# A Study of Abū 'Ubaida Ma'mar Ibn al-Muthannā as a Philologist and Transmitter of Literary Material

by

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# ABSTRACT

## Introduction:

A short notice on the foundation of Baṣra and its cultural milieu is followed by a discussion of the most important representatives of the literary life there, and a survey of works by modern European and Arab scholars on Baṣran literary figures. A section on the importance of Abū 'Ubaida and the sources upon which the study is based concludes the introduction.

The thesis is divided into five parts:

## Part One:

This consists of three chapters (I, II & III), the first dealing with Abū 'Ubaida's life, the second with his socio-religious views. In this chapter I discuss in detail the so-called Shu'ūbite and Khārijite leanings of Abū 'Ubaida. Chapter III deals with Abū 'Ubaida's output, in the form of an introduction followed by a list of his books.

## Part Two:

This consists of two chapters (IV & V).

In chapter IV I deal with Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions, and discuss in detail the dīwāns and anthologies which he has transmitted. In the following chapter I deal with Abū 'Ubaida's method of transmission, in connection with which the various problems of authenticity are discussed. The last part of this chapter deals with Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on poetry and poets.

Part Three:

This consists of two chapters (VI & VII).

This part is in the main devoted to study Abū 'Ubaida's attitudes towards language, and his standing as a philologist. In the first chapter of this part (Ch. VI) I discuss Abū 'Ubaida's opinion of language and its nature, and then deal with Abū 'Ubaida as a lexicographer and grammarian. The following chapter deals with him as a collector of dialect material.

Part Four:

This consists of one chapter, in which I study the Kitāb al-Majāz. The first part of this chapter gives a short introduction to Quranic studies followed by an examination of the nature of the book under consideration, and a discussion of opinions, ancient and modern, about it.

The concept of majāz, and its various kinds in the works of Abū 'Ubaida are discussed. There then follows a study of Abū 'Ubaida's methods in dealing with the Quranic modes of expression.

Part Five:

This consists of two chapters (IX & X).

Chapter IX gives an introduction to Abū 'Ubaida's historical writings, and a thorough examination of the Ayyām al-'Arab, their transmission, contents, and historical importance.

The final chapter deals with the diction, style and language of the Ayyām.

The thesis is appended with an unpublished work by Abū 'Ubaida called Tasmiyāt Azwāj al-Nabī, and specimens from Ayyām al-'Arab and Sirat 'Antara.

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## Notes and Abbreviations

1) The full transliteration "Qur'ān" has only been used in the titles of books. In the text of the thesis, the form "Quran" has been adopted.

2) In quotations from De Slane's translation of Wafayat al-A'yān, the original transliteration has been kept.

3) Abbreviations.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A.D.R.A.T. | - | Atti della Reale Academia D'Italia. |
| A.I.E.O. | - | Annales de l'Institut des Études Orientales. |
| B.S.O.A.S. | - | Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. |
| E.B. | - | Encyclopaedia Britannica. |
| E.I. | - | Encyclopaedia of Islam. |
| E.R.E. | - | Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. |
| G.L.E.C.S. | - | Groupe Linguistique D'Études Chamito-Sémitiques. |
| I.C. | - | Islamic Culture. |
| J.A.O.S. | - | Journal of the American Oriental Society. |
| J.R.A.S. | - | Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. |
| M.F.O.U.S.J. | - | Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale de L'Université Saint-Joseph. |
| M.M.A.A. | - | Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī. |
| R.A.A.D. | - | Revue de L'Académie Arabe à Damas. |
| T.G.U.O.S. | - | Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society. |
| W.Z.K.M. | - | Wiener Zeitschrift Für die Kunde des Morgenlandes. |

4) S after al-Muzhir refers to M.A. Ṣabīḥ's edition only.

S after al-Naqā'iḍ refers to M. al-Ṣāwī's edition only.

D after al-Aghānī refers to the edition of the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya only.

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# INTRODUCTION

## The foundation of Baṣra:

In 14/637,[1] 'Utba Ibn Ghazwān reached a place called al-Khuraiba and by the order of the Caliph 'Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Baṣra,[2] a town destined to play an important role in Islamic life for centuries, was founded. So runs the story told us by Abū 'Ubaida and others.[3]

Although at first, the reasons for the foundation of Baṣra seem to have been military,[4] it took no great length of time to expand, and to acquire an importance which was unmatched until the foundation of Baghdad in 145/762.

C. Pellat observes, "The town reached its zenith in the 2nd/8th century and the beginning of the 3rd/9th century. At this period it was fully developed and its population had increased to considerable proportions".[5]

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[1] Al-Balādhurī "*Futūḥ al-Buldān*" (Cairo 1956) 483.
Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī "*Mu'jam al-Buldān*" (Leipzig 1866) 1.640.

[2] Literally 'the soft white stone'. Cf. Ibn Qutaiba "*Adab al-Kātib*" (Leiden 1900) 457. Ibn al-Siggīt "*al-Aḍdād*" (Leiden 1881) 5.

[3] *Futūḥ al-Buldān*. 483 *Mu'jam al-Buldān* 1. 640.

[4] R. Hartmann says "the occupation of the point of intersection of the important systems of highways which, in particular, command the approach to Iraq from the sea, was a military necessity for the conquerors" *EI*$^{(1)}$ (al-Baṣra) vol.1, part 2. 672. It is worthy of note that Dr. Ṣ.A. al-'Alī echoed this opinion in his paper "Khuṭaṭ al-Baṣra" Cf. *Sūmer* (Baghdad 1952) VIII.72-84 and 281-304.

[5] *EI*$^{2}$ (al-Baṣra) I 1086.

## The picture of the age:

To give a clear picture, in a few pages, of a period as long as that in which Abū 'Ubaida lived, almost the whole of the second century, and to survey quickly some of the relevant aspects of the first century, is anything but simple. The difficulty is not lessened by the fact that that period has been reasonably well described in the past few decades.[1]

However, every period in history may be interpreted in various ways, and the richer it is in events as well as in thought, the more numerous will be the interpretations. Thus, it is the intention here to project an image of that age and to stress particularly how interesting were the activities of the Baṣran intellectuals, and their unconscious determination to shape, mould and frame not only the cultural life of Baṣra but that of the Islamic world as well, for centuries to come.

The period was, undeniably, one of ferment and change, of imitation and innovation. The Arabs who had just left a barren and arid peninsula for Iraq, Persia, Syria and other countries with deep-rooted civilizations, were put to a severe trial, indeed, a critical challenge, which had to have one of two results: either retreat and the collapse of their mission, or advance and spread. The challenge was met however and a new civilization did emerge. Along with the military advance of Muslim troops destroying empires and establishing new institutions and ways of life, there was simultaneously a cultural march commensurate with the military one.

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[1] Particularly, Ṣ.A. al-'Alī "*al-Tanẓīmāt al-Ijtimā'iyya wal-Iqtiṣādiyya fī al-Baṣra*" (Baghdad 1953)
C. Pellat, "*Le Milieu Basrien et la Formatism de Jahiz*
Arabic translation by Dr. I. al-Gailānī, "*al-Jahiz wa Athar al-Jaww al-Baṣrī fihi* (Damascus 1961)
A.K. Zakī "*al-Hayāt al-Adabiyya fī al-Baṣra*" (Damascus 1961)

The importance of Baṣra in the political, social and cultural life of Islam at this time was briefly but vividly described by Sir William Muir who points out that Baṣra, ? predominantly settled by North Arabian tribes, was unique in its origin, and that its influence on the literature, theology and politics of Islam was immense. He goes on saying that there was an abundance of time and opportunity since service in the field was desultory and intermittent. Time, therefore, was whiled away in recalling the marvellous story of their faith, or in debates and gossip which too often degenerated into tribal rivalry and domestic scandal .... The people grew too petulant and too factious to control, particularly by weak caliphs and governors. Sir William concludes that this "rent the unity of Islam and brought on disastrous days which, but for its marvellous vitality, must have proved fatal to the faith."[1]

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[1] The Caliphate, Its Rise, Decline and Fall (Edinburgh 1924) 125-126.

The political setting:

Baṣra was indeed a great political centre. Any sketch of the political life of this town turns out to be a reflection of the general course of Umayyad and 'Abbasid policy. Baṣra political identity is believed to have taken a more or less definable shape after the battle of al-Jamal (36/656). Thus, al-Aṣma'ī is reported to have said "All the Baṣrs are 'Uthmānite sympathizers, while all the Kūfites are Shī'ite sympathisers, and all the Syrians are Umayyad sympathisers, while al-Jazīra is Khārijite and al-Ḥijāz Sunnite. Al-Baṣra has become 'Uthmānite since the day of al-Jamal."[1]

The political history of Baṣra, especially in the first century was so intricate and complex that it resists any quick and brief survey. Yet a few remarks on al-Aṣma'ī's statement will be pertinent.

A survey of the active and real political forces in Baṣra does not, in fact, support the statement of al-Aṣma'ī. It is true that the battle of al-Jamal had had a considerable impact upon the political structure in Baṣra. Yet Baṣra was not altogether 'Uthmānite. Baṣra was dominated by three disparate groups. The 'Uthmānites, the Khārijites and the Shī'ites. The revolutions which took place in Baṣra attest this political distribution. The Day of al-Jamal was an

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[1] Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi "al-'Iqd al-Farīd" (Cairo 1316) III 255.

'Uthmānite battle, Miṣ'ab b. al-Zubair's revolution was a Shī'ite movement, while the Khārijites engineered many revolutions in the first and second centuries.

In all these events the Baṣra, actively and enthusiastically participated. Baṣra, it seems, was never a united community on the political level at least. In all the previous mentioned revolutions, this city was divided against itself. This is due in part to the peculiar social structure of the city, and in part to the tribal nature of the Arabic society itself.

Yet this political upheaval had calmed down, relatively speaking, by the time of the advent of the 'Abbāsid dynasty, and with the establishment of Baghdad, the centre of gravity started to shift to this new capital of the Islamic empire. Baṣra then began to recover and to lead a somewhat quieter life, in which a great cultural movement blossomed. Baṣra witnessed the birth of "Arabic sciences", and the Mu'tazilite movement.

Indubitably, the Islamic faith as crystallized in the Quran was the stimulus behind this cultural renaissance. Some analysis of this factor helps in the comprehension of the essence of this cultural current and its different aspects.

Gabrieli rightly observes, "religious faith, unquestionably, furnished to this civilization [i.e. Islamic] not only its common denominator, but also its axis and fundamental aspects. All other aspects of life, material and spiritual, political and literary, economic and social bear this religious element's mark, take colour from its reflection and develop under its influence."[1]

In the first century, Islamic faith had rested solely upon revelation. In the second century, it rested equally upon examination and intensive study re-enforcing the faith and re-asserting the revelation. Even the orthodox scholars, such as al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', felt that faith must be grounded firmly upon "scientific" foundations.

Baṣra occupies a peculiar position among other Islamic centres, since the experience it had witnessed and lived through was, by any standard, a new and profound one.

Three factors contributed to create that experience and to lend it its peculiarity and character, namely the amalgam of tribal ethic, Islam and "rationalism".

## The tribal nature of Baṣra:

In Baṣra we can perceive the difference produced by the association of men in an ordered communal life contrasted with the anarchy of tribal conditions, and the consequent differences of attitude towards the new religion.

Turning to the latter side we see that the tribal nature of the social reality adhered to the ideals and moral concepts of pre-Islamic Arabia. Those ideals were well expressed in the classical poetry which Baṣra did its utmost to revive and save from oblivion. The revival of pre-Islamic ideals such as *'aṣabiyya*, generosity, vendetta, boasting etc., was fully reflected in the *Naqā'iḍ* of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq.[1]

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[1] "Literary Tendencies" In "*Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*" ed. by G.E. von Grunebaum. (Chicago 1955) 87.

This trend in Baṣra can be understood in the light of the following explanation.

Most of the tribes which settled in Baṣra were Bedouins, and their way of life and traditions were so deeply rooted in them that Islam, in such a short time, could not supplant their age-old ideals and values. It is perhaps easy to a man, and to a community, to change material surroundings but it is not easy to change a way of life, morality or outlook. Although Islam is a simple faith, the Bedouins were in such a primitive mental state that they were unable to comprehend the teachings of the new religion. Islam demands from its adherents a kind of spiritual and mental discipline, something to which those Bedouins were not accustomed. Furthermore, the successive governors of Baṣra, Dr. Ghannāwī observes, with the exception of Zīyād b. Abīhi,[1] helped, covertly and overtly, to encourage and revive the pre-Islamic ideals and habits by siding with their tribe in case of need.[2]

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[1] Dr. M. al-Ghannāwī in his study "*Naqā'id Jarīr Wal-Farazdaq*" (Baghdad 1954) devoted two long chapters to demonstrate and illustrate with plenty of poetical quotations how the pre-Islamic ideals were prevailing in Baṣra as the poetry of al-Farazdaq and Jarīr reflect. Cf. chaps. 5 and 6. 210-290.

Islam:

The new religion, on the other hand, tried to establish new ideals and values by a more humanistic and universal way of life and thought.

Islam at once awakened and satisfied a craving for a higher, purer, less torn and fragmentary being. It disclosed to them a gracious, benevolent and all-powerful God, who on the one hand would one day redress all wrongs and recompense all pains, and on the other punish justly and deservedly the sinners and wrongdoers. Its great glory was to have raised the moral dignity and self-respect of the many to a level which had, hitherto, been reached only by a few. For, in pre-Islamic Arabia the "Arabs had generally recognised a code of morals ... which ... did not always reach a very high ethical standard" and "the maintenance of morality was due much more to respect for traditional usage and public opinion than to fear of Divine Wrath."[3]

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[1] In his famous speech Ziyād b. Abīhi warned the Baṣrites from indulging in the pre-Islamic habits. He said "Keep clear of pre-Islamic ways, for I cut out the tongue of any man who professed them. You have committed unparallel crimes, and to every crime we will fit the punishment." Cf. al-Jāḥiz, "al-Bayān Wal-Tabiyyin" Muḥī al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb's edition (Cairo 1913) II 30.

[2] "Naqā'iḍ Jarīr Wal-Farazdaq" 198.

[3] Nöldeke, (Arabs) in E.R.E. (Edinburgh 1908) I 673.

Rationalism:

Besides the two previously mentioned trends, there was a third one which was neither purely Islamic nor pre-Islamic, but a "rational" one. This current created an atmosphere which encouraged criticism and judgement by reason on all questions, idealogical, theological and social.

The so-called "rationalist" trend in Islam began with the debate on the notion of predestination.[1] These speculations were motivated by the Quran itself, and the verses in which God declared his absoluteness, such as "Say; nothing will afflict us save what Allah has ordained for us" (IX.51) or "Surely we have created every thing according to a measure." (LIV.49).

Before the end of the first century, Mu'bad b. Juhanī (d. 80/699) was the first who instituted discussions on "qadar" at Baṣra.[2] With al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728) the school which is known as Mu'tazila came into existence. The most marked feature of it was its rational trend and liberal attitude towards problems of theology and thought.

In the second century, Baṣra had witnessed some outstanding figures who advocated and promulgated the ideas of different schools of thought. Abū al-Faraj related the following story. "I was told by Yaḥyā b. 'Alī, who was told by his father on the authority of 'Āfiya b. Shabīb, who said,

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[1] A.J. Wensinck "The Muslim Creed" (Cambridge 1932) 53.
[2] Dwight M. Donaldson, "Muslim Ethics" (London 1953) 98.

Abu Suhail told me on the authority of Sa'īd b. Sallām who said, there were in Baṣra six *mutakallimūn* (*min aṣḥāb al-kalām*), 'Amr b. 'Abīd, Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', Bashshār al-A'mā, Ṣāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Qaddūs, 'Abd al-Karīm b. Abī al-'Awjā' and a man from Azd. Abū Aḥmad, Jarīr b. Ḥāzim said, they used to meet at the home of the Azdite, and discuss [questions] there. As for 'Amr and Wāṣil, they became [later] Mu'tazilites, as for 'Abd al-Karīm and Ṣāliḥ they repented and returned to the right path. As for Bashshār, he stayed uncertain and perplexed [in his belief], as for the Azdite he maintained al-Sumaniyya, an Indian doctrine, but in appearance he stayed as he was before."[1]

This "rational" trend was said to have been promoted by a translation movement on a massive scale mainly of Greek philosophy. "The movement ... began under the Umayyads, when some Greek and Coptic works on chemistry were translated."[2] ?
In time, these translations had had an immense influence on Arabic thought. The Mu'tazilites, in particular, availed themselves of the fruits of the translated books in strengthening their position and buttressing their reasonings. Nöldeké suggests that "With the aid of Greek dialectic, with which the Arabs became acquainted, first in limited degree,

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[1] Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Aghānī* (Cairo 1929) III 146-147 al-Sumaniyya were said to worship idols and believe in the transmigeration of souls. Cf. *ibid.*, III 147, footnote.
[2] B. Lewis "*The Arabs in History*" (London 1954) 136.

and afterwards much more fully, through the Syriac, [the Mu'tazilites] reduced their orthodox opponents to desperation."[1]

Thus Baṣra was, in fact, a crucible in which many trends, movements and currents of thought were mixed and fused. However, the essence of this cultural climate was that it was integrated with social reality, and that it represented a process of synthesis of the classical, the Islamic and the "rational" as the foundation for a new culture and creative activity.

## Literature and poetry:

Pre-Islamic literature, mainly poetry, had an essential role to play in this activity, and the Baṣrans accomplished much in this respect.

Al-Jāḥiẓ, by origin, a Baṣran, describes the literary climate in Baṣra in the second century of Islam in an articulate and lively passage, referring to the pre-occupations of the rāwīs and the public with matters of language and poetry. In this passage al-Jāḥiẓ, with an acute sense of observation, detects fluctuations of taste among the Baṣrans and goes to say "I have seen them [the rāwīs] running madly after al-'Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf's amatory poetry. But soon when Khalaf al-Aḥmar brought them Bedouin erotic poetry, they got tired of al-'Abbās' amatory poetry."

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[1] Nöldeke "Sketches from Eastern History" (London 1892) 91.

"I have listened to Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī, Yaḥyā b. Nujaim, Abū Mālik 'Amr b. Karkara, along with the Baghdādī rāwīs. Yet, I do not remember that anyone of them once transmitted a piece of love poetry, except Khalaf al-Aḥmar who used to transmit everything".

"I know of no aim of grammarians [in transmitting poetry] but that poetry in which there is i'rāb, no aim of the professional reciters but that poetry in which there is a peculiar word or difficult meaning which needs to be pondered upon, no aim of the akhbāriyyūn but that poetry in which there is a shāhid or mathal."[1]

It is difficult however to over-estimate the debt of the cultural movement of Baṣra to the pre-Islamic poetry. Although the Baṣran~~s~~ intellectuals lived their own life, and thought their own thoughts, yet a great respect for the way in which things had been done before, by those who had done them well, was part of their ideal of literary creation, and thus strove to reach the same heights as the classical masters.

To them as to Dryden, the masters were the great men, "whom we propose to ourselves as patterns of our imitation, serve us as a torch, which is lifted up before us, to enlighten our passage, and often elevate our thoughts as high as the conception we have of our author's genius."[1]

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[1] Al-Rāghib al-Iṣ~~b~~fahānī Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabā' (Beirut 1961) 1. 290. Viz. The Grammarians are interested only in poetry for its grammatical context etc..

To stress the nostalgia for the past, however, is to give a false colour to the intellectual climate of Baṣra. The second century, in particular, was an age of imitation and innovation, of simultaneous reverence for and derision of the classical. That perhaps is what lends this period its fascinating atmosphere and special importance.

Arab society had come to a watershed. And dynamic conceptions of religion, politics and modes of experience were at work, and subjected to scholarly examination and scrutiny.

## The New Trend in poetry:

Such being the case, it was most likely that new ideas and currents would be evoked. In the field of poetry, the best known representatives of the new trend were Abū Nuwās and Bashshār, both Baṣrans although they went to Baghdad in search of wealth and fame. Both poets aroused a storm of controversy with the new poetry which soon acquired a wide public. Najm al-Naṭṭāḥ was reported to have said, "I recalled my last time in Baṣra, there was neither lover nor mistress who did not recite the poetry of Bashshār; nor professional mourner, nor singing girl who did not earn a living by it; nor was there any noble man who did not fear it."[1]

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[1] J. Dryden "The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy" in "Dramatic Essays" (Everyman's Library, London n.d.) 129.

And, again it was said of Bashshār that "there is nothing which tempts more the people of this town [i.e. Baṣra] to lead an immoral life, than the poetry of this blind man"[2].

However, the cultural atmosphere which we are trying to illustrate was equally associated with some outstanding figures such as, Abū al-Aswad, al-Du'alī, al-Khalīl b. Aḥmd al-Farāhīdī, Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, Abū Zaid al-Anṣārī, Abū 'Ubaida, al-Mufaḍḍil al-Ḍabbī, al-Aṣma'ī, and others.

## Periods and figures:

The works of those scholars have been a solid foundation on which later works were based. Islamic culture, undeniably, cannot be fully grasped without a knowledge of the earliest literary activity and of those who contributed to establish the cultural edifice in the first two centuries of Islam.

With the renaissance of the Arab world, the re-interpretation, re-orientation, and re-examination of the writings of the past was a first and imperative step. Academic studies and research play, necessarily, a leading part in this task.

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1. Aghānī (D) III 149.
2. Ibid.

However, it is by no means easy to determine what kind of studies is more needed or profitable, whether studies of individual authors or studies of periods and movements. Opinions concerning this issue are divided. Some advocate the concentration upon particular authors and works. These insist on regarding a particular work as an individual, self-existent work of art, to be described, analyzed and evaluated without regard to the cultural scene, or the social milieu of its author. In other words, extrinsic considerations are considered valueless.

On the other hand others hold that the study of periods and movements is of greater value and validity. One cannot deny the value of general notions about the climate of opinion in a given period, nor the importance of establishing the relation of individual authors to their age. Thus full attention should be paid to the cultural milieu in which a given work was written. It is also argued that before a survey of the cultural climate of a given period is made, the study of individual authors can only be of partial significance. Because, "studying individual authors necessitates from the researcher that he establish his (the author's) place in the cultural history of the individual author's tradition and epoch, and that he point out by whom this particular author or work was influenced and upon whom this particular author exercised his influence."[1]

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[1] A.S. Al-Jawārī "al-Shi'r fī Baghdād" (Beirut 1956) 2.

In both these theories there is a certain amount of truth. The insistence on the individuality of a work should clearly be taken into consideration and any particular work, can indeed be judged and "evaluated in terms appropriate to a work of literary art."[1]

On the other hand, any literary work, and author, stems from a given moment, and unquestionably bears the characteristics of the time in which that work was written, and in which the author developed and matured. Thus, it seems that the interaction between a given work, or author, and a given period is self-evident.

It is clear, moreover, that except where we have to deal with an individual work of exceptional aesthetic importance that the method of setting a writer against his background has important advantages.

It is from this stand-point that we have essayed to carry out the present work.

Regrettably, studies on individual authors of the second century in Baṣra, to the best of our knowledge, have never been thoroughly and satisfactorily carried out. Theses and studies have been centered upon poets rather than on reciters, philologists, critics or grammarians.

The reasons for this, perhaps are: firstly that the nature and approach of studies concerned with language and

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1. David Daiches "Critical Approaches to Literature" (London 1963) 328.

grammar differ from that of poetry and poets, in the sense that the former are more technical and difficult. Secondly, the study of the poetry of a poet does not require from a researcher more than a knowledge of his poetry and an ability to discuss it from an aesthetic point of view and a few anecdotes concerned with his life, which may or may not help to understand the poetry under consideration. A study of a grammarian or a philologist on the other hand requires a full acquaintance with his works, and of comparable works, and some estimation of works either lost or still not in print. Such a study requires, moreover that an appreciation be made of the writer within the general framework of grammar or philology as a whole.

## Reviews of Academic Works:

However, few academic theses have been done about some early philologists and grammarians, which we are going to consider in brief.

Amongst the notable names to which we have already alluded, there are only three names who have been a subject for studies, namely al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, Sībawaihi and al-Aṣma'ī.

## Al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī:

Al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī has been the subject of three studies, each one distinguished from the other in the aspect, or aspects, which the writer has concentrated on, and the approach he follows.

In his study "al-Khalīl Ibn Ahmad and the Evolution of Arabic Lexicography"[1] Dr. Darwīsh divides his thesis into four parts. The first deals with the first stage in the development of Arabic lexicography, in which dictionaries were arranged in 'anagrammatical' order.[2] This order was founded by al-Khalīl. In the second part the writer follows the lexicographers who adopted al-Khalīl's model, in both the East and the West (Spain). In the third part the author follows the development of dictionary until recent times. Part four is devoted to a discussion of Kitāb al-'Aīn, and particularly, to the controversy over the authorship of this dictionary. In a second volume of his thesis Dr. Darwīsh edits sections chosen from al-'Aīn to serve as specimens of the text.

This study has the aim of making a contribution to our knowledge of the development of Arabic lexicography, and the author has succeeded in detecting the stages of that evolution, and in revealing the influence of al-Khalīl in the dictionaries composed after him.

This thesis, in fact, deals with more than al-Khalīl and the Kitāb al-'Aīn is taken as a starting point for the author to follow the development of Arabic lexicography.

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1. A thesis submitted for the Ph.D. degree, University of London 1955.
2. The anagrammatical method itself consists of changing letter-order to form new words.

Not less important in this study is the question of the authorship of al-'Aīn which was, for a long time, debated at length. Dr. Darwīsh discusses this question in detail. Reviewing the problem, he finally gives an opinion based on internal evidence, which attests al-Khalīl's authorship of the book.

The study concentrates on one aspect. al-Khalīl was a versatile scholar. He was beside being a lexicographer, a grammarian. The later aspect has been the subject of study made by the German scholar Wolfgang Reuschel "al-Halīl Ibn Aḥmad, der Lehrer Sībawawaihs, als Grammatiker."[1]

In his study Reuschel attempts to sketch the theory of grammar of al-Khalīl through a detailed study of the quotations made by Sībawaih in his "al-Kitāb".

Reviewing the book Beeston notices "Unfortunately for a project of this sort it is plain that Sībawaihi's general practice was only to quote his teacher in the discussion of problems arising out of minor irregularities, and not in the broad statement of principle. We cannot therefore gain a really comprehensive picture of Khalīl's teaching; but Reuschel is able to show at any rate that certain principles were known to Khalīl. Most of these principles turn out, indeed, to be commonplaces of Arabic grammatical theory; nevertheless, it is of interest to have it established

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1. Berlin 1959.

that they were already recognized so early in the history of Arabic grammatical studies.[1]

The major bulk of this work is occupied by the detailed discussions of selected passages. Some of these are well presented, but in others Reuschel regrettably displays a muddled thinking and an inability to pick out the essential points of Khl's arguments. What is particularly disturbing (in a work devoted to the evaluation of one of the greatest Arabic grammatical thinkers) is to find that Reuschel has in some places quite misunderstood the Arabic text of the Kitāb."[1] Beeston afterwards gives examples demonstrating his criticism of the book.

The third study on al-Khalīl is more comprehensive. Dr. M. al-Makhzūmī's "al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī; A'maluhu wa Manhajuhu"[2] is a study of al-Khalīl as a philologist, grammarian and phonetician.

Dr. al-Makhzūmī begins his study with a sketch of the literary life of Baṣra, followed by a biographical note. The author then proceeds to examine al-Khalīl's opinions in regard to language, grammar, and phonetics.

The study is a serious attempt to put al-Khalīl in his true perspective and to show his contribution to scholarship.

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[1] "Al-Ḫalīl Ibn Aḥmad, der Lehrer Sībawaihs, als Grammatiker" in BSOAS (1962) vol.XXV, part 2. 343.

[2] Baghdād 1960.

In spite of the many valuable aspects which the author examines, there are still many things which have been left untouched, such as the work of al-Khalīl as a lexicographer and prosodist.

In fact, the author concedes that one book is not enough to investigate all aspects of al-Khalīl, and that his study should not be considered as complete, but as an outline of the main features of al-Khalīl's activities.[1]

Thus, the title seems somewhat misleading, since the author, as we have just seen does not study all aspects of al-Khalīl. The sub-title of this thesis ("His works and method") is not therefore altogether accurate.

On the whole, this study differs from the first two books on al-Khalīl. It is more comprehensive, and more indicative of al-Khalīl's method and writings.

Sībawaihi:

On Sībawaihi two studies have been made. The first by a German scholar A. Schaade, is entitled "Sībawaihi's Lautlehre".[2] The second is by an Arabic author 'Alī Najdī Nāṣif and is called "Sībawaihi Imām al-Nuḥāt".[3]

A. Schaade's study is concerned only with Sībawaihi as a phonetician. The author tries to give as clear as possible a picture of Sībawaihi's opinions on Arabic phonetics. H.Fleisch says "A. Schaade a fait une étude approfondie de la phonêtique de Sībawayhi. Avec les ressources que fournissant le Kitāb, specialement dans ce fameux chapitre 11. 565 dont il donne la traduction allemande."[1]

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[1] al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī, 3.
[2] Leiden 1911.
[3] Cairo 1953.

In his introduction the author apologizes for the fact that of not knowing Sanskrit, he was unable to say whether the Arabs had any idea of Indian phonetics, or whether phonetics was an original Arabic study.[2] Then he states that phonetics after Sībawaihi declined.[3]

Schaade referred to the distinction by Sībawaihi between consonants as majhūra and mahmūsa, and made a comparison with later grammarians' distinction between ḥurūf rakhwa, shadīda, majhūra and mahmūsa.[4]

The book, if we are not mistaken, is an attempt to clear up Sībawaihi's phonetical theory by elucidation of his own terminology.

Naturally, this study does not say the final word on such an intricate subject, but it does shed some light on it.

A.N. Nāṣif's study is concerned with the life and the epoch of Sībawaihi. He devotes only one third of his book to a study of Sībawaihi's grammatical theory.

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1. "La Conception Phonétique des Arabes d'après le Sirr Ṣinā'at al-I'rāb d'Ibn Ginnī" in ZDMG (1958) 75.
2. Sībawaihi's Lautlehre Vorwort 2.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.1.

The approach of the author was not critical and evaluative. Apart from the first chapters of the book in which Nāṣif tries to relate Sībawaihi to his time, the book fails to convey the essence of this remarkable grammarian.

The author deals with external aspects of the book "*al-Kitāb*"; the subject-matter, the composition of the book and when it was composed. Valuable though it is to investigate those questions, it does not help the reader to get a clear idea of Sībawaihi himself.

The book has an index which shows the Quranic and poetical quotations in "*al-Kitāb*".[1]

### Al-Aṣma'ī:

al-Aṣma'ī has been the subject of a study written by Dr. A.J. al-Jumard, entitled "*al-Aṣma'ī, Ḥayātuhu wa-Athāruhu*".[2] This hardly qualifies as an academic study. The prejudice of the author manifests itself on every line and page.

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[1] Saarān also examines Sībawaihi's phonetics in the third part of Chapter 3 of his thesis "*A Critical Study of the Phonetic Observations of the Arab Grammarians*". (Thesis SOAS, London University 1951). In this chapter, the author examines Sībawaihi's description of sounds according to the place of articulation and gives a description of the consonants and vowels. Saarān points out that Sībawaihi's category of the *ḥurūf majhūra* and *mahmūsa* corresponds to that of voiced and voiceless sounds (This however is only approximately true). It is worthy of note to say that before Saarān, Schaade in his book which has already been reviewed, observes that Sībawaihi's classification of the *ḥurūf* into *majhūra* and *mahmūra* corresponds to what he calls in German "*stimmhafte*" (voiced) and "*stimmlos*" (voiceless) (Cf. *Sībawaihi's Lautlehre*. 1).

[2] Beirut 1955.

This book, in fact, is a biography of al-Aṣma'ī more than a study of his works. When the author comes to discuss al-Aṣma'ī's opinions on grammar, language, poetry, and criticism, in the last chapter, he is led by his admiration into sweeping generalizations and unwarranted judgements. The author, for instance, says that al-Aṣma'ī was unique amongst his contemporaries in transmitting, understanding, criticising and analysing poetry, and that he collected, memorized and transmitted more than any other rāwī.[1]

The book is a collection of stories and anecdotes related by, or about, al-Aṣma'ī, and seldom does the author question the authenticity of the anecdotes with which he crams his book, in spite of the fact that he admits that a lot of stories were fabricated about al-Aṣma'ī, or attributed to him.[2]

The author also makes no attempt to examine the stories and to sort out what might be indicative of al-Aṣma'ī's attitude and outlook.

This, then, is of no great help to the reader in understanding and appreciating al-Aṣma'ī's contribution to the Arabic culture.

Apart from these books which, there are no long studies of the scholars of the first and second centuries of Islam though some articles have been published.

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[1] Al-Aṣma'ī, Ḥayātuhu wa Āthāruhu, 148, 157, 304.

[2] Ibid.

## The importance of Abū 'Ubaida:

There is therefore good reason for a study of Abū 'Ubaida on a general ground. There are other reasons too.

Abū 'Ubaida in his lifetime and in modern times has been misunderstood, his works misinterpreted, and his position as a scholar of high ranking generally misassessed.

Although it was not the fault of Abū 'Ubaida that he was born and lived at a time when the struggle between Arabs and non-Arabs in the Islamic empire was reaching its peak; a time in which anyone was liable to be labelled as a Shu'ūbite, particularly, if he was of non-Arab origin like Abū 'Ubaida, nevertheless this accusation, which is discussed in detail below,[1] has precluded many from assessing Abū 'Ubaida fairly.

To modern scholars, although he was,unquestionably, anti-Arab, his contribution to Islamic culture can be justly evaluated by those who look at him detachedly and objectively.

The fact that Abū 'Ubaida did not attach himself to any official party, that he was not patronized by caliphs or governors;[2] and that the intellectual climate of Baṣra was

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1. Cf. Chapter II.
2. It must be noted, however, that Abū 'Ubaida tried to associate himself with the court of Hārūn al-Rashīd as we shall see in Chapter I. This event had no effects on his writings, because his attempt, for many reasons we will later mention, failed and consequently, Abū 'Ubaida returned to Baṣra and continued his previous life.

favourable to free thinking and reason, freed him from being less than frank about current issues, literary and social.

Thus, he can be regarded, perhaps, as a typical product of the second century in Baṣra.

Abū 'Ubaida was an important figure in the history of Islamic culture. This importance stems from the fact that he was one of the early collectors, and transmitters of Arabic poetry, and that from him stems the first application of the ṭabaqāt conception in Arabic criticism, and not from Ibn Sallām as it is generally known.

Abū 'Ubaida was also the first to write on majāz and to study the modes of expression employed in the Quran, and thus he initiated the study of grammar, not as a collection of rules, but as a manifestation of style.

He was also the first and most important source for the transmission of Ayyām literature. Lastly, his philological works were utilised to a large extent in the composition of the Arabic dictionaries after him.

## The sources of the present study:

In spite of the loss of most of Abū 'Ubaida's books, a few of them survived, and we have based our study mainly on them. Among these books, Majāz al-Qur'ān, al-Naqā'iḍ, al-Khail, and al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara, are in print, and a small Ms. "Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī" has been edited and appended to this thesis.

A word on how use has been made of those books will perhaps not be out of place.

Firstly, with the exception of al-Majāz, these books have not been studied in isolation for one reason. Every book, although apparently concerned with one subject, yet contains material which is not on the main subject of the book. To give an example of this, we may instance Kitāb al-Naqā'iḍ.

This book is, as its title implies, devoted to the satirical poems composed by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq against each other. But it also contains, valuable data and information on history, language, dialects and criticism. Thus al-Naqā'iḍ has been examined as a collection of poetry in the chapter devoted to Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions, and has been also utilised in the chapter on al-Ayyām, and referred to, and quoted from in other places whenever it was relevant to do so.

The same approach has been made with Abū 'Ubaida's other works. Secondly, sources which drew their data from Abū 'Ubaida's lost works have been utilized. Arabic books on language and grammar are frequently collections of sayings and statements of earlier grammarians, philologists and rāwīs, rather than original compositions. Thus, they are useful in so far as they provide us with data of not only one grammarian or rāwī, but of many scholars, and reflect different opinions with regard to one problem. Sources of this kind are al-Kāmil of Ibn al-Athīr, al-Aghānī of Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī and al-'Iqd al-Farid of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, in which are to be found the bulk of Abū 'Ubaida's works on al-Ayyām. Also utilised to a less extent are al-Jamhara of Ibn Duriad, al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ of Ibn Sīda and Lisān al-'Arab of Ibn Manẓūr.

These works have been of great importance in providing the material necessary for a study of Abū 'Ubaida's views on language on the one hand, and to study his method and subject matter, particularly his lexical works; on the other hand, despite the fact that Kitāb al-Khail serves as an example of Abū 'Ubaida's works in this respect.

The usefulness of these books, sometimes, is badly impaired by the fact that some of them are badly published and devoid of indexes.

Nevertheless, it is not possible to write about Abū 'Ubaida's opinion on language and his lexical works without the help of statements quoted in such sources as it can be seen in Part Three.

Before concluding this small introduction, there are two points on which it may be appropriate to make a remark or two.

In the case of any figure about whom no study has, hitherto, been written, the best method would seem to be to present him as a whole and to give as complete as possible a picture. Then, and only then, can a study be made which is more profound in approach and treatment, and narrower in scope.

It is certain that Abū 'Ubaida could be a subject for more than one study, and if this thesis can claim anything, it is that it has shed some light on points which need more investigation and questions which require answers. And it might also be a virtue to admit that this work has perhaps raised more questions than it has answered.

The main characteristic of this study is that it is descriptive, in that it aims at showing the reader the scope of Abū 'Ubaida's preoccupations, particularly in poetry and language, and at setting forth the kind of subject-matter which he treated, and the way in which he did this.

The main goal therefore is to describe his works in general and also to put his contributions into true perspective. By so doing it is possible to see the marked features of his writing and to point out the originality in it.

# PART I

## CHAPTER I

## BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

Name and nickname:

The full name of the subject of this study is Abū 'Ubaida Ma'mar Ibn al-Muthannā al-Taimī. He also has the nickname of subbukht which probably indicates a Jewish origin.[1]

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[1] Aghānī (Bulāq 1868) XVII.19. there is a misconstruction in the surname. Abū al-Faraj gives it as سبخت (Ibid), while Ibn al-Nadīm gives it as سكب (al-Fihrist, Leipzig 1871. 53), al-Jāhiz gives it as سكبت (al-Bayān wal-Tabyyīn 11.3 quoted in Fück 'Arabiyya) (Berlin 1950) 47.

Subbukht however seems to be the correct form as Tha'lab, Ibn Manzūr, al-Zabīdī and al-Qiftī note it. (Majālis Tha'lab. Cairo 1949. 11.424. Lisān al-'Arab. Beirut 1955. 11.39. Tāj al-'Arūs. Cairo 1306 A.H. 1.550. Anbāh al-Ruwāt 'alā Anbāh al-Nuhāt Cairo 1955.111.285).

The word in question occurs in verses said to be composed by Ibn Munādhir.

اذا انت تعلقت بحبل من ابى الصلت
تعلقت بحبل واهن القوة سنبتّ
فخذ من سلخ كيسان ومن اظفار سبخت

These verses were transmitted by Tha'lab (Majālis 11.424). Ibn Manzūr and al-Zabīdī both relate only the last verse (Lisān 11.39, Tāj al-'Arūs 1.550 respectively).

The origin and the meaning of the word is rather ambiguous, although in Tāj al-'Arūs(1.550) al-Zabīdī gives what maybe considered with caution as the origin and the meaning of the word. Thus

" سبخت بضم السين والباء المشدده وسكون الخاء المعجمه ومنهم من
فتح السين. معرّب اوعربي اصله الجماعه وهو ( لقب ابى عبيده)
وانشد ثعلب ... "

In the margin the gloss runs. " سبوخت بضم السين والباء الفارسيه والواو ممدوده والخاء ساكنه ماضي سبوختن بمعنى طعن او معرب زمخت بضم الزاي والميم والخاء المعجمه والفاء ساكنتان "

Obviously, neither al-Zabīdī nor the writer of the gloss has said the final word, and both seem uncertain of what they record. Al-Zabīdī's statement that the word in question was either Arabised or Arabic does not help much, nor indeed does the writer of the gloss, when he suggests that the word was either derived from the Persian supūkhtan which means "to stab", or alternatively was the Arabised form of zumukht, the meaning of which is not given, but which, according to Steingass, was "styptic, astrigent, a very hard knot, a miser, harsh, severe, improper and untoward." (Persian - English Dictionary. London n.d. 621).

J. Fück in his book Arabiya commenting on the gloss of Tāj al-'Arūs, suggests "gestossen" as an equivalent of the passive participle Ṭa'ana which is stated to be the meaning of sipōht. Curiously enough, the German word already been referred to was translated manbūdh in the Arabic edition of Fück's book (al-'Arabiyya, Cairo 1951, 84). The French translator, moreover, suggests two words instead of one as the equivalent of the German word purporting to give the meaning of sipōht namely heurté, choqué ('Arabīya Paris, 1955. 72).

Fück, at any rate, doubts the veracity of the gloss in Tāj al-'Arūs saying "Aber die durch das Metrum gesicherte Gemination des Zweiten Konsonanten spricht dagegen." (Arabiya 47).

It seems unlikely that the word in question could have a Hebrew origin. The nearest Hebrew form to subbukht is sibbēkh, a Pi'el form meaning, to entangle, complicate which has the passive subbakh. Any Hebrew etymology however is open to the objection that the suffix ī in the word under consideration cannot satisfactorily be explained.

The Persian origin of the word was again examined in the course of discussion with Dr. O.N. Mackenzie. The latter first suggested that the word consists of two syllables, sī "three", and bukht "saved". The word, therefore, according to Dr. Mackenzie would mean "saved by the three principles of good thought, word and deed". This name is in fact listed in Justi ( Iranisches Namenbuch. Marburg 1895, 293).

However, the one thing which is clear is that the laqab subbukht was not a respectable one, and as Abū

## Date and Place of Birth:

The date of Abū 'Ubaida's birth is subject to dispute. It has been variously said that he was born in 110, 111, 114, 118 and 119 A.H.[1] In his article on "Abū 'Ubaida", Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī, having mentioned the disagreement concerning the date of birth, concludes that it must have been many years before 110,[2] basing his conclusion on the following statement related by al-Tawwazī on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. "Throughout the year we [viz. Abū 'Ubaida] saw every rider from the direction of the Banū Umayya who dismounted at Qatāda's door to ask him about an anecdote, genealogy or poem."[3] Qatāda, according to al-Aṣma'ī, died in Baṣra in 117/735, during the reign of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik.[4] Al-Ḥājirī concludes, "if the statement of Abū 'Ubaida

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al-Faraj states, Abū 'Ubaida used to get angry whenever he was addressed it (Aghānī XVII.19). It is, therefore, very likely that the meaning of the word is pejorative. Dr. Mackenzie, then suggested that the word could be derived from the Persian sipukht which means "outcast". This suggestion, although not altogether convincing, is at least immune from the second objection.

The name could however be pejorative in that it refers to a Muslim by a Non-Muslim name.

[1] Yāqūt, Irshād (Cairo 1925) VII 168. Ibn al-Anbārī, "Nuzhat al-Alibbā' fī Ṭabaqāt al-Udabā'" (Baghdad 1959) 68. Ibn Khallikān "Wafayāt al-A'yān" Translated by De Slane (Paris 1842) III 396. "al-Fihrist" 53.

[2] "Abū 'Ubaida" (al-Kātib al-Miṣrī) (March 1946) 279.

[3] Irshād VI 202. The same story was related by al-'Askarī in his book "Sharḥ mā yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf (Cairo 1963) 3.

[4] Ibid.

related by al-Tawwazī is true, then we have to make the birth of Abū 'Ubaida many years before 110."[1] His argument, would seem to be based on the assumption that Abū 'Ubaida, if born in 110, would have been seven or less when Qatāda died and could not have remembered events that took place at such an early age. But this reasoning is hardly convincing. It has to be remembered that there is complete accord between Ibn Khallikān, Yāqūt and Ibn al-Anbārī on the year 110 as the date of Abū 'Ubaida's birth.[2] As for the other dates, it was, in fact, only Ibn Khallikān who mentions them, and he himself dismisses them. He says "He [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] was born in the month of Rajab 110 A.H."[3] He adds "Other accounts place his birth in the year 110, 114, 118 and 119, but the date here given is the true one. The proof is that the emir Jaʿfar Ibn Sulaimān Ibn Abd al-Muttalib, having asked him when he was born, he replied "Omar Ibn Abī Rabīʿa al-Mukhzūmi has already shaped out my answer: being asked the date of his birth he replied, the night on which [the Khalīf] Omar Ibn al-Khattāb died; what excellence was then removed from the world and what worthlessness brought into it; now I was born the night of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's death, and [the rest of] my answer shall be the same as Omar Ibn Abī Rabīʿa's."[4]

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[1] al-Kātib al-Miṣrī 279.

[2] Wafayāt III 396. Irshād VII 168. Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 68.

[3] Wafayāt III 396.

[4] Ibid.

If the date of his birth has been questioned, the place is utterly unknown. There is, however, an anecdote related by 'Alān al-Shu'ūbī which suggests that Abū 'Ubaida was of Persian origin. "I have read in a manuscript by 'Alān al-Shu'ūbī that Abū 'Ubaida was from the people of Fārs and [thus] of Persian origin."[1]

And a statement attributed to Abū 'Ubaida himself reports that his grandfather was a jew from Bajarwān.[2]

Ṭāha al-Ḥājirī thinks that the first citation (namely that of 'Alān) relates to his upbringing, and the second to his racial origin. He concludes that Abū 'Ubaida came of a Jewish family and that his grandfather was taken prisoner in one of the Muslim expeditions and then, in Fārs, became a *maulā* of one of the men of the Taim Quraish tribe and that here Abū 'Ubaida was born and spent his early life.[3] All these conclusions however, depend on conjecture and are not supported by evidence, not even by statements of Abū 'Ubaida or 'Alān. The statement of neither in fact gives any indication of the place of Abū 'Ubaida's birth.

Abū 'Ubaida was a *maulā* of the Banū 'Abdullah b. Ma'mar al-Taimī,[4] and it is possible that he took the name

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1. *Fihrist* 53.
2. *Ibid.*
3. "*al-Kātib al-Miṣrī*" 278, 599.
4. *Irshād* VII 164. *Wafayāt* III 388. *Nuzhat al-Alibbā'* 68. *Fihrist* 53.

Ma'mar from the name of his master.

## His Parentage:

Abū 'Ubaida's father, according to Brockelmann, was a slave.[1] It was related however, that al-Aṣma'ī, hearing that Abū 'Ubaida had shamed him by referring to his miserliness, said "That son of a weaver!".[2] On another occasion he described him as the son of a dyer.[3] In other words he considered his father to have been engaged in work which was not much respected at that time, and al-Aṣma'ī clearly intended to insult Abū 'Ubaida by calling him ibn al-nassāj and again ibn al-ṣabbāgh.

Abū 'Ubaida's father was almost certainly a Muslim and not a Jew. Abū 'Ubaida himself stated that his father had told him that *his* father was a Jew,[4] and supporting this is the statement of Abū al-Faraj to the effect that *subbukht*, Abū 'Ubaida's nickname, was one which belonged to the Jews and that he was given this nickname because his grandfather was a Jew.[5]

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[1] "Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur" Arabic Translation "Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī" by A.H. al-Najjār (Cairo 1961) II. 142. Unfortunately the author has not mentioned his source.

[2] Al-Lughawī "Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn" (Cairo 1955) 50.

[3] Ibn Duraid "Jamharat al-Lugha" (Ḥaidarābād 1345 A.H.) II.87.

[4] *Irshād* VII 165. *Nuzhāt al-Alibbā'* 69.

[5] *Aghānī* XVII 19.

His Education:

Information about his early upbringing and education is lacking, and all our sources pass over this point in silence. Abū 'Ubaida appears in Arabic sources as a fully-grown rāwī and philologist of reputation, and his biographers fail to give any account, however short, of his early life and upbringing. Nevertheless, it is possible to sketch in outline the early education which shaped his personality.

He studied the"Arabic Sciences",(language, poetry, tradition, Quran, akhbār) under the supervision of the most learned men of his time. Baṣra was then rich in outstanding figures, and was at the apogee of its cultural life. In Baṣra was Abū b. al-'Alā', a great scholar whom Abū 'Ubaida highly appreciated. "Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'" says Abū 'Ubaida "is the most learned man in variant readings of the Quran, in the Arabic language and in the ancient battles of the Arabs."[1] Abū 'Amr seems to have had a remarkable influence on Abū 'Ubaida, along with Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, who was a leader of the grammarians (Imām al-Nuḥāt) and an authority to whom all grammarians and men of letters referred their problems, and whose circle was the place where all Bedouins 'speaking pure Arabic' and people of science and literature gathered together.[2] Abū 'Ubaida, as he himself reported, stayed with

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1. Irshād IV 217.
2. Ibid., VII 310.

Yūnus forty years, filling out his notes from the storehouse of Yūnus' memory.[1]

Abū 'Ubaida gives an account of how teaching was carried out in Yūnus' circle when he says, "Yūnus, the grammarian, being asked who was the best poet, Jarīr, al-Farazdaq or al-Akhṭal, said, 'The scholars agree on al-Akhṭal.' Abū 'Ubaida said 'I said to a man beside him, ask him who these scholars are?' The man did so, and he [i.e. Yūnus] answered, 'Whoever you want, Ibn Abī Isḥāq, Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', 'Īsa b. 'Umar al-Thaqafī, 'Anbasa al-Fīl and Maimūn al-Aqran, those who have assiduously studied language and practised it, not like those from whom you relate, neither Bedouins nor grammarians.' I said to the man, 'Ask him for what reason al-Akhṭal was preferred to them.' He answered 'Because he has more long and good poems with no obscenity or rubbish in them.'"[2]

It is quite natural, therefore, for Abū 'Ubaida to relate many anecdotes on the authority of both Abū 'Amr and Yūnus, and it is interesting to trace their influence in his writings and upon his ideas.

Apart from these scholars, he accumulated information from a variety of people, some of them grammarians, like al-Akhfash[1] and al-Kisā'ī,[2] some of them poets like Ru'ba.[3]

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[1] Muzhir (S) (Cairo n.d.) II 399. Irshād VII 310. Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn 21.

[2] Irshād VII 310, 399.

Al-Suyūṭī has listed the Bedouin informants from whom Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī and Abū Zaid are supposed to have drawn,[4] and Abū 'Ubaida himself also mentions more than one person from the Hawāzin tribe from whom he drew information.[5]

Abū 'Ubaida seems to have been interested in knowledge irrespective of its source, and to have pursued his education even after he had acquired a high reputation and become a teacher. Abū al-Faraj relates a story demonstrating how Abū 'Ubaida even listened to his pupils and benefited from their knowledge. Al-Tawwazī said, "I asked Abū 'Ubaida about what the Arabs call the second day of *yaum al-naḥr*. He said, "I know nothing about it." Then I met Ibn Munādhir in Mecca and told him what he [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] had said. He was astonished and said, "Could that come from a man like Abū 'Ubaida? They are four successive days, all of which end with '*r*'. The first is *yaum al-naḥr*, the second *yaum al-qarr* the third *yaum al-nafr*, the fourth *yaum al-ṣadr*". I related that to him [i.e. to Abū 'Ubaida), and he wrote it down on the authority of Ibn Munādhir."[6]

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[1] *Muzhir* II 401.

[2] Ibn Qutaiba "*Adab al-Kātib*" (Leiden 1900) I 214.

[3] *Irshād* IV 214.

[4] *Muzhir* II 401.

[5] Ibn 'Abd Rabbih "*al-'Iqd al-Farīd*" (Cairo 1316) I 150.

[6] *Aghānī* XVII. 27.

It seems that Abū 'Ubaida educated himself in Baṣra and began to make a name for himself in literature and language. As well as reflecting tribal alignment, Baṣra was a crucible in which many cultures, races and nations were mixed and fused.[1] To an open-minded man like Abū 'Ubaida, it was an excellent centre in which to obtain all the knowledge he wanted. The wide range of his books goes to prove this.[2] It is this which would lead one to believe that Abū 'Ubaida did not go to the desert in search of information and poetry, but was satisfied with the knowledge he had obtained, and could obtain in Baṣra itself.

In fact, the rāwīs of the second century of Islam to which Abū 'Ubaida belonged had no real need to go to the desert as long as the Bedouins themselves came to Baṣra, bringing with them their language and akhbār.[3]

The references to this question however, are ambiguous. Al-Suyūṭī relates on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida that

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[1] C. Pellat "al-Jāḥiẓ wa Athar al-Jaww al-Baṣrī fīhi" 5-79.
[2] Cf. Chapter III.
[3] The question whether the reciters and grammarians and philologists of the first and second centuries of Islam did actually utilize these Bedouin informants in a proper scientific way is of course a question of considerable importance. It would not be apposite to discuss this point here in detail. A more or less flexible attitude was maintained by Abū 'Ubaida in regard to all the information he gets from his Bedouin informants. Abū 'Ubaida ordinarily accepts the data given by his Bedouin informants, but when he is sceptical for one reason or another, he was not slow to question the authenticity of information. (Cf. in particular Chapters IV, V, and VI).

"Kīsān used to go with us to the Bedouins".[1] And again, al-Suyūṭī, speaking about the Baṣran grammarians and philologists including Abū 'Ubaida, states that Abū Zaid has drawn more information than others from the desert.[2] In the first citation going to "the Bedouins" cannot be taken as synonymous with going to the desert. The Bedouins in question may well be the Arab tribesmen who came to Baṣra. The second citation is just as ambiguous, for we have no way of knowing whether al-Suyūṭī included Abū 'Ubaida amongst those other than Abū Zaid who went to the desert in search of material.

Having mastered the 'Arabian Sciences', Abū 'Ubaida gradually began to show a character of his own and to develop not only as a reciter and philologist, but also as a chronicler and man of letters. Yazīd b. Murra said, "Abū 'Ubaida had fully mastered every branch of knowledge, so that anyone who examined him in a particular branch would imagine that he could only have mastered that one branch."[3]

Much evidence is to be found in the works of the early Arab authors that Abū 'Ubaida became an eminent figure in the cultural life of the day, and all his contemporaries speak highly of him. Ibn al-A'rābī related that Ibn Munādhir said "As for Abū 'Ubaida, he is a most learned man possessing

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1. Al-Suyūṭī, Bughayat al-Wū'āt (Cairo 1326 A.H.) 382.
2. Muzhir II 402.
3. Irshād VII 165.

vast knowledge."[1] Although some Arab authors thought that Abū 'Ubaida was distinguished by his vast knowledge of al-Ayyām,[2] others thought his speciality was his ability in language,[3] or his knowledge of poetry,[4] or geneology,[5] or history,[6] or rare words.[7]

It does seem true than that Abū 'Ubaida was so versatile a scholar that he fully mastered all the branches of knowledge. According to Dr. A. Amīn, he was able to do this because of the circumstances which exposed him not only to Arabic culture but to Jewish and Persian culture as well.[8] This opinion is not accepted by Ṭahā al-Ḥājirī, another modern writer, who assumes that Abū 'Ubaida had nothing to do with other cultures, since he confined himself to the Arabic Sciences from the time he became a pupil of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', although he might have had some acquaintance of Persian, Indian and other cultures.[9]

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1. Wafayāt VI 145.
2. Muzhir II 402.
3. Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn 39.
4. Irshād VI 165.
5. Ibid. VII 165.
6. al-Mas'ūdī, Murūj al-Dhahab (Paris 1861) I 10.
7. al-'Asqalānī Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb (Ḥaidarābād 1325 A.H.) X 247. Irshād VI 165.
8. A. Amīn Duḥā al-Islām, Second edition (Cairo 1938) II 304.
9. al-Kātib al-Miṣrī 281.

This latter opinion, however, seems unconvincing. It is self-evident that a man of Jewish origin and Arabic upbringing, living at a time and in a place when Persian culture found its way into Arabic life and literature, would be acquainted with these cultures. The books he wrote, indeed, reveal a knowledge of Persian as well as of Arabic.[1] But although at first glance it seems axiomatic that Abū 'Ubaida should have been influenced by his Jewish background, this background, it would seem, never manifested itself in his writings, perhaps because the Jewish connection was not immediate.

## Detraction of his Standing as a Scholar:

Abū 'Ubaida's reputation as a scholar of high rank has been severely criticised as well as praised. It has been reported, for example, that he could not read aloud correctly, that he made many mistakes, and that he expressed himself badly.[2]

Al-Baṭlayūsī says "Ibn Qutaiba states in his chapter "On Food and Drink", the verse:

هي الخمر تدعى الطُلا كما الذئب يكنىٰ ابا جُعده

and that this verse is not correct in metre. Ibn Qutaiba states that it was Abū 'Ubaida who recited it like this.[3]

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[1] Cf. Chapter III. No.38.

[2] Wafayāt III 390.

[3] al-Iqtiḍāb (Beirut 1901) 148. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 192.

Many other statements have been made concerning his inability to recite the Quran correctly even when it was in front of him.[1] The authenticity of these stories is, as a matter of fact, questionable. Clearly, they are in contradiction to other statements and stories which prove that he was fully competent in grammar and other branches of 'Arabic Science'.

Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Lughawī states, "What we learned from our scholars is that Abū 'Ubaida was the most learned one of the three [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī and Abū Zaid] in grammar."[2]

However, it seems more likely that the claims which discredit Abū 'Ubaida were exaggerated. We think that there was an attempt to belittle and depreciate him because of his broad-minded outlook and his disinterested attitude towards Arabic life and culture which provoked the attacks of such as al-Aṣma'ī, al-Sijistānī and others. His reputation, in fact, has suffered from his detractors, in spite of the testimonies of unbiased men.

Yet if we examine closely the charges levelled at Abū 'Ubaida, we find that most of them lack cogency. The question whether Abū 'Ubaida had committed grammatical mistakes[3] is not an unfamiliar one, for Abū 'Ubaida was not

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1. Wafayāt III 389. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193.
2. Al-Baghdādī Tārīkh Baghdād (Cairo 1931) XIII 256.
   Ibn Qutaiba al-Ma'ārif (Cairo 1960) 236.
3. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 195.

the only scholar accused of such blunders. There are reports claiming that other notable figures, such as al-Aṣma'ī, Abū Ḥanīfa, al-Shilūbīn, also committed grammatical mistakes.[1] It is noteworthy that al-Farrā', having made a grammatical mistake at the court of Hārūn al-Rashīd, said in justification "lahn is likely to occur among town-people."[2] This signifies that the phenomenon is considered as an undeniable reality, because the disparity between the language of every-day life and the literary language had become marked.

In any case grammatical mistakes are far from being a sign of incompetence in the creative use of language. Stories are reported implying that Abū 'Ubaida might have made some grammatical mistakes on purpose. Thus Ibn Khallikān relates that Abū 'Ubaida made grammatical mistakes designedly because "grammar brings ill-luck!"[3] Also, al-Ṣūlī reports that Abū 'Ubaida's father advised his son (i.e. Abū 'Ubaida) to make grammatical mistakes "to avoid giving himself airs of perfect correctitude."[4]

Strange as these stories may appear, they nevertheless shed some light on the accusations made against Abū

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[1] al-Rāfi'ī, "Tārikh Ādāb al-'Arab" (Cairo 1940) I 306. Cf. also "Nuzhat al-Alibbā'" 154. Ḍuḥā al-Islām II 312.

[2] al-'Arabiyya 85-86.

[3] Wafayāt III, 391.

[4] Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī "Adab al-Kuttāb" (Cairo 1922), 131.

'Ubaida and give them some justification.

As for the claim that he "was unable to recite a verse without mangling it,"[1] as Ibn Khallikān puts it, his biographers mention only one example to substantiate it.[2] Al-Baṭlayūsī himself, who relates the story, realized the baselessness of the claim and suggested that it was not inability on Abū 'Ubaida's part which caused him to recite the poetry wrongly, but rather his honesty in reciting exactly as he heard, without alteration or improvement.[3] Al-Baṭlayūsī vouches for his honesty in the following words:- "As for their claim that he can not quote a single verse in the correct metre, I do not think it is true, and I have never known him but to relate what he heard. Al-Khalīl recited the verse

وقالوا هي الخمر تُدعى الطُلاء
كما الذئب يكنى ابا جُعْده

and this is right according to the requirements of the metre. But it has been claimed that it was al-Khalīl who corrected the verse. This goes to show that the alteration in the metre occurred before the time of Abū 'Ubaida. If it was another version, other than that of Abū 'Ubaida, al-Khalīl would not have needed to rectify it."[4]

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[1] *Wafayāt* III 389.

[2] *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 192-193.

[3] *al-Iqtiḍāb* 148. Cf. another example in *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 212.

[4] *Ibid*. 148, 599.

Other evidence is related by Ibn Khallikān on the authority of 'Alī b. al-Madīnī: "He was a most correct transmitter of traditional literature; never did he give as a genuine production of the desert Arabs a piece which was not authentic."[1] Al-Azharī also reports "He is reliable concerning the rare expressions which he relates on the authority of the Bedouins."[2]

In the light of what has already been said, it is not without significance that none of Abū 'Ubaida's biographers has accused him of being a forger or interpolator.

## His Career as a Teacher:

Abū 'Ubaida, having mastered the 'Arabic Sciences', then started on his teaching career. The date on which he began is unknown. It seems, however, that he practised teaching at a very late age, if one accepts that he studied under the supervision of Yūnus from the age of 10 or 15 years, and stayed with him, as Abū 'Ubaida himself said, for forty years.[3] This would mean that he took up teaching at the age of fifty or fifty-five.[4] What may give weight to

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1. Wafayāt III 391.
2. Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb X, 247.
3. Muzhir II. 399. Irshād VII, 310. Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn 21.
4. It may be that Abū 'Ubaida began teaching earlier than this date, if we assume that, while he was studying under the supervision of Yūnus, he was at the same time teaching. Needless to say that all that we have said concerning this point is assumption being based on indirect evidence.

this assumption is the fact that Abū 'Ubaida visited Baghdad before 177/793, as we shall see later, and was refused admittance to the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, presumably on the pretext that he was unknown,[1] having just started his teaching career. Later on, Abū 'Ubaida's name came into prominence, and he was summoned to the court of Harūn al-Rashīd. This was in 188/803, when Abū 'Ubaida was about 78.

His circle was in the mosque in Baṣra, where al-Aṣma'ī also taught. The latter used to say when he entered the mosque, "Look in and see if that fellow be there", meaning Abū 'Ubaida, so much did he dread the sharpness of his tongue.[2]

The fact that al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida were close to each other, and that rivalry arose between them, tempted al-Bāhilī to say that "students who went to al-Aṣma'ī's lessons were purchasing pellets of dung in the pearl-market, and when they went to Abū 'Ubaida they purchased pearls in the dung-market."[3]

Arab life, in all its aspects, was discussed and studied in his circle, while his pupils listened or wrote notes and asked questions.

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[1] Al-Zubaidī relates that Abū 'Ubaida refused admittance to the court "because he has an effeminate way and lisps". (Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193). But this reason alone seems unsatisfactory. Had this really been the reason, why then was he later summoned by the Caliph?

[2] Wafayāt III 394. Cf. also "Irshād" VII 168.

[3] Wafayāt III 390.

Abū 'Ubaida spent all his life writing and teaching in the Baṣra mosque without a break, except for a short period when he visited Fārs and Baghdad.[1]

## His Poetry:

Abū 'Ubaida is said to havè composed poetry. According to al-Marzubānī, it was not only Abū 'Ubaida who wrote poetry but al-Aṣma'ī as well, and although the poetry of both those scholars was bad and weak, the poetry of al-Aṣma'ī was, comparatively, better.[2] Al-Marzubānī goes on to say that Abū 'Ubaida's poetry was so weak and bad that people used to make fun of it and sneer at it. An example of what the Baṣrans used to attribute to Abū 'Ubaida is the following two verses which were written in praise of Kharakk, the nephew of Yūnus the grammarian with whom, the story tells us, Abū 'Ubaida was in love.[3]

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1. There is a single allusion in the Lisān, (ṣabab I.518) which sounds as if Abū 'Ubaida had been to Egypt. But other sources give nothing to support Ibn Manẓūr's statement.
2. al-Muwashshaḥ (Cairo 1343 A.H.) 367.
3. Ibid. Abū 'Ubaida was accused of being a homosexual. Cf. Wafayāt III, 395 and Brockelmann Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī II 145. Abū Nuwās alluded to this in these two verses:-

> God's blessing on Lūṭ and his people, on Abū 'Ubaida, say Amen; for you, surely, are one of their survivors (and have always been so) since the age of puberty, though you are in your seventieth year.

Diwan Abū Nuwās, Āṣāf's edition (Cairo 1898) 176.

The people of Lūṭ are of course mentioned in the Quran as being homosexual. Thus (XXVI: 165-166) "What! do you come to the males from among the creatures, and leave what your Lord has created for you of your wives? Nay, you are a people exceeding limits."

ليتني ليتني وليت وليتي    ليتني قد علوت ظهر خَرَكِّ
فقرأنا كتابه وفككنا    خاتماً كان قبل لم يُفَكِّ

Al-Marzubānī, having mentioned these two verses, comments: "Those two verses are irrefutable proof of Abū 'Ubaida's inability to write poetry."[1]

The judgment Khalaf al-Aḥmar passed on Abū 'Ubaida's poetry (the precise date of which is unknown) seems to have put an end to Abū 'Ubaida's attempts in this field, and henceforth Abū 'Ubaida would seem to have realized that being a philologist or a transmitter of poetry does not necessarily mean that one could also be a poet. In spite of the vulgarity of Khalaf's comment, it gives a precise idea of his reaction to Abū 'Ubaida's poetry. al-Marzubānī says, "I was told by al-'Anzī who was relating on the authority of 'Amr b. Shabba who said that Abū 'Ubaida once recited some of his poetry to Khalaf al-Aḥmar. (Having heard some) Khalaf said, "O Abū 'Ubaida, hide this poetry as cats hide their excrement!"[2]

Arabic sources do not mention Abū 'Ubaida's poetry. Apart from the two verses just quoted, which are related only by al-Marzubānī, we have no further examples. Brockelmann, as we shall see in the third chapter, mentions a poem rhyming in lām said to have been written by Abū 'Ubaida. On investigation however it seems certain that the poem concerned is not Abū 'Ubaida's but al-Aṣma'ī's.[3]

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[1] Ibid. 368.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Cf. Chapter III.

## His Character, and relations with his Contemporaries:

Generally speaking, Abū 'Ubaida does not appear to have been a lovable or an adaptable man. Stories on this subject are many - one of the most significant is the one which is reported to have been related by Abū 'Ubaida himself - which was quoted earlier in connection with Abū 'Ubaida's birth. Abū 'Ubaida, on being asked when he was born, replied, "ʿOmar Ibn Abī Rabīʿa al-Makhzūmi has already shaped out my answer. Being asked the date of his birth, he replied, "The night on which [the Khalīf] ʿOmar Ibn al-Khattāb died; what excellence was then removed from the world and what worthlessness brought into it!" Now I was born the night of al-Hasan al-Basri's death, and [the rest of] my answer shall be the same as ʿOmar Ibn Abī Rabīa's."[1]

Among his contemporaries, however, he was a controversial figure. For although al-Tawwazī describes him to al-Farrā' as a man of bad character,[2] al-Suyūṭī, as well as al-Baghdādī, states that he was of excellent character.[3]

In fact, Abū 'Ubaida was known as a sharp-tongued and witty man, whose sarcasm his contemporaries sought to avoid. We have already quoted the saying of al-Aṣma'ī when he went to the mosque namely, "Look in and see if that fellow is there" meaning Abū 'Ubaida, from fear of his tongue.[1] Ibn Khallikān also reports that "no one attended his funeral because he had not spared, in his acrimony, either gentle or simple."[2] Stories which manifest his ability to leave his opponents dumbfounded are many. He once set out for Fārs with the intention of visiting Mūsā Ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Hilālī, who, being informed of his approach, said to the pages, "Be on your guard against Abū Obaida, for every word of his is cutting." A repast was served and one of his pages spilled some gravy on the skirt of Abū Obaida's cloak," "Some gravy has fallen on your cloak" said Mūsa, "But I shall give you ten others in place of it". "Nay", replied Abū Obaida, "Do not mind, your gravy can do no harm".[3] By that he meant that there was no strength in it",[4] and that he (i.e. Mūsā) was a miser.

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[1] Wafayāt III 396.

[2] Muzhir II 404.

[3] Ibid. II 402. "Tārīkh Baghdād" XIII 257.

Another anecdote demonstrates the same trait. It is related that when Abū 'Ubaida composed his Kitāb al-Mathālib, an Arab said to him: "You have insulted the whole of the Arabs", on which he replied: "That can do you no harm, for it does not concern you."[5] This fact did not escape his biographer Ibn Khallikān who said, "Abū Obaida was of so sarcastic a humour that everyone in Basra who had a reputation to maintain was obliged to flatter him."[1] Abū 'Ubaida was quite conscious of his extensive knowledge of the 'Arabic sciences', and we can see in his pride and boastfulness a compensation for his humble origin.

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[1] Irshād VII 168.

[2] Wafayāt III 394.

[3] Wafayāt III 393-394. Al-Zubaidī relates the same story with a slight difference. Cf. (Ṭabaqāt, al-Naḥwiyyīn 193).

[4] Ibid. III, 394.

[5] Ibid.

Abū 'Uthmān said, "I heard Abū 'Ubaida say, 'I had an audience with al-Rashīd, and he said to me, 'O! Ma'mar, I have heard that you have a book on the description of horses; I should like to hear about it from you'. Al-Aṣma'ī said, 'What are you doing with a book? A horse could be brought here, and we could put our hands on every part of it, mention each part by name, and recite what has been said about them.' Al-Rashīd said: 'O page, bring a horse.' Al-Aṣma'ī stood up and put his hand on every part saying this is such-and-such, the poet said such-and-such. When he finished, al-Rashīd asked me, 'What do you say about what he has said?' 'He was right', I said, 'in some things and wrong in others. The right things he said we knew, as for the wrong I do not know where he took them from!'"[2]

Al-Jāḥiṣ relates an anecdote in which Abū 'Ubaida tried to test al-Naẓẓām. The latter answered extremely well, and Abū 'Ubaida liked his answers and appreciated them.[3] In another story Abū 'Ubaida shows a tendency to sarcasm and disdain, exhibiting his own ability and knowledge on one hand, and showing up the ignorance of his opponent on the other.[1]

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[1] *Ibid*. III. 393.
[2] *Irshād* VII 168.
[3] Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān* (Cairo 1945) III 471, VII 165.

Nevertheless Abū 'Ubaida manifests a notable respect towards his teachers. He spoke highly of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' and Yūnus. And he did not answer Khalaf al-Aḥmar back, when the latter criticised him sharply saying:

> We have an argumentative fellow
> With a few correct [ideas] and many false ones,
> More importunate than a black beetle
> and prouder, when he struts, than a cock.[2]

On the contrary, he used to say that Khalaf al-Aḥmar was the teacher of the people of Baṣra.[3] He had the same idea about his colleague Abū Zaid. Being asked about him, Abū 'Ubaida answered: "He is as abstemious and God-fearing a Muslim as you could desire."[4]

Abū 'Ubaida's relationship with al-Aṣma'ī is of exceptional importance, and consequently needs further

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1. Ibid. III 402.
2. Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim Ibn Sallām "Faṣl al-Maqāl fī Sharḥ Kitāb al-Amthāl" (Kharṭūm 1958) 387. In his book "Ḥayawān" (III. 500) al-Jāḥiẓ states that Khalaf composed those two verses satirising al-'Utbī.
3. Irshād IV 179.
4. Ibid. IV 236.

comment. His name has been linked with al-Aṣma'ī's, and, to some extent, with Abū Zaid's. These were the most learned men in Baṣra that time. Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Lughawī said: "There were at this time three [men] who were the leaders of the people in language, poetry, grammar and the Arabic Sciences. Nobody has seen the like of them before or after. From them has been taken almost all of what is in the hands of the people. They are Abū Zaid al-Anṣārī, Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī."[1]

Unlike the relationship between Abū 'Ubaida and Abū Zaid, that between the former and al-Aṣma'ī was not good. This was, as Nicholson said, "due in part to difference of character, and in part to personal jealousies". He adds: "While Abū 'Ubaida was notorious for his free thinking proclivities, al-Aṣma'ī had a strong vein of pietism".[2] The same explanation for their rivalry is given by Isḥāq Mūsā al-Ḥusainī.[3]

This difference in character led them to disputes on the subject of the Quran. When Abū 'Ubaida composed his "*Majāz*", in which he comments on the Quran, Al-Aṣma'ī considered it an offence to the Quran and religion and made his feeling public. When Abū 'Ubaida was "informed that al-Asmaʿī blamed him for composing the "*Kitāb al-Majāz*" and that he had said: "He speaks of God's book after his own private judgment", he enquired when and where he gave lessons, and on the day mentioned he mounted his ass, rode up to the circle of scholars, dismounted and after saluting al-Asmaʿī sat down and conversed with him. On finishing he said: "Tell me, Abū Saʿīd, what sort of thing is bread?" The other answered: "It is that you bake and eat." "There" said Abū Obaida, "You have explained the book after your own private judgment, for God, may his name be exalted, has said: "I was bearing on my head bread". (XII. 36) Al-Asmaʿī replied, "I said what appeared to me true and did not explain the Quran after my own private judgment." On which Abū ʿObaida replied: "and all that I said, and which you blamed me for, appeared to me true and I did not mean to explain the Korān after my own private judgment." He then rose up from his place, mounted his ass and went off."[1]

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[1] *Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn* 39.
[2] Nicholson, *"A Literary History of the Arabs"*(Cambridge 1953) 345 and the footnote.
[3] *The Life and Work of Ibn Qutayba* (Beirut 1950) 25.

The narrow and strict outlook of al-Aṣma'ī in religious questions undoubtedly led him into some illogical attitudes. For instance he refrained from saying anything about some words because they are mentioned in the Quran,[2] and he refrained from uttering "Imru'ul-Qais" because it was said that "Qais" was the name of an idol, and used to replace it by "Imru'ullāh".[3] The same with the word 'Baghdad' which

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1. Wafayāt III 390.
2. Muzhir II, 326-327.
3. al-Iqtiḍāb 295.

he replaced by "Dār al-Salām".[1]

This rivalry is a commentary on the two important currents, the "rational" and the "conservative", which can be detected in the Baṣra atmosphere. But this early stage of Arabic culture did not allow the "rational" current, which Abū 'Ubaida represented, to manifest itself fully, let alone to prevail. This might explain the comparative "popularity" of al-Aṣma'ī.

Yet, in spite of their rivalry, neither al-Aṣma'ī nor Abū 'Ubaida attempted to discredit the other. Indeed, they occasionally related on the authority of each other.[2] In this respect, Abū al-Ṭayyīb al-Lughawī observed "Abū Zaid and Abū 'Ubaida disagreed with him [i.e. al-Aṣma'ī], and opposed him as he opposed them. Each one defamed the other by claiming that [he] did not pass on a great deal of poetry. Yet no one accused the other of having been a liar ... because they kept themselves aloof from such things."[3]

His Visit to Fārs and Baghdad:

Ibn Khallikān and al-Zubaidī[4] point out that Abū 'Ubaida visited Fārs, but they do not mention when and why,

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1. Al-Jawālīqī, al-Mu'arrab Min al-Kalām al-A'jamī 'alā ḥurūf al-Mu'jam (Leipzig 1867) 32.
2. "al-'Iqd al-Farīd" (Cairo 1898) I 237.
3. Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn 50, Muzhir II 404.
4. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193, Wafayāt III 393.

although Ibn Khallikān states that Abū 'Ubaida set out for Fārs with the intention of visiting Mūsā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Hilālī.[1] Presumably this visit was short and insignificant.

As for his visit to Baghdad, the statements concerned are confused. Yet, in spite of their contradictory nature it can be affirmed that Abū 'Ubaida visited Baghdad on two occasions, for the first time before 177/792, and for a second time in 188/803.

In the Ṭabaqāt of al-Zubaidī we read that Abū Ḥātim was asked whether Abū 'Ubaida went to Baghdad, and he answered that he did. Asked why, he answered, "To ask [for money]". Abū Ḥātim then said: "He was taken into the presence of Ja'far b. Yaḥyā, who told him that a man like him should not see the Caliph." When Abū Ḥātim was asked why, he said, "Because he has an effeminate way and lisps, and such a man cannot enter their presence." Then Abū 'Ubaida asked Ja'far, "should I return disappointed?" He said, "No, we will give you [a present]."[2] The date of this visit cannot be fixed from this text, but certainly it took place before 177/792, the year in which Ja'far was killed.

This visit was fruitless for Abū 'Ubaida, and he probably went back to Baṣra and pursued his former life for many years before he had another opportunity of visiting Baghdad.

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[1] Wafayāt III 393.

[2] Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193.

Many sources allude to the second visit, and give the same version with slight differences.[1] This, presumably, is due to the fact that he met the Caliph, and stayed some time in Baghdad teaching *Ḥadīth*,[2] and also because he then met his rival al-Aṣma'ī, engaging with him in a literary competition, and finally because this visit stimulated him to write his book *Majāz al-Qur'ān*, which raised such a storm of controversy amongst his contemporaries and succeeding generations.

Abū 'Ubaida himself described this visit saying, "Al-Faḍl Ibn al-Rabīʿ sent to me, at Basra, the order to go and see him. I set off though I had been informed of his haughtiness. Being admitted to his presence, I found him in a very long and broad saloon, [the floor of which] was covered with a carpet of one single piece. At the upper end of the room was a pile of mattresses, so lofty, that I could not be got upon without a foot-stool, and on those mattresses al-Faḍl was seated. I said to him, "Hail to the vizir". He returned my greetings, smiled on me, and bidding me draw near, he placed me on the same seat, with himself, he then asked me sundry questions, and showed me such affability, as set me quite at ease. At his request, I recited to him the finest ante-Islamic poems, I could recollect. "I know most of these", he said, "What I want [to hear] is gay verses." I recited some to him, and as I proceeded, he shook his sides, laughed and got into excellent humour. A well-looking man in the dress of a Kātib then came in. Al-Fadl made him sit down beside me, and asked him if he knew me, on his reply that he did not, he said to him, "This is Abū 'U~~O~~baida, the most learned man of Basra. We sent for him that we might derive some benefit from his learning.""[1]

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[1] *Wafayāt* III 393, *Irshād* VII 166, "*Tārīkh Baghdād*" XIII 254.

[2] Abū 'Ubaida said, "I sat [teaching] in Baghdad and the people crowded around me." Cf. "*Sharḥ mā yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf*" (Cairo 1963) 187.

The question arises as to who summoned Abū 'Ubaida, and why. The texts concerning these points are rather conflicting and confused. Ibn Khallikān mentions that Hārūn al-Rashīd summoned him,[2] while Abū al-Faraj and Yāqūt agree that it was not he but al-Faḍl.[3] Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī relates that it was neither of these but Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm who summoned him.[4] A careful investigation of these versions leads us to believe that al-Rashīd summoned Abū 'Ubaida, influenced by al-Faḍl b. al-Rabī', who in his turn was influenced by Isḥāq. What confirms this deduction is the story related by Abū al-Faraj: [illegible]

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[1] Wafayāt III 389.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Aghānī V 107. Cf. also Irshād VII 166.

[4] "Tarīkh Baghdād" XIII 254.

"Isḥāq used to draw from al-Aṣma'ī and very often related on his authority, but their relationship worsened. Isḥāq satirised him, exposed his defects to al-Rashīd and told him of his ungratefulness, stinginess, and lack of self-respect. He told him moreover that he showed no sense of gratitude. He then described Abū 'Ubaida as honest, trustworthy and extremely knowledgeable. Isḥāq said the same to al-Faḍl and sought his support. He [i.e. Isḥāq] kept on doing so until he had reduced the position of al-Aṣma'ī and denigrated him in his eyes. They then sent somebody to bring Abū 'Ubaida."[1]

Another story is in al-Wafayāt,[2] in which Isḥāq influences al-Faḍl by praising Abū 'Ubaida, and by making a slighting reference to al-Aṣma'ī in these two lines:

> Take Abū ~~O~~'Ubaida, and treat him with favour, for in
> him you will find all science,
> Honour him therefore, prefer him, and reject the
> she-monkey's cub.

al-Aṣma'ī, as Abū al-Faraj said, withheld some verses from Isḥāq.[3] This, doubtless, is why the relationship between them

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1. Aghānī V 107.
2. III 391.
3. Aghānī V 108. Irshād I 166.

deteriorated to the point where al-Aṣma'ī became "a she-monkey's cub".

Abū 'Ubaida, therefore, on reaching Baghdad, saw al-Faḍl and the latter presented him to al-Rashīd. Al-Aṣma'ī, as instructor to al-Amīn, Hārūn's son, also was in Baghdad at this time.

Hārūn al-Rashīd wanted to test them and to bring them together. Abū Nuwās, anticipating this occasion, had commented: "Abū 'Ubaida will recite them the history of the ancients and the moderns ... as for al-Aṣma'ī he is a nightingale in a cage."[1]

It seems that al-Aṣma'ī had obtained the Caliph's satisfaction and won a horse. Al-Aṣma'ī said, "And whenever I wanted to annoy Abū 'U Obaida I rode that horse to pay him a visit."[2]

How long did Abū 'Ubaida stay in Baghdad? The sources refer, as we have seen, to his teaching *Ḥadīth* in Baghdad; but in spite of that Abū 'Ubaida did not become a courtier.[3] It seems that the attempt to replace al-Aṣma'ī by Abū 'Ubaida failed, and consequently, Abū 'Ubaida's sojourn in Baghdad was short, although we cannot say for sure how short. Abū 'Ubaida then went back to Baṣra where he composed his "*al-Majāz*".[4]

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1. *Tārīkh Baghdād* II 124.
2. *Wafayāt* II 124.
3. "*A Literary History of the Arabs*" 261.
4. *Irshād* II 167.

al-Sirāfī in his book "Akhbār al-Naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn" states that "Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī were taken to al-Rashīd, and then he [i.e. al-Rashīd] chose al-Aṣma'ī."[1] Thus it seems that Abū 'Ubaida was not considered suitable company for the Caliph, presumably because his character in general and his caustic wit made him unpopular among the court society.[2] And, in fact, he was not a good conversationalist. Ibn Khallikān observes that he lisped and al-Aṣma'ī was therefore, "better qualified to be a table-companion".[3] Lastly, his origin was humble, and his orthodoxy was suspect.[4] All these reasons debarred him from becoming either a courtier or an instructor to the Caliph's son.

The years that followed this visit were full of important political events. Soon after the death of al-Rashīd, the bitter struggle between al-Amīn and al-Ma'mūn overshadowed the literary life in Baghdad, which had blossomed during the Hārūn's reign. Baghdad became an arena of war, rather than a cultural centre. It is likely that Abū 'Ubaida stayed far away from this struggle, which was, in some ways, a Persian-Arab one. To Abū 'Ubaida, Baṣra, his native town, was the best place in which he could pursue his literary activities.

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1. (Paris 1936) 70.
2. Stephen and Nandy Ronart Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam (Amsterdam 1959) 541.
3. Wafayāt III 391.
4. Ibid. III 394.

His Death:

The question of when Abū 'Ubaida died, and of what cause, is as problematic as the question of when and where he was born. Therefore, after taking into consideration the date of his birth only an approximate date can be given.

Almost all sources refer to the dates 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213 and 216.[1] We have already seen that the most probable date of his birth is 110, and that he lived, according to Ibn al-Anbārī, al-Zubaidī and Yāqūt[2] about 98 years. Accordingly, the date which would seem to be nearest to the truth for his death is 208.

On the subject of his death, a certain anecdote is mentioned in al-Wafayāt,[3] al-Aghānī,[4] and Nuzhat al-Alibbā'[5] without essential difference.

Ibn Khallikān says, "A banana which Muhammad Ibn al-Kāsim Ibn Sahl an-Nushjāni gave him to eat was the cause

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1. Muzhir II 462, Fihrist I 53, Tārīkh Baghdād XIII 257, Tabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193, Murūj al-Dhahab VII 80, Wafayāt III 396, Bughyat al-wū'āt 395, Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 73, Irshād VII 168. Al-Yāfi'ī Mir'āt al-Janān (Ḥaidarābād 1338 A.H.) II.44.
2. Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 74, Ṭabaqāt 195, Irshād VII 168 respectively. Ibn Qutaiba related in his al-Ma'ārif that he was about a hundred years old when he died. (269) al-Mas'ūdī relates nearly the same, Murūj al-Dhahab VII 80 al-Muẓaffir b. Yaḥyā relates that he died when he was about ninety-three. Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 73.
3. III 396.
4. III 130.
5. p. 73, 74. Cf. also Anbāh al-Ruwāt III. 280.

of his death. Some time afterward Abū 'l-Atāhiya went to see an-Nushjāni who offered him a banana on which he exclaimed, "What do you mean, Abū Jaafar, you took away Abū Obaida's life by means of a banana, and you intend to kill me in the same manner! Do you consider lawful the murdering of learned men."[1]

The version of Abū al-Faraj gives more details, having mentioned the anecdote related by Abū al-'Atāhiya with but slight difference. He relates on the authority of 'Urwa b. Yūsuf al-Thaqafī saying, "I saw Abū 'Ubaida being carried and covered, but he was alive. Near his head there was a branch of bananas, and another one was near his feet. He was being taken to his family. Al-Nushjānī and others said, "We went to visit him, and said, "What is the cause of your ailment?" "This al-Nushjānī brought me a banana. I ate too much of it, and so it was the cause of my ailment". After saying that, he died of this illness."[2]

C. Huart who assumes him to have been a Shu'ūbite, says that Abū 'Ubaida was poisoned for his hostile attitude towards the Arabs. He says:

"He had made himself so many enemies by his book called al-Mathālib that when he died at Baṣra in 825 poisoned by a banana, not a soul followed his coffin to the grave."[1] This assumption can hardly be substantiated, for there is no evidence whatsoever indicating that Abū 'Ubaida was poisoned or, moreover, that his attitude towards the Arabs was considered Shu'ūbite.

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[1] III 396.

[2] Aghānī III 130.

It seems that Abū 'Ubaida died, simply, from an attack which followed upon his over-eating bananas.

He died, according to Ibn Khallikān,[2] at Baṣra. al-Mas'ūdī relates that "Nobody attended his funeral, so somebody was hired to carry it."[3] Both Ibn Khallikān and Yāqūt give the reason: "Because he had not spared in his acrimony, either gentle or simple."[4]

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1. A History of Arabic Literature (London 1903) 141.
2. Wafayāt III 396.
3. Murūj al-Dhahab VII 80.
4. Wafayāt III 394, Irshād VII 168.

# CHAPTER II

## HIS VIEWS ON SOCIETY AND RELIGION

Seldom do we find among Arab scholars and thinkers as controversial a figure as Abū 'Ubaida, whose name was, at one time or another, associated with many racial and religious movements. Thus he was accused of being a Khārijite,[1] a Shu'ūbite,[2] a Mu'tazilite,[3] a Muḥdith,[4] and a Qadarite.[5] Yet, none of his biographers has been able to prove Abū 'Ubaida's attachment to any of these movements. Evidence on this question is, in fact, confused and contradictory and, to the best of my knowledge, no thorough investigation of the evidence has previously been carried out.

Almost all modern scholars, as we shall see later, accepted unquestioningly the statements of early Arab authors, and in particular, the fact that Abū 'Ubaida has shu'ūbite and Khārijite tendencies was taken for granted.

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[1] *Irshād* VII. 165. *Wafayāt* III. 388-389. *Fihrist* 53. *al-Ma'arif* 543.

[2] *Irshād* VII.165.

[3] Al-Jāḥiẓ *al-Bukhalā'* (Cairo 1958) 332. 192. Al-Khayyāṭ *al-Intiṣār* (Beirut 1957) 17.

[4] *Irshād* VII. 165. In *Lisān* (II.131-134) *muḥdithāt al-Umūr* innovations which are not known in Quran, custom on convention. Thw word "*muḥditha*" means, heresy. Sometimes the word *iḥdāth* denotes adultry try.

[5] *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 193.

There was no attempt made to examine the authenticity of the relevant statements and no effort made to check them against the writings of Abū 'Ubaida, to see if, in fact, any trace of Shu'ūbite or Khārijite leanings could be detected in them.

Before we start discussing in detail the question of Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite and Shu'ūbite leanings, we should like first to dismiss the claims, that he was a Muḥdith or a Qadarite.

The accusation of Abū 'Ubaida as a Muḥdith, in the sense of being an innovator in religious matters or a heretic, is hardly worth dwelling upon. Firstly, this claim is mentioned only by one another, namely Yāqūt, neither proof nor even evidence being adduced. Secondly, Abū 'Ubaida, during his lifetime, was not known as an heretic or 'innovator'. Indeed, Abū al-Muẓaffar Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad al-Asfarāyinī gives evidence that Abū 'Ubaida was far from being so. He mentions the well-known Arab grammarians and philologists, including Abū 'Ubaida, and says, "In their writings they all show themselves zealous supporters of tradition and orthodoxy and refute the assertions of heretics and innovators."[1]

The claim that Abū 'Ubaida was a Qadarite is also groundless. In fact, it was categorically denied by al-Sijistānī as al-Zubaidī reports.[1] Like the previous claim, this accusation was made by one author only. The third claim, that Abū 'Ubaida was a Mu'tazilite, will be discussed when we study Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards the Quran in Chapter VIII.

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[1] al-Tabṣīr fī al-Dīn wa-Tamyīz al-Firqa al-Nājīya 'an firaq al-Hālikīn". (Cairo 1940) 117.

## Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite leanings:

References to Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite leanings are frequent[2] but a general survey of the evidence leads to the conclusion that most of the statements which label Abū 'Ubaida as a Khārijite, in fact, derive from a few early sources. The original sources for this claim can be brought down to four only. They are: al-Sijistānī and al-Tawwazī (on whose authority al-Murtaḍā and Ibn Khallikān relate), al-Jāḥiẓ (on whose authority both Yāqūt and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī relate), and lastly Tha'lab (on whose authority Ibn al-Nadīm relates).

## Ancients' statements concerning his Khārijite leanings:

Ibn Khallikān, as well as al-Murtaḍā, relates on the authority of al-Sijistānī. the following

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1. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 193.
2. Wafayāt III 394. Irshād VII 165. Fihrist 53. Amālī al-Sayyid (Cairo 1907) I 638. Tārīkh Baghdād XIII 252. Al-Ash'arī Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn (Istanbul 1928) 114. al-Ma'ārif 543.

statement, "Abū Ḥātim as-Sijistānī related that Abū 'Ubaida treated him with respect because he thought him to be one of the Khārijites of Sijistān."[1] It is generally understood from this statement that Abū 'Ubaida himself had some inclinations towards the Khārijite doctrine. Yet, apart from doubts about al-Sijistānī's evidence concerning Abū 'Ubaida in general and in this respect in particular, to which we shall refer in a moment, the statement under consideration, when carefully examined, consists largely of an implication on the part of al-Sijistānī, namely that Abū 'Ubaida's respect for al-Sijistānī was due to Abū 'Ubaida considering him a Khārijite of Sijistān. Since there is no evidence to corroborate this statement, one is entitled to ask whether this is not mere assumption on al-Sijistānī's part. Did Abū 'Ubaida in fact consider him a Khārijite? And even if he did, it does not necessarily follow that, admitting Abū 'Ubaida did respect him, the reason for this respect was that he considered him a Khārijite. More important, it is quite obviously nonsensical as logic to affirm that Abū 'Ubaida is a Khārijite merely because he respects al-Sijistānī for being one. A certain sympathy is the most that could be implied, and even this would depend on al-Sijistānī's statement being accepted as valid.

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[1] Wafayāt III 394.

The truth of the matter, however, is that we have little reason to believe that al-Sijistānī, although he was a pupil of Abū 'Ubaida, was impartial in his attitude towards Abū 'Ubaida. There was, in fact, an ideological difference between the two men, similar to that between al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida, to which we have already referred in the previous chapter.[1] Al-Sijistānī's views can be identified with the orthodox school of thought. It may be worthwhile noting that al-Sijistānī transmitted many of al-Aṣma'ī's books, such as al-Nabāt wal-Shajar and al-Dārāt wal-Karam, and moreover, adopted the same unfriendly attitude as al-Aṣma'ī towards the Kitāb al-Majāz of Abū 'Ubaida.[2] This difference could not but lead to opposition between the two scholars. Al-Sijistānī himself relates a story which demonstrates what are likely to be Abū 'Ubaida's true feelings towards him: "I came to Abū 'Ubaida one day with 'Urwa b. al-Ward's poetry. Abū 'Ubaida asked me, 'What have you brought with you?' ''Urwa's poetry', I replied, on which Abū 'Ubaida commented, 'An idiot has carried miserable poetry to recite to a miserable man.'"[3] As this story shows, al-Sijistānī was, to Abū 'Ubaida, no more than an idiot. In the light of this, the alleged respect of Abū 'Ubaida for al-

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1. Cf. p. 65-66
2. Cf. p. 315
3. Amālī al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā I 638. Cf. also Muzhir I. 161.

Sijistānī would seem to be difficult to substantiate.

Having shown the weakness of al-Sijistānī's statement concerning Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite leanings, we turn now to examine al-Tawwazī's story. Ibn Khallikān relates on the authority of al-Tawwazī saying, "I [i.e. al-Tawwazī] went to the mosque and found Abū 'Ubaida sitting alone and writing with his finger on the floor. He asked me who was the author of this verse:-

> I said to my soul, when it shook and trembled:
> Back to thy wonted mood! Strive to merit praise
> or else repose [in death].

I replied that it was Katarī Ibn al-Fujāa, on which he exclaimed, "God smash your mouth! Why not say, the Commander of the faithful Abū Naāma?" He then requested me to sit down and never to repeat what he had just uttered. So I kept it a secret till the day of his death."[1]

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[1] Wafayāt III 394. In the English translation of Wafayāt, from which the above is taken, the name al-Tawwazī is replaced by al-Thaurī. This misconstruction could have been avoided, had the translator, De Slane, noticed that al-Thaurī, according to Ibn Khallikān's biography in Wafayāt (I 576), died before Abū 'Ubaida in 161/777, and this therefore contradicts the saying of the narrator, "So I kept it secret till the day of his death," which suggests that Abū 'Ubaida died before the narrator of the story. Thus, the narrator cannot be al-Thaurī. The same story, with slight differences, is related by al-Murtaḍā on the authority of Ibn Duraid on the authority of al-Ashmānadānī on the authority of al-Tawwazī. (Amālī al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā I 636) and this is clearly a more reliable account.

If we are not mistaken, the story implies an admiration for Qaṭarī rather than an adoption of the Khārijite doctrine which he held. This admiration is expressed by the epithet, "Commander of the faithful". Giving Qaṭarī this epithet is scant evidence for considering that Abū 'Ubaida himself was a Khārijite. Also it must be noted that this epithet was, in fact, given to Qaṭarī during his own lifetime,[1] and was not invented by Abū 'Ubaida to express his admiration.

Apart from these considerations, the fact that these verses are not Qaṭarī's adds more doubts concerning its authenticity and in fact Ibn Khallikān himself does not seem convinced of the authenticity of the story he relates, and he clearly voices his doubts when he says, "This anecdote appears to me contestable, for the verse just mentioned belongs to a poem composed by Amr Ibn al-Itnāba al-Anṣāri al-Khazraji. Iṭnāba was his mother's name and Zaid Manāt the name of his father. No literary scholar denies the verse to be his, the poem from which it is taken being acknowledged to be of that author's composition."[2] Al-Murtaḍā, on the other hand, in his *Amālī* relates the same story with a different verse. Instead of the verse related by Ibn Khallikān and to which we have just referred, we have:-[3]

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[1] Vida *E I*$^{(1)}$ (Ḳaṭarī) vol.II, part II, p.818.

[2] *Wafayāt* III 394.

[3] *Amālī al-Sayyid al-Murtaḍā* I 636.

وما للمرءِ خيرٌ من حياة
اذا ما عُدَّ من سَقَطِ المتاعِ

The discrepancies in this story and the suspicion of Ibn Khallikān, together with our interpretation of the story, render these statements unacceptable therefore as an indication of Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite leanings.

Turning to al-Jāḥiẓ's statement in this respect, we find that his remarks seem to be of special importance, because he knew Abū 'Ubaida intimately, and drew from him as well.[1] Both al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī and Yāqūt relate al-Jāḥiz's to the effect that, "There is no Khārijite or orthodox believer on earth who is more extensively knowledgeable than Abū 'Ubaida."[2] And in his book, al-Ḥayawān, al-Jāḥiẓ qualifies Abū 'Ubaida as a "Ṣufarī Khārijite",[3] while Ibn al-Nadīm refers to Tha'lab's statement that Abū 'Ubaida had a slight leaning towards the Khārijites.[4]

Although the last-mentioned sources do not prove that Abū 'Ubaida was a Khārijite, nevertheless they must be treated with some respect. But the question of how far it is valid to identify Abū 'Ubaida with the Khārijite movement, basing this identification on al-Jāḥiẓ's and Tha'lab's statements alone, is open to argument. One thing must be borne in mind. The statements which were examined earlier are suspect, and this minimizes the validity and significance of the last-mentioned statements of both al-Jāḥiẓ and Tha'lab, particularly since there is no tangible proof either in the writings of Abū 'Ubaida or in other sources to corroborate their statements.

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[1] Al-Bayān wal-Tab~~iy~~yīn (Cairo 1913) III 235-236.

[2] Tārīkh Baghdād XIII 252. Irshād VII 165. Cf. also "Wafayāt" III. 388.

[3] Ḥayawān III 402. Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn 114.

[4] Fihrist 53.

Logically, it is difficult to accept a statement, apparently proving an allegation, as evidence, if other statements (viz. those of al-Sijistānī and others) to the same effect have been proved invalid.

### The attitude of modern scholars:

Modern scholars have maintained differing opinions. On the one hand Goldziher dismissed the claim that Abū 'Ubaida had Khārijite sympathies as, "A superficial description".[1] His argument is based on 'Umar b. Shabba's report that Abū 'Ubaida admired the poetry of the Shī'ite poet al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī.[2] Gibb, on the other hand speaks of Abū 'Ubaida as a "convinced Khārijite",[3] and he thinks that his opinion is fully sustained by the best sources, namely al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Ash'arī.[1] Gibb, furthermore, disagrees with Goldziher's reasoning and holds that Abū 'Ubaida's appreciation of al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī's poetry is not a cogent reason for denying Abū 'Ubaida's Khārijite inclinations.[2]

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[1] Quoted by Gibb in "Studies on the Civilization of Islam" (London 1962) 73.
[2] Ibid.
[3] E I.(2) (Abū 'Ubayda) I 158.

A more flexible attitude is maintained by Dr. A. Amīn. Amīn argues that Abū 'Ubaida may have adopted Khārijite doctrines, basing his argument on the stories of al-Sijistānī and al-Tawwazī which have already been referred to. But, Amīn goes on, if Abū 'Ubaida were truly a Khārijite, then his outward conduct in associating himself with the court would be incompatible with his beliefs.[3] In conclusion Amīn says:- "He was a Khārijite in regard to some questions. Firstly in his critical attitude towards the Caliphs, and secondly in his belief that all those who disagree with them [i.e. the Khārijites] should be considered unbelievers, but he would not express [his beliefs] openly."[4]

On the last point Amīn and Suter are at one. The latter says in this respect that Abū 'Ubaida "agreed with the Khārijites only in what regards certain questions so that there was some reason to style him a heretic."[5]

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1. Studies on the Civilization of Islam 73.
2. Though the fact that he did appreciate the poetry of al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī could well have been used to argue that Abū 'Ubaida was a Shī'ī. So slender is the evidence adduced ordinarily for implying religious and political beliefs to famous literary men.
3. Ḍuḥā al-Islam III 335.
4. Ibid. III 336.
5. E I$^{(1)}$ (Abū 'Ubaida) I 112.

None of these statements is entirely satisfactory, either one way or the other, and no great weight of evidence is adduced for the conclusion. Without stronger evidence, however, we are not inclined to accept that Abū 'Ubaida was "a convinced Khārijite, as Gibb maintains.[1] And although A. Amīn's argument seems apparently pursuasive, his conclusion and that of Suter do not solve the question satisfactorily.

Abū 'Ubaida's Shu'ūbite leanings:

It is striking that only one of Abū 'Ubaida's biographers namely Yāqūt (b 626/1229) refers to him as a Shu'ūbite. Yāqūt writes, "It was said that he was a Shu'ūbite, and that he used to disparage the ansāb."[2] Other biographers mentioned only that he hated the Arabs, disparaged their genealogies, and wrote many books concerning their faults.[3]

In this connection it is noteworthy that none of Abū 'Ubaida's pupils accused him of being a Shu'ūbite, although they did regard him as a Khārijite, and al-Jāḥiẓ,

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1. It must be noted, however, that Abū 'Ubaida wrote a book on "Khawārij al-Baḥrain wal-Yamāma" (Irshād VII 170). But writing a book on this subject does not necessarily mean that he was in favour of this movement, neither does it imply that he was opposing it. It might be regarded as a proof of impartial scholarship. Cf. also note p.77
2. Irshād VII 165.
3. Al-Ma'ārif 543.

also did not identify him with the Shu'ūbite movement. Al-Jāḥiẓ, as is known, repudiated the Shu'ūbite claims in his "Kitāb al-'Aṣā",[1] and was the first writer to apply the term "Shu'ūbites" to those who were against the Arabs, and the term "ahl al-taswiya" to those who considered the Arabs and other nations equals.[2] It is, therefore, most unlikely that if Abū 'Ubaida were a Shu'ūbite, al-Jāḥiẓ, owing to his concern with this movement, would not have said so.

After al-Jāḥiẓ, we find that Abū al-Faraj (b. 356/967) applied the term "Shu'ūbī" to Ismā'īl b. Yasār,[3] and Ibn al-Nadīm spoke of 'Alān al-Shu'ūbī (the Shu'ūbite).[4] Although both those writers have favoured us with valuable information about Abū 'Ubaida, neither refers to him as a Shu'ūbite. It was not until the time of Yāqūt that he was labelled a Shu'ūbite.

Later biographers, such as Ibn Khallikān (b. 681/1282) and al-Suyūṭī (b. 911/1505), disagree with Yāqūt on this point. This means that, owing to lack of evidence to support this claim, all Arab authors, save Yāqūt, including all those concerned in repudiating the claims of this movement, did not group Abū 'Ubaida with the Shu'ūbites, and

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1. Al-Bayān wal-Tabiyyīn I. 1 sqq. II. 1 sqq.
2. Ibid. II 2. III 2.
3. Aghānī IV 105.
4. Fihrist 105.

that all modern scholars, Arabs and Orientalists alike, who apply this term to Abū 'Ubaida, have done so without first examining the evidence.

Before we investigate this question further, we would like to refer in brief to modern scholars' opinions on the subject.

Almost all Western Orientalists agree that Abū 'Ubaida was a Shu'ūbite. To Goldziher he was "a typical example of the whole class of Shu'ūbī philologists and genealogists".[1] While Nicholson holds that he "maintained in his writings the cause of the Shu'ūbite against the Arab national party".[2] A third scholar considers him as "one of the leading spirits of the movement of emancipation of non-Arab Moslems from Arab hegemony."[3] As for C. Huart states that "his leanings were also Shu'ūbite ... he asserted the superiority of the conquered races over the Arab victors."[4] And lastly E.G. Browne, considered him as "one of the most accomplished of these Iranophile scholars",[5] and "a philologist of strong shu'ūbī tendencies ... and the bitter satirist of the Arab tribes."[6]

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[1] Quoted by Gibb in "Studies on the Civilization of Islam" 67.
[2] "A Literary History of the Arabs", 344.
[3] "Concise Encyclopaedia of Arabic Civilization" 541.
[4] "A History of Arabic Literature"141.
[5] "A Literary History of Persia"(Cambridge 1928) 1.269.
[6] Ibid. 1. 277.

Arab authors, on the other hand, have tried to expose Abū 'Ubaida's role in the racial conflict which was taking place during his lifetime. Dr. al-Dūrī, for instance, considers that his Shu'ūbite inclinations played a particular role in the marring and mutilating of Arab history, imposing untruth upon it, and thus creating a reaction amongst the Arabs leading them to study their own history.[1] Dr. Ghannāwī thinks that Abū 'Ubaida explained al-Naqā'iḍ in such a way as to expose the faults of the Arab.[2]

It is fairly apparent that Abū 'Ubaida's biographers as well as modern scholars derive their ideas of his Shu'ūbite leanings from his so-called Persian origin on the one hand, and from his books on al-Mathālib and his attitude towards al-Ansāb on the other. It is, therefore, necessary to examine in detail these factors if we are going to reach a fair judgment in this matter.

## Abū 'Ubaida's origin:

There is a common tendency amongst Arab authors, and amongst Orientalists as well, to think that Abū 'Ubaida was of Persian origin. This is derived from the words of 'Alān al-Shu'ūbī, who said that Abū 'Ubaida from Fārs was of

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1. "Baḥth fī Nash'at al-Tārīkh 'ind al-'Arab (Beirut 1960) 45-46.
2. Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq. 146-147.

Persian origin,[1] and also from a remark which is generally considered as one of Abū 'Ubaida's own statements, to the effect that his grandfather was a Jew from Bājarwān.[2]

As yet, the question of Abū 'Ubaida's origin has not been investigated, and to do so, geographical and historical evidence must be examined. The enquiry may be framed around the following three questions:-

1. What does the name "Fārs" stand for?
2. To which land and people may it be applied?
3. And did, in fact, the land from which Abū 'Ubaida's grandfather originate belong to the area of so-called "Fārs"?

There is some confusion over the terms "Persia" and "Iran". We now regard "Persia" as a synonym of "Iran". Browne states that "Īrān", Ērān, Airān, the Airiyana of Arèsta, is the land of Aryans, and had a wider significance than the term "Persia", which is the equivalent of "Īrān" in the modern sense has now. Balkh, Sogdiana and Khawārazm were Īrānian lands, and the Afghan and Kurds are Īrānian peoples.[3]"

This quotation clearly indicates that there are many people of different races living in what are now known as "Iran", among them Afghans and Kurds. It is obvious that

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1. Fihrist 53.
2. Ibid.
3. A Literary History of Persia I, 4. (footnote).

people who have been living in this vast land cannot be regarded as "Persians", for Persia is but one province. To quote Brown again, "This land "Pārsa", the "Persis" of the Greeks, the modern "Fārs" is one province out of several. But,because that province gave birth to the great dynasties the Achaemedian in the sixth century before, and the Sāsānian in the third century before Christ, its meaning was extended so as to include the whole people and country, which we call "Persian"; just as the tribe of Angles, though numerically inferior to the Saxons, gave this name to England and that the English now connotes."[1]

Le Strange in his book "Lands of the Eastern Caliphate" asserts almost the same. "The province of Fārs had been the home of the Achaemedian dynasty and the centre of their government. To the Greeks this district was known as "Persis" and they, in error, used the name, the central province, to connote the whole kingdom. Their misuse of the name is perpetuated throughout Europe to the present day, for with us "Persia", from the Greek "Persis" has become the common term of the whole empire of the Shāh, whereas the native Persians call their country the kingdom of Īrān, of which, Fārs the ancient Persis is but one of the northern provinces.[2]" The question however, remains, where was "Bajarwān", to which

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1. Ibid. I 4-5.
2. (Cambridge 1930) 248.

Abū 'Ubaida's grandfather was attributed, situated?

Bajarwān is a village in the district of Balkh.[1] It is also the name of a town "situated in Sherwān, a province of Armenia, and near which, it is said, lies the fountain of immortality discovered by al-Khiḍr."[2] Ibn Khallikān adds "I am inclined to believe that Abū 'Ubaida belonged to this place."[3]

Between Ibn Khallikān and Yāqūt there is agreement as to its situation. Yāqūt states "Bājarwān is a town in the side of Bāb al-Abwāb, near Shīrwān, in which al-Khiḍr discovered the fountain of life."[4] Between Shīrwān and Bāb al-Abwāb is one hundred parasangs and near it is the Rock of Moses. They said, "The Rock is Shīrwān's, and the sea is Jīlān and the village is Bājarwān."[5]

Le Strange describes it more accurately, and gives more details. He identifies the town as the capital of Mughan, a "great swampy plain which stretches from the base of Mount Sablān to the coast of Caspian sea ... it was sometimes counted as part of Adharbayjān province, but more often formed a separate district."[6]

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[1] *Wafayāt* III 396.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.* Gibb, however, maintains that his "grandfather and his father came from Bajarwān near Raqqa in Mesopotamia, less probably the village of the same name in Shirwan." But this assumption is supported with no evidence whatsoever. *E I*$^{(2)}$ (Abū Ubayda) I 158.

[4] *Mu'jam al-Buldān* I. 454.

[5] *Ibid.* III 282.

[6] *"The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate"* 175.

The Arabs, we presume, used the term "Persia" (*Fārs*) to connote many provinces, because, as Brown states, Fārs was the strongest. The saying attributed to 'Alān that Abū 'Ubaida was from the people of Fārs, of Persian origin, therefore, can not be taken without reservations. However, if we are going to accept the statement, we do so on the grounds that Fārs here connotes a vast land, in which many races were living. 'Alān used the term "Persia" (Fārs) inaccurately.

Bājarwān, then, belonged to a district which submitted to Persian domination for a while. The logical conclusion, therefore, is that Abū 'Ubaida was not of Persian extraction, and he was rather a Khazarī,[1] as Ṭāha al-Ḥājirī suggests.

The so-called Shu'ūbite leanings have nothing to do with Abū 'Ubaida's so-called Persian origin. This significant fact has been referred to by Ṭāha al-Ḥājirī. He states, "If he was of Persian origin, he would rather be a Shī'ite. This claim, then is far from being correct, because he was from those remote districts and races which did not take part in the "Races Battle" in Iraq."[2]

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[1] *al-Kātib al-Miṣrī* 283.

[2] *Ibid*. We need not, of course, accept al-Ḥājirī's assumption concerning the Shī'ite tendency. Obviously, al-Ḥājirī himself does not advocate that Abū 'Ubaida was rather a Shī'ite, because, elsewhere in his article, the writer presumes that Abū 'Ubaida was a Shu'ūbite who believed in equality among nations and races, in other words he was one of "*ahl al-Taswiya*". *Ibid*. 286.

Abū 'Ubaida's Books on Mathālib:

As for his books on "al-Mathālib", it is noteworthy that almost all his biographers claim that he wrote books on "their [i.e. The Arabs] faults." The issue raised here is not that of the existence of such books, but whether it is necessary to accuse Abū 'Ubaida of being a Shu'ūbite simply because he wrote on al-Mathālib.

al-Mathālib (Faults) played an essential part in Arabian life. They are always connected with al-Manāqib (Virtues) or al-Ma'āthir, as literary genres. Both are to be found in the literary life of the pre-Islamic period. It was quite natural for one tribe to establish a good reputation for itself, and to disparage another in any rivalry that might arise between them. The most usual form of this phenomenon was hijā' (poetry) and madīḥ (poetry) in its widest sense, as long as the poet was the spokesman of his tribe, expressing its good deeds and denigrating the claims of other tribes. When Islam came into existence, foreign elements engaged in this rivalry. We now find hijā' from non-Arab poets against the Arab in general, and not against any particular tribe. The poetry of Abū Nuwās and Ismā'īl b. Yasār provides good examples of this. Yet it must be stressed and remembered also that the hijā' among the Arabs themselves still existed in the form of naqā'id.

It is worthwhile mentioning at this point that Abū

'Ubaida himself considered al-Naqā'iḍ of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq as mathālib, and deplored the poems which these two poets had composed against each other in which their faults were exhibited.[1]

The ancients were conscious of the fact that hijā' and madīḥ poetry in the form of naqā'iḍ not only reflected the narrow rivalries between two or more tribes, but that the poets here brought into the light an important aspect of Arabic life in general.

However, since poetry was an important source for any study of Arabic life, we have to admit that the bulk of Arabic poetry falls under two categories, hijā' and madīḥ, which parade both faults and virtues alike.

All the Arabs, al-Rāfi'ī states, were involved to a greater or lesser degree in this matter and, whether their manāqib or mathālib were true or not they nevertheless illustrated a prominent part of their life.[2]

Al-Mas'ūdī reports that Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik used to hold meetings in which al-Abrashī, al-Kalbī, Khālid b. Slama al-Makhzūmī, al-'Abbās b. al-Walīd and al-Naḍr Ibn Marwān al-Ḥimairī mention the manāqib of their people and the mathālib of other peoples.[3] Indeed, this evidence is of

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1. al-Naqā'iḍ 1049.
2. "Tārīkh Ādāb al-'Arab" I. 392.
3. Murūj al-Dhahab V 480-481.

great significance. From it one can infer that an Arabic Caliph did not consider the *mathālib* as something shameful, nor that those who spoke on this subject should be regarded as Shu'ūbites to be condemned.

Moreover, the *mathālib* were regarded as a complementary part of "Arabic Science". al-Rāghib al-Isfahānī asserts, "Memorising the *manāqib* and *mathālib* is part of Arabic Science."[1]

From what has already been said, it is clear that writing on *mathālib* is not necessarily a Shu'ūbite activity, especially if it is connected with writing on the *manāqib*, on the part of a man whose sole pursuit is the study of Arabic life in its deepest and widest sense.

In this respect, Gibb thinks that writing on *al-Manāqib* and *al-Mathālib* was due to "the method generally adopted by the early philologists to group their materials under categories, so that facts of the same or similar kinds were collected together in monographs, whether philological forms like *faʿali,* (viz. *fa'ālī*) or subjects of antiquarian interest, like the works on Arab horses which have come down from Ibn al-Kalbī and from Abū 'Ubaida himself."[2] Gibb goes on to consider the question "To what ... is due the imputation that he [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] was a hater of the Arabs?" and

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1. *Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabā'* I 152.
2. "*Studies on the Civilization of Islam*" 68.

finds that "it does not appear to me difficult to find one explanation - an explanation to which, indeed, there are not a few parallels even at the present day." "Abū 'Ubaida (adopting the method mentioned above) grouped many of his data relating to the Arab tribes under the headings of virtues or vices, as may be seen from all the lists of his works."[1]

However, on al-Mathālib, Abū 'Ubaida wrote one book, although the list of his books given by Ibn al-Nadīm and Yāqūt mention two titles which refer, apparently, to two separate books:-

1. Mathālib al-'Arab[2] - (The Faults of the Arabs)
2. al-Mathālib[3] - (The Faults)

We assume that these two books are one, the title (proper) of which is Mathālib al-'Arab, being shortened to al-Mathālib. It is well-known that Arab authors often delete part of the title and refer to a book by the word which sums up the main idea.

Unfortunately, this book was lost and thus our judgment of Abū 'Ubaida's treatment of the subject is necessarily incomplete, owing to the lack of evidence. Nevertheless, our sources furnish us with two stories said to be extracted from his Mathālib.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Irshād VII 169.

[3] Fihrist 54. Wafayāt III 392. Irshād VII 169. Murūj al-Dhahab VII 80.

The first, which Yāqūt quotes, runs thus, "Abū 'Ubaida said in the Kitāb al-Mathālib, that Hishām b. 'Abd Manāf begat Ṣaifī, whose name is 'Amr or Qais. Ḥayya was their mother. She was a black slave of Mālik or Amr. b. Salūl, the brother of Abū Salūl, and father of 'Abdullah b. Ubaiy b. Salūl al-Munāfiq. Ḥayya had been bought from Ḥabāsha fair which belongs to Qainuqā'. Makhrama b. al-Muṭṭalib b. 'Abd Manāf b. Qais is their uterine brother."[1]

The second story, quoted by al-Zubaidī and al-Suyūṭī, runs thus: "Abū 'Ubaida said in Mathālib Ahl al-Baṣra that al-Naḍr b. Shumail had left Baṣra because he could not find means by which to live."[2]

These two stories, obviously, do not indicate any hostile attitude towards Arabs or distortion of reality. As we are informed that Abū 'Ubaida had taken the material of his book on mathālib from a collection of conversations which took place in the court of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik,[3]

It is as well to remember that

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1. Mu'jam al-Buldān II 192-193.
2. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 53. Bughyat al-Wu'āt 404. The title "Mathālib Ahl al-Baṣra" in al-Zubaidī's story does not imply the existence of a book on this subject. Presumably, al-Zubaidī was quoting from Abū 'Ubaida's Mathālib concerning the people of Baṣra.
3. Murūj al-Dhahab V 480-481.

al-Baghdādī made an allusion to the fact that al-Naḍr b. Shumail and Khalid b. Salama al-Makhzūmī had composed a book on _al-Manāqib_ and _al-Mathālib_.[1] Yet, if we remember that both those authors were at the court of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik when conversations on the subject used to be held, then it could be inferred that Abū 'Ubaida was most likely acquainted with their book and probably put together stories concerned with the _manāqib_ of particular tribes in different books, and that concerned with the _mathālib_ in one comprehensive book.

It is necessary at this stage of our enquiry to stress the fact that Abū 'Ubaida did not practise fabrication, either in the _mathālib_ or in the _manāqib_, and that he was a mere transmitter. Moreover, he did not neglect the "good" side, that is to say the _manāqib_, for he composed more than one book on the subject, e.g. "_Ma'āthir al-'Arab_" and "_Ma'āthir Ghaṭafān_".[2] Thus, we agree with Gibb when he states that "there is nothing so far is known to indicate that Abū 'Ubaida was more interested in the _mathālib_ than in _mafākhir_, or was actuated by malice, or to suggest that he falsified or misrepresented the material derived from his Arab informants in order to serve the interest of any party. In all that has come down from him he stands out as a thorough, and, in the scientific sense, disinterested scholar."[1]

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[1] _Khizana_ (Būlāq 1299) II. 519.

[2] _Fihrist_ I 54. _Wafayāt_ III 392. _Irshād_ VII 169. _Murūj al-Dhahab_ VII 80.

Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards ansāb:

As for his attitude towards ansāb, Yāqūt seems to have based his accusation that Abū 'Ubaida was a Shu'ūbite on the fact that he disparages genealogy.[2] Disparaging the genealogy is, in fact, only a part of the mathālib in general. The quotation in which Abū 'Ubaida traced the genealogy of Hishām b. 'Abd Manāf was extracted from his Mathālib, as we have seen.

To Gibb this tendency in Abū 'Ubaida indicates a Khārijite inclination rather than a Shu'ūbite. He says "As a Khārijite he made light of the pretensions of the Arab sharīf of his day such as the Muhallabids and publicly exposed the results of his researches into their genealogy."[3]

However, this attitude can be best understood, perhaps, in the light of his extraction and character, especially the sharpness of his tongue. Abū 'Ubaida's humble origin would impel him to look with scepticism upon the science of genealogy in general, and on the psychological level to stress continually his own ability and knowledge, i.e. to practise a kind of self-compensation. He once said,

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1. Studies on the Civilization of Islam 68-69.
2. Irshād VII 165.
3. Studies on the Civilization of Islam 68.

on being asked by a man to teach him genealogy, "The only benefit you [can] obtain from that is a knowledge of vices."[1]

## Conclusion:

Having exposed the question in detail, another judgment, taking into consideration all these aspects, and assessing the evidence of both sides, is inevitable.

It has been shown that Yāqūt's accusation that Abū 'Ubaida was a Shu'ūbite was not soundly based. Moreover, we can observe that the sources are not at one regarding this claim nor, indeed, has it been stated unequivocally.

The question which arises is "what were Abū 'Ubaida's views?" There are two facts that should be borne in mind. Firstly, Abū 'Ubaida was not an Arab. And secondly, he would seem to have had an unbiased outlook towards all that he dealt with.

It goes without saying that his non-Arab extraction prevented him from being a pro-Arab zealot, and gave him the chance neither to over-estimate nor to under-estimate the question he was dealing with. "Examination of the charges brought against him, suggests that they may well be regarded as proofs of impartial scholarship rather than of deliberate bias."[2] He saw in the Arabs, as indeed in the 'Ajam, without any pre-conceived ideas, some aspects which cannot be

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1. Muḥāḍarāt al-Udabā' I 39.
2. E I(1) (Ta'rīkh) Supp.234.

considered as virtues, and yet were part of their life, as represented in their literature.

The fault of those who wrote about Abū 'Ubaida, and whom we have, in the preceding pages, quoted or referred to, was that they looked at only one side of his writings on this question (i.e. al-Mathālib) and ignored the other side (i.e. al-Manāqib). It is not without significance that they always refer to his book on the mathālib, and overlook his books on the manāqib.

There must be no confusion between Abū 'Ubaida and the group of real Shu'ūbites who adopted and propagated anti-Arab doctrines. One group of this party tried to transform Arab virtues into vices and to deny them every good quality. Another group adopted a disinterested outlook and reviewed the Arab way of life as a whole; these people, with whom Abū 'Ubaida is to be identified, cannot be considered as Shu'ūbites.

It must be remembered too that many Arab writers, among them al-Jāḥiẓ, dealt with the same subject. Also Ibn al-Nadīm referred to Abū al-Yaqẓān, who wrote many books on the subject, as an authority on mathālib and manāqib.[1]

Besides Abū al-Yaqẓān, Ibn al-Nadīm refers to al-Wāqidī, who wrote on Mathālib Rabī'a, and al-Mathālib al-Ṣaghīr wal-Kabīr.[2] Yet, no scholar has claimed those

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1. Fihrist 94.
2. Ibid. 99.

writers as Shu'ūbites.

In considering Abū 'Ubaida's works in their totality, surely every impartial researcher with respect for historical truth will base his judgment on what we know of Abū 'Ubaida's own works. Further, a fair appraisal and criticism of his writings on this subject must share his own central purpose, to present a complete and unbiased picture of the particular matter in hand, and not try to falsify, through preconceptions, his attempt at depicting Arab life in its totality.

# CHAPTER III

## HIS WORKS

"Abū 'Ubaida" Yāqūt says, "wrote about two hundred books".[1] Yet, neither Yāqūt nor other biographers, such as Ibn Khallikān and Ibn al-Nadīm, gave a complete list of his works.

Ibn Khallikān says, having given a partial list of Abū 'Ubaida's works: "He left besides other instructive works, all of which I should mention were I not afraid of lengthening this article too much."[2]

Moreover, we do not even possess all the books which Abū 'Ubaida's biographers did mention. What we have, in comparison with what Abū 'Ubaida composed, is scanty indeed.[3]

The biographers' lists which do not differ much from one another, demonstrate the wide range of Abū 'Ubaida's knowledge. As will be seen in the course of the present thesis, his works deal with many subjects: poetry, language, history, hadīth, Quran, dialects and other major themes.

His books reveal that he was not a mere transmitter of the material he drew from his teachers and Bedouin

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1. Irshād VII. 170.
2. Wafayāt III. 393.
3. Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī declares that Abū 'Ubaida kept on writing books till he died (Ṭabaqāt 193). Al-Khashnī also reports that Abū 'Ubaida was more knowledgeable than al-Aṣma'ī, transmitted more akhbār and wrote more books. (Ibid. 188).

informants, nor a mere compiler. The controversy which raged around his book al-Majāz shows the independence of the personality which lies behind it, and it is not without significance that al-Aṣma'ī accused Abū 'Ubaida of having explained the Quran "after his own private judgment."[1]

The fact that most of his books have been lost, the disagreement concerning their titles, subject-matter, number and authenticity are commonplace knowledge. Indeed, this kind of thing is a familiar phenomenon, not peculiar to Abū 'Ubaida alone, but true also for other literary figures. This should not however be an excuse for leaving these points without investigation, and a re-construction of his various activities as embodied in a large number of books is necessary.

As has been previously stated, the lists of his works given by Ibn al-Nadīm, Ibn Khallikān and Yāqūt are incomplete.[2] We shall, therefore, try to give as complete as possible a list of his books arranged alphabetically and a short account of them wherever possible.

Before this, however, we should like to refer to two previous attempts along the same lines. The first was made by 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn in his introduction to Abū 'Ubaida's

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1. Wafayāt III. 390.
2. Ibn al-Nadīm mentions 105 works (Fihrist.53), Yāqūt refers to 82 works only (Irshād VII. 168), while Ibn Khallikān mentions 77 works (Wafayāt III.391).

work entitled al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara.[1]

Hārūn gives a list of 126 works, relying, in the main, on the lists given by Ibn al-Nadīm, Ibn Khallikān and Yāqūt. However, he has missed some works, and his list is not accurate with regard to the titles and authorship of some books. Hārūn, for instance, points out the disagreement between Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn Khallikān on the one hand and Yāqūt on the other hand concerning the title of one of Abū 'Ubaida's books. The former two, according to Hārūn mention Kitāb Khawārij al-Baḥrain wal-Yamāma, while the latter mentions Khawārij al-Baḥrain only.[2] This is not in fact correct, all the above-mentioned authors are in full agreement in regard to the title of the book concerned.

After the publication of Hārūn's work, Dr. F. Sizgīn, the editor of al-Majāz declared his intention of preparing a new list. In his introduction to the Majāz he states "I have prepared a list of his [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] works arranged alphabetically and referred to the authors who have mentioned them. But I realise that the list needs to be compared, studied and examined, so I have decided to postpone mentioning it until the second volume."[3] In the second volume, however, Dr. Sizjīn did not fulfil his promise.

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[1] Cairo, 1955.
[2] Al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara 342.
[3] Majāz I. 16.

The list of Abū 'Ubaida's works given by Brockelmann (GAL) is not, unlike the foregoing, intended to be complete. What he does is to refer to the surviving books (six altogether) and to lost books from which quotations were drawn by Arab authors (sixteen altogether). A few remarks on Brockelmann's list will not be irrelevant.

Brockelmann mentions six surviving books; they are:

(1) Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'

(2) Al-Khail

(3) Al-Muḥāḍarāt wal-Muḥāwarāt

(4) Tafsīr Gharīb al-Qur'ān[1]

(5) A qaṣīda Lāmiyya

(6) Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī [2]

Of these works, two have already been edited and published, namely the second and the fourth. The last one, viz., Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī is edited and appended to this thesis.[3]

The unique MS. of the first work, preserved in Beirut, was lost during the First World War.[4]

The authorship of the other two, the third and the fifth is doubtful as we shall explain presently.

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[1] This book according to Brockelmann, is al-Majāz. Cf. Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī II.144.

[2] Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī II.143-144.

[3] Appendix I.

[4] Cf. No.124 of the list given below.

The poem rhyming in *lām* is definitely not by Abū 'Ubaida as Brockelmann supposed. According to Ahlwardt, the poem is by al-Aṣma'ī.[1]

The ascription of *al-Muḥāḍarāt wal-Muḥāwarāt* to Abū 'Ubaida is also subject to dispute. Brockelmann, although he includes this book among Abū 'Ubaida's surviving books, seems to have been uncertain about the real author of the book, because he also refers to Ritter's opinion that the book is by Ibn al-'Arabī.[2] To the best of my knowledge, there is no author, apart from al-Nadawī, who ascribes the book to Abū 'Ubaida.[3] The MS. of this book, at any rate, gives no clue as to the author. The catalogue of the Ayā Ṣūfyā library refers to this book (No.4253) without naming the author, since a few pages from the beginning and the end are missing.[4] Furthermore, the title of the MS. given in the catalogue differs from that given by Brockelmann. In the catalogue the title is *Kitāb fī al-Muḥāḍarāt*,[5] while in *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* it is styled *al-Muḥāḍarāt wal-Muḥāwarāt*.

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1. *Die Handschriften - Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*. (Berlin 1894) VI. 554.
2. *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* II. 143.
3. Muḥammad Hāshim al-Nadawī, *Tadhkirat al-Nawādir* (Ḥaydarābād 1350 A.H.) 121.
4. *Daftar Kutub Khāna Ayā Ṣūfya* (Istānbūl 1304 A.H.) 253.
5. *Ibid*.

The book, in my opinion, is not by Abū 'Ubaida. References are to be found in the text which suggest that the book was written by an author who lived in or after the sixth century of Islam.[1] Thus anecdotes are related on the authority of Abū Ḥaiyān al-Tawḥīḍī who lived in the fourth century of Islam,[2] and there are also citations from the poetry of Mihyār al-Dailamī (d. 428/1037).[3] Further, the style of the author, in which _saj'_ is not uncommon, has no similarity to Abū 'Ubaida's style.[4]

Among the lost books which Brockelmann refers to there are two which have been found and edited. The first is _Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq_, edited first by A. Bevan in Leiden, and again by A. al-Ṣāwī in Cairo. The second is _Akhbār al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara_, edited by A.S. Hārūn, as previously stated, under the title _al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara_.

Undoubtedly any attempt to reconstruct an inventory of Abū 'Ubaida's books is bound to be incomplete for two reasons. Firstly, a complete list of his works has not come down to us. Secondly, discrepancies in the titles of the books sometimes make it difficult if not impossible for one to know the real title of the book concerned. Ibn al-Nadīm, for instance, mentions _Kitāb al-Ḥasf_ among Abū 'Ubaida's books, while both Ibn Khallikān and Yāqūt mention *Kitāb al-Khuff*. Again, Ibn Khallikān refers to a book called *Ḥaḍr al-Khail*, while both Ibn al-Nadīm and Yāqūt refer to a book entitled *Khaṣī al-Khail*. In both these examples one cannot with certainty decide whether *al-Ḥasf* and *al-Khuff* are two different books or one. If they are the same book, what, then is its real title? The same might be said with regard to *Ḥaḍr al-Khail* and *Khaṣī al-Khail*.

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[1] Fol. 6a.
[2] Fol. 306b.
[3] Fol. 305b.
[4] Fol. 306b.

With these provisos, the alphabetical list which follows is, nevertheless, believed to be more accurate and comprehensive than those discussed above.

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| (1) | *Kitāb al-Aḍdād* | *Fihrist* 54. *Irshād* VII.169.<br>*Wafayāt* III.392. |
| (2) | *Kitāb Ad'īyā' al- 'Arab* | *Fihrist* 54. Irshād VII.169. |
| | or *Kitāb Ad'yat al-'Arab* | *Irshād* VII.169. *Wafayāt* III, 392. |
| (3) | *Kitāb al-'Iffa* | *Irshād* VII. 169. |
| | or *Kitāb al-'Aqaqa* | *Fihrist* 54. *Wafayāt* III. 392. |
| (4) | *Kitāb al-Aḥlām* | *Fihrist* 54, |
| | or *Kitāb al-Iḥtilām* | *Wafayāt* III. 392. *Irshād* VII.170. |
| (5) | *Kitāb Akhbār al-Ḥajjāj* | *Fihrist* 54 *Irshād* VII.170.<br>*Wafayāt* III, 392. |
| (6) | *Kitāb al-Amthāl al-Sā'ira* | *Irshād* VII, 169. |
| | or *Kitāb al-Amthāl* | *Fihrist*, 54. |

A great deal of this book is to be found in *al-'Iqd al-Farīd* (I.333) of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi who clearly states that he is relating on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. Al-'Askarī in his book *sharḥ mā yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣhīj wal-Taḥrīf* (252) refers to this book and gives it this title *al-Majalla*.

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| (7) | *Kitāb al-Anbāz* | *Jamharat al-Lugha* (Ḥaidarābād 1345 A.H.) II. 284. |

This book seems to be on Arab genealogy as the quotations made by Ibn Duraid indicate. Cf. *ibid*.

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| (8) | *Kitāb al-'Aqārib* | *Irshād* VII, 169. *Fihrist* 53. |
| | or *Kitāb al-'Uqāb* | *Wafayāt* III, 392. *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III. 285. |
| (9) | *Kitāb al-Ariqqā'* | *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III. 286. |
| (10) | *Kitāb Ash'ār al-Qabā'il* | *Irshād* VII. 169. |
| (11) | *Kitāb A'shār al-Jizūr* | *Fihrist* 54. |
| (12) | *Kitāb Asmā' al-Khail* | *Irshād* VII, 169. *Wafayāt* III, 392. *Fihrist* 54. |
| (13) | *Kitāb al-Asnān* | *Fihrist* 53. |
| (14) | *Kitāb al-Aufiyā'* | *Fihrist* 54. |
| (15) | *Kitāb al-Aus wal-Khazraj* | *Fihrist* 54. *Irshād* VII,169. *Wafayāt* III, 393. |
| (16) | *Kitāb al-A'yān* | *Irshād* VII. 170. |
| (17) | *Kitāb Ayādī al-Azd* | *Fihrist* 53, *Wafayāt* III, 392. |
| | or *Kitāb Ayād al-Azd* | *Irshād* VII. 170. |
| (18) | *Kitāb al-Ayyām al-Kabīr* | *Irshād* VII, 169. *Wafayāt* III, 393. |
| (19) | *Kitāb al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr* | *Irshād* VII, 169. *Wafayāt* III, 393. |

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| (20) *Kitāb al-Ayyām* | *Fihrist* 54. *al-Ishtiqāq* of Ibn Duraid, (Cairo 1958) 21. |
| (21) *Kitāb Ayyām Banī Yashkur wa Akhbāruhum* | *Fihrist* 54. |
| (22) *Kitāb Ayyām Banī Māzin wa Akhbāruhum* | *Irshād* VII.169.<br>*Wafayāt* III,393. |
| or *Kitāb Banū Māzin wa Akhbāruhum* | *Fihrist* 54 |
| (23) *Kitāb al-Baiḍa wal-Dir'* | *Khizānat al-Adab* (Cairo 1348 A.H.) I.2. |
| (24) *Kitāb al-Bakra* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Wafayāt* III. 392 *Fihrist* 54. |
| (25) *Kitāb al-Bāzī* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Wafayāt* III.392 *Fihrist* 53. |
| (26) *Kitāb al-Bulh* | *Irshād* VII, 170 *Wafayāt* III. 391 |
| (27) *Kitāb al-Bunyān bi-Ahlihi* | *Wafayāt* III.392 |
| or *Kitāb Bayān Bāhila* | *Irshād* VII.169 |
| (28) *Kitāb Buyūtāt al-'Arab* | *Irshād* VII, 169 *Wafayāt* III.392 *Fihrist* 54. *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* (Istanbul 1941) 762. |
| (29) *Kitāb al-Dībāj* | *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.391 *Fihrist* 53. *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 762. |

The subject of this book cannot be defined with certainty, although the quotations taken from this book by al-Baṭalyūsī suggest that Abū 'Ubaida deals with the description of horses. (*al-Iqtiḍāb 138-143*).

(30) *Kitāb al-Ḍīfān* *Irshād* VII, 169 *Wafayāt* III.391.

Quotations from this book are to be found in *al-Mu'talif wal-Mukhtalif* (Cairo 1354 A.H.) (96) and *Khizānat al-Adab* (III.386).

(31) *Kitāb al-Dilwi* ? *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III,392.
*Fihrist* 54.

(32) *Dīwān al-A'sha* *Khizānat al-Adab* III.216.

(33) *Dīwān 'Alqama al-Faḥl* *Al-Khail* 136.

(34) *Sharḥ Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim* *Khiza~~m~~nat al-Adab* IV 355.

(35) *Dīwān Imri'l-Qais* *al-Khail* 136.

(36) *Dīwān Yazīd Ibn 'Amr al-Ḥanafī* *al-Khail* 148.

(37) *Kitāb Fa'ala wa Af'ala* *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III. 392.
*Fihrist* 54.

(38) *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Furs* *Irshād* VII. 170 *Fihrist* 54.

or perhaps *Kitāb Akhbār al-Furs* if this is the book to which al-Mas'ūdī refers to in his *Murūj al-Dhahab* (II. 237-238). This is a biographical history of the Persian kings, Abū 'Ubaida's main source for this book was a *rāwī* called 'Umar Kisrā, who was well-versed in the history of Persia, and for this reason this *rāwī* was given the nickname Kisrā. Ibn 'Asāqir also refers to this book, and claims to have seen and quoted from it. *Tārīkh Dimashq* (Damascus 1951) I. 12.

(39) *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-'Arsh* *Irshād* VII. 169.
*Wafayāt* III. 393
*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1276.

(40) *Kitāb al-Faras* (or *al-Furs*) *Irshād* VII. 169 *Fihrist* 54. *Wafayāt* III. 392.

(41) *Kitāb al-Farq* *Irshād* VII, 169. *Wafayāt* III.392. *Fihrist* 54.

In his Kashf al-Ẓunūn (1446) Ḥājji Khalīfa mentions this book saying: "The *Kitāb al-Farq* of Abū 'Ubaida, abridged, starts with 'Parise be to God' etc. This book [deals] with the differences between Man and the quadrupeds - lions, beasts and birds."

(42) *Kitāb Futūḥ Armīniya* *Wafayāt* III. 392. *Fihrist* 54. *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1239.

(43) *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Ahwāz* *Irshād* VII. 170 *Fihrist* 54.

(44) *Kitāb al-Ghārāt* *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.392 *Fihrist* 54.

(45) *Kitāb Gharīb al-Qur'ān* *Irshād* VII. 168. *Fihrist* 53. *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1204. *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* (Istanbul 1945) II. 147. *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 194.

(46) *Kitāb Gharīb al-Ḥadīth* *Wafayāt* III. 391. *Irshād* VII.169. *Fihrist* 53.

(47) *Kitāb Gharīb Buṭūn al-'Arab* *Fihrist* 54 *'Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II. 316.

(48) *Kitāb al-Muṣannaf* *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 298.

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| (49) *Kitāb al-Ḥayyāt* | *Irshād* VII, 169 *Wafayāt* III, 392<br>*Fihrist* 53. *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II,291 |
| (50) *Kitāb al-Ḥamām* | *Irshād* VII, 169 *Wafayāt* VII, 392<br>*Fihrist* 53. *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1413. |
| (51) *Kitāb al-Ḥammalīn wal-Ḥammālāt* | *Iḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.291<br>*Fihrist* 54. |
| (52) *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* | *Fihrist* 53 |
| (53) *Kitāb al-Ḥirāth* | *Fihrist* 54. *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.289 |
| (54) *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Wafayāt* III.391.<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1411. |

Ḥājji Khalīfa mentions another two books with the same title written by Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī and al-Ghazzāli. From his statement, in regard to these two books and that of Abū 'Ubaida, it seems that the book deals with jurisprudence. (*Ibid.*)

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| (55) *Kitāb al-Ḥums min Quraish* | *Irshād* VII. 169<br>*Fihrist* 54 *Wafayāt* III.392. |
| (56) *Kitāb al-Ibdāl* | *Irshād* VII. 169 |
| (57) *Kitāb al-Ibl* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Wafayāt* III.392<br>*Fihrist* 55. *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II. 261. |
| (58) *Kitāb al-'Illa* | *Fihrist* 53. |
| (59) *Kitāb I'rāb al-Qur'ān* | *Fihrist* 54. |
| (60) *Kitāb al-I'tibār* | *Fihrist* 53. |
| (61) *Kitāb Jafwat Khālid* | *Fihrist* 53. |

(62) *Kitāb al-Jamal wa Ṣiffīn* *Irshād* VII, 170
*Wafayāt* III. 392 *Fihrist* 54
*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II. 286

(63) *Kitāb al-Jam' wal-Tathnīya* *Irshād* VII. 169
*Fihrist* 44. *Wafayāt* III.313

(64) *Kitāb Khabar 'Abd Qais* *Fihrist* 53.

(65) *Kitāb Khabar Abī Baghīd* *Fihrist* 53.

(66) *Kitāb Khabar al-Barrāḍ* *Irshād* VII. 169
or *Kitāb Akhbār al-Barrāḍ* *Wafayāt* III. 392

(67) *Kitāb Khabar al-Rāwiya* *Fihrist* 53.

(68) *Kitāb Khabar al-Tau'am* *Fihrist* 53. *Īḍāḥ al-Makmūn* I. 426

(69) *Kitāb al-Khail* *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.392
*Īḍāḥ al-Makmūn* II. 293

(70) *Kitāb Khalq al-Insān* *Irshād* VII. 170 *Wafayāt* III. 392
*Fihrist* 54.

(71) *Kitāb Khaṣī al-Khail* *Fihrist* 53.
or *Kitāb Ḥaḍr al-Khail* *Wafayāt* III. 392 *Irshād* VII. 169

(72) *Kitāb Khawārij al-Baḥrain wal-Yamāma* *Wafayāt* III.391
*Irshād* VII. 170 *Fihrist* 53.

(73) *Kitāb al-Khuff* *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.392
or *Kitāb al-Ḥasf* *Fihrist* 54.

(74) *Kitāb Khurāsān* *Irshād* VII. 170. *Wafayāt* III.391
*Fihrist* 53.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (75) | *Kitāb al-Lijām* | *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III. 392<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1454. *Fihrist* 54. |
| (76) | *Kitāb al-Lughāt* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Fihrist* 54.<br>*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II. 326. |
| (77) | *Kitāb Luṣūṣ al-'Arab* | *Irshād* VII. 169. *Wafayāt* III. 392<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1550<br>*Fihrist* 54 |
| (78) | *Kitāb Ma'āthir al-'Arab* | *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III. 392<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1573<br>*Fihrist* 54 |
| (79) | *Kitāb Ma'āthir Ghaṭafān* | *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1573<br>*Fihrist* 54 *Irshād* VII.169<br>*Wafayāt* III.392 |
| (80) | *Kitāb Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* | *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1730<br>*Fihrist* 53 |
| (81) | *Kitāb Makka wal-Ḥaram* | *Irshād* VII. 170<br>*Wafayāt* III. 392<br>*Idah al-Maknūn* II.336<br>*Fihrist* 54. |
| (82) | *Kitāb Maghārāt Qais Wal-Yaman* | *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II. 334<br>*Fihrist* 53 |
| (83) | *Kitāb Majāz al-Qur'ān* | *Irshād* VII.168 *Wafayāt* III. 391<br>*Fihrist* 53 |
| | or *al-Majāz* | *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1450<br>*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.428 |

(84) *Kitāb Manāqib Bāhila* *Kashd al-Ẓumūn* 1586 *Fihrist* 54

(85) *Kitāb Manāqib Quraish wa Faḍā'iluhum* *Al-Tanbīh wal Ishrāf* (Leiden 1894) 210

(86) *Kitāb Man Qatalat Banū Asad* *Fihrist* 54
or *Kitāb Tasmiyat Man Qatalat Banū Asad*
*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.281
or *Kitāb Tasmiyat man qutila min Banū Asad*
*Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III.286

(87) *Kitāb Man Shukira Min al-'Ummāl wa Ḥumida*
*Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.393
or *Kitāb Man Shukar Min al-'Ummāl* *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.339
*Fihrist* 54

(88) *Kitāb Maqātil al-Fursān* *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III.392
*Mu'jam al-Buldān* IV. 999
*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1778

In his book *Akhbār al-Naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn* (69), al-Sīrāfī mentions this book amongst Abū 'Ubaida's book on *Ayyām*. Quotations from this book in both *Lisān al-'Arab* (v.270) and *Mu'jam al-Buldān* (I.435, IV 999) support al-Sīrāfī's statement. The book is lost, although S. Krenkow points out that extracts from it are to be found in an MS. preserved in the British Museum (*al-Khail* 178). My efforts to substantiate this have not been successful. Al-Mas'ūdī relates that he himself has written a book on "*Maqātil Fursān al-'Ajam*" in imitation (*mu'āraḍatan*) of Abū 'Ubaida's book. Cf. (*al-Tanbīh Wal-Ishrāf* 102).

(89) *Kitāb Maqātil al-Ashrāf* *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayat* III.392
*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1778
*Fihrist* 54

(90) *Kitāb Maqtal 'Uthmān* *Irshād* VII. 170 *Wafayāt* III.392
*Fihrist* 54
or *Kitāb Maqtal 'Uthmān b. 'Affān* *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1794

(91) *Kitāb Marj Rāhiṭ* *Irshād* VII, 170. *Wafayāt* III.392
*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II, 330
*Fihrist* 53

(92) *Kitāb Mas'ūd Ibn 'Umar wa Maqtaluhu* *Fihrist* 54

Ibn al-Nadīm also mentions a book by Abū 'Ubaida called *Mas'ūd* (*Ibid* 53). It is most likely that these two books are one.

(93) *Kitāb al-Maṣādir* *Fihrist* 54 *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III.

(94) *Kitāb Mā Talḥunu fīhi al-'Āmma* *Irshād* VII, 169
*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1577
*Wafayāt* III.393 *Fihrist* 54

(95) *Kitāb al-Mathālib* *Wafayāt* III, 392 *Fihrist* 54
Or *Mathālib al-'Arab* *Irshād* VII.169

(96) *Kitāb al-Mawālī* *Irshād* VII, 170. *Wafayāt* III.392
*Fihrist* 53 *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.341

(97) *Kitāb al-Mu'ātabāt* *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III.392
*Fihrist* 54

(98) *Kitāb Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm Ibnayy 'Abdillah Ibn Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib*. *Irshād* VII.169
or *Kitāb Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm Ibnayy 'Abdillah Ibn Ḥasan Ibn Ḥusain*. *Fihrist* 54
or *Kitāb Muḥammad wa Ibrāhīm* *Wafayāt* III.393

(99) *Kitāb al-Mujjān* *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.328
*Fihrist* 53

(100) *Kitāb al-Mulāwamāt* *Irshād* VII. 169 *Wafayāt* III.392
or *Kitāb al-Mulāwayāt* *Fihrist* 54

(101) *Kitāb al-Mullāṣ* *Fihrist* 53 *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.336
*Anbān al-Ruwāt* III.286

(102) *Kitāb al-Munāfarāt* *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III.391
*Fihrist* 53 *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.337

(103) *Kitāb Muslim Ibn Qutaiba* *Fihrist* 54

(104) *Kitāb al-Nawāshiz* *Irshād* VII.169 *Fihrist* 53
or *Kitāb al-Nawashir* *Wafayāt* III.392

(105) *Kitāb Naqā'iḍ Jarīr Wal-Farazdaq* *Irshād* VII.169
*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1937
*Fihrist* 158.

(106) *Kitāb al-Nawākiḥ* *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III.392
or *Kitāb al-Nawā'iḥ* *Fihrist* 53

Ḥājji Khalīfa says in *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* (p.1468) that the *Kitāb al-Nawākiḥ* of Abū 'Ubaida was originally called *Kitāb al-Nawā'iḥ*.

(107) *Kitāb al-Nawādir* *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III. 108.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (108) | *Kitāb al-Nuṣra* | *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.343.<br>*Fihrist* 53 |
| (109) | *Kitāb al-Qabā’il* | *Irshād* VII, 169 *Wafayāt* III.391<br>*Fihrist* 53 *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1448 |
| (110) | *Kitāb al-Qābiḍ* | *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III. 286 |
| (111) | *Kitāb Qāmat al-Ra’īs* | *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.321<br>*Fihrist* 54 |
| | or *Kitāb Nābih al-Ra’īs* | *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III.286 |
| (112) | *Kitāb al-Qarā’in* | *Irshād* VII.169<br>*Wafayāt* III.392 |
| | or *Kitāb al-Qawārīr* | *Fihrist* 53<br>*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* III.392 |
| (113) | *Kitāb al-Qattālīn* | *Anbāh al-Ruwāt* III.286 |
| (114) | *Kitāb al-Qaws* | *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.323 |
| (115) | *Kitāb al-Qirā’āt* | *Tārīkh al-Qur’ān* (by 'Abdullah al-Zinjānī. Cairo 1935) 18,24 |
| (116) | *Kitāb Qiṣṣat al-Ka'ba* | *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III, 392<br>*Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.228.<br>*Fihrist* 54 |
| (117) | *Kitāb Quḍāt al-Baṣra* | *Irshād* VII.170 *Wafayāt* III.392 |
| | or *Kitāb Quḍāt Baṣra* | *Fihrist* 54 |
| (118) | *Kitāb al-Raḥl* | *Irshād* VII.169 *Wafayāt* III.392 |
| (119) | *Kitāb al-Rustiqbādh* | *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn* II.300<br>*Fihrist* 54 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (120) | *Kitāb al-Saif* | *Irshād* VII.169 *Fihrist* 54<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1429 |
| (121) | *Kitāb al-Sarj* | *Irshād* VII.392 *Fihrist* 54<br>*Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1424 |
| (122) | *Kitāb al-Sawād wa Fatḥuhu* | *Īdāḥ al-Maknūn* II.304<br>*Irshād* VII.170 *Fihrist* 54 |
| (123) | *Kitāb al-Shawārid* | *Irshād* VII.169 *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* 1431<br>*Wafayāt* III.392 *Fihrist* 54 |
| (124) | *Kitāb al-Shi'r Wal-Shu'arā'* | *Wafayāt* III, 392<br>*Īdāḥ al-Maknūn* II.306 |

Brockelmann mentions this book under the name *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*, and points out that the unique MS. of this book is preserved in *Jāmi'at al-Qiddīs Yūsuf* in Beirut. After writing to the editor of *al-Mashriq* 'Abdu Khalīfa al-Yasū'ī about this MS. I had a letter from him declaring that this MS. was lost along with others during the first World War.

L. Sheikho, however, in his *Shu'arā' al-Naṣrāniyya* quotes from this MS. but unfortunately it is not easy to single out the quotations which he takes from Abū 'Ubaida's book, because of his inadequate system of referencing. All that Sheikho does is to give a list of his sources after each chapter.

An attempt to reconstruct the skeleton of this MS. and to study the concept of *ṭabaqāt* is made in Chapter 5.

(125) Sīrat 'Antara

The romance of 'Antara is traditionally ascribed to al-Aṣma'ī (A literary History of the Arab, 459), although Arberry thinks that this asumption "is wholly indefensible" [because] "the picture of the meticulous philologist which is presented by the biographers of al-Aṣma'ī ... hardly accords with such activities as the spinning of tall yarns about a semi-mythical Bedouin hero."[1] (The Seven Odes. London 1957. 169).

There is no clear reference to Abū 'Ubaida having written such a book by his biographers. Elsewhere there are allusions which suggest that Abū 'Ubaida, if he did not actually write a book on this romance, nevertheless definitely transmitted elements of this famous cycle. (Mu'jam al-Buldān IV. 728. Jamharat al-Lugha II.360)

The transmission of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī found its way to the story-tellers who added unmercifully to the historical material transmitted by both the afore-mentioned, in order to attract larger audiences and more attention. Thus, the historical facts of this cycle, were covered by thick layers of fiction and imagination, and expanded till

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1. Arberry is not right however. Although it is agreed that al-Aṣma'ī was meticulous, it is also obvious that when the modern researcher ascribes the 'Antara romance to al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida, he does not mean the version as altered and amended by the story-tellers, but the original version which was almost certainly nearer to reality and history. Cf. below

they consisted of eight large volumes as Abū al-Fidā says (*al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* MS. British Museum Add. 23,292. F.46)[1] Abū al-Fidā did not preserve the *sīra* of 'Antara as transmitted by the story-tellers. In other MSS. however, which give a full account of the story, Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī are referred to as the main sources of the material. The unpolished style of the extant romance, let alone its grammatical mistakes, indicates unmistakeably that the extant version suffered considerably at the hands of the story-tellers. It is now difficult, if not impossible, to disentangle the original version from the fiction. Specimens from the MSS. referred to previously are given in appendix 3.

(126) *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Fursān* *Irshād* VII.169
*Wafayāt* III.391
*Al-'Iqd al-Farīd* II.33,44,69

In his introduction to al-Jāḥiẓ's book *al-Tāj*, Aḥmad Zakī Pāsha refers to other books which have the same title, and among them is a book by Abū 'Ubaida. The editor in a footnote, however, doubts whether Abū 'Ubaida wrote a book called al-Tāj, basing his assumption on the fact that similar quotations are once referred to as having been derived from al-Tāj (al-'Iqd al-Farīd II.69), and on another occasion from al-Dībāj (al-Kāmil 372). He then suggests that Abū 'Ubaida wrote a book, the name of which is al-Dībāj, (No.29 supra) and that later on some authors gave the book the title al-Tāj. Cf. Al-Tāj fī Akhlāq al-Mulūk (Cairo 1914) introduction 35.

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[1] Abū al-Fidā says "This romance is based on the story-tellers' account, between their account and that of the historians there is a big difference." Having mentioned 'Antar's battles, he goes on "... Because of its palatable style, this romance can easily be enjoyed and appreciated by laymen. The story abounds with incredible anecdotes and differs from the accounts of the historians. It is in eight big volumes (based on) the transmissions of al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida Ma'mar Ibn al-Muthanna". Cf. *al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* F.46).

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|---|---|---|
| (128) | Kitāb al-Tamthīl | Muzhir II. 138. |
| (129) | Kitāb al-Ṭarūfa | Fihrist 53. |
| or | Kitāb al-Ẓarūfa | Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn II.312 |
| (130) | Kitāb Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī | Yusuf al-'Ashsh.<br>Fihris Makhṭuṭāt Dār al-Kutub al-Ẓāhirīyaḥ (Damascus 1947) 70.<br>Cf. Appendix I. |
| (131) | Kitāb al-Zar' | Irshād VII. 169 Wafayāt III.392<br>Fihrist 54 |
| (132) | Kitāb al-Zawā'id | Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn II. 301<br>Fihrist 54 |
| (133) | Kitāb Akhbār 'Abd al-Qais | |
| (134) | Kitāb Mathālib Bāhila | |

These two books are mentioned among Abū 'Ubaida's historical writings by C. Pellat (al-Jāḥiẓ 199). Unfortunately the author does not mention his source.

# PART II

## CHAPTER IV

## Abū 'Ubaida's Poetical Transmissions

Introductory note:

It is generally agreed that Arabic poetry in the pre-Islamic period[1] was not set down in writing. Attempts have been made to substantiate the opposite view by Dr. N.D. al-Asad, but the evidence in support of his assertion that Arabic poetry was set down in writing on a large scale can not be considered conclusive.[2] This poetry was circulated amongst Arab tribes orally in general by members of the tribe to which the poet belonged and in particular by his rāwiya.

With the advent of Islam interest in poetry temporarily dwindled. The adherents of the new religion busied themselves with reciting the Quran, and some of the poets ceased composing poetry. When Islam had firmly established itself, and the Arab communities had settled down, the Quran became a subject of study aimed at proving the inimitability of its style. This particular aspect of Quranic studies resuscitated an interest in poetry and hence the collecting and studying it in order that the vocabulary, syntax and metaphors of the poetry might throw light on Quran interpretation. "It has been said" Gabriel observes, "that this [i.e. collecting poetry] was done because the ancient poetry contained documentary material for the exact understanding of the Holy Book, and this partially true, but the whole archaic period of imitation of pre-Islamic poetry, which was pursued in the first century of Islam and which was to constitute one of the poles of the "Ancients -Moderns" quarrel under the Abbasids, proves that this poetry was nevertheless experienced not only as a means but as an end, with an artistic and historic dignity of its own."[1]

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[1] This ignores the rather weak argument of Margoliouth and Ṭāhā Ḥusain that jāhilī poetry is not genuinely pre-islamic. Cf. p. footnote.

[2] Maṣādir al-Shi'r al-Jāhilī wa Qīmatuhā al-Tārīkhiyya. (Cairo 1956) particularly Chapter I, part 2.

Collecting pre-Islamic poetry began in the Umayyad period and reached its apogee with the endeavours of the scholars of the Abbasid period.[2] Inevitably, reciters played a leading role in this task, and with indefatigable energy they collected, commented on, and transmitted Arabic poetry. It is their efforts that have saved Arabic poetry from oblivion and preserved valuable documents of ancient Arabic civilization and intellectual life as Goldziher states.[3]

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1. Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization, 91.
2. Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī I.65.
3. I. Goldziher "A Short History of Arabic Literature" (Ḥaidarābād 1958) translated and enlarged by Joseph de Somogi. Reprinted from the quarterly "Islamic Culture" 25.

According to Goldziher again "the collections of tribal dīwāns formed the labours of the most important philologists during the second and third centuries (A.H.)"[1] Nicholson, on the other hand, states that the scholars of Baṣra and Kūfa "have arranged their material according to various principles. Either the poems of an individual or those of a number of individuals belonging to the same tribe or class were brought together -- such collection was called Dīwān, plural Dawāwīn, or, again, the compiler edited a certain number of qaṣīdas chosen for their fame or excellence or on other grounds, or he formed an anthology of shorter pieces or fragments, which were arranged under different heads according to their subject-matter."[2] The reciters' efforts were certainly not limited to collecting the tribe-dīwāns only. A cursory glance at al-Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadīm is sufficient to corroborate the view that efforts were also being made to collect and annotate the dīwāns of individual poets.

Both aspects of this movement flourished in Baṣra.

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1. "Some Notes on the Dīwān of the Arabic tribes" in JRAS (1897) 333.
2. A Literary History of the Arabs 127-128. Dr. A. Trābulsī thinks that ancient poetry was preserved and collected in five forms: (a) dawāwīn (b) general anthologies (c) tribe anthologies (d) books usually deal with the poets' life and their classes and (e) literary books such as al-Ḥayawān of al-Jāḥiẓ or 'Uyūn al-Akhbār of Ibn Qutaiba. Cf. La Critique Poétique des Arabes (Damas 1955) 14-15. 53-54.

It was a good centre for this purpose, owing to the fact that al-Mirbad fair was situated not very far away, and because of the tribal structure with Baṣra itself. The result was that a school of distinctive character was established there to study the "Arabic sciences" including poetry.

## Abū 'Ubaida's role in transmitting poetry:

Abū 'Ubaida was a prolific reciter, and one of the earliest known authorities for the transmission of Arabic poetry. Yāqūt, for instance, mentions amongst his work the Kitāb Ash'ār al-Qabā'il.[1] Giving an account of his contribution in this field offers many problems, but not altogether insoluble ones. These problems are raised by the fact that only a few of the books in which Abū 'Ubaida presumably transmitted, a great deal of poetry are extant, and that most, if not all, of his poetical transmissions that have survived are scattered in literary books, anthologies and dīwāns.

Such being the case, it must be admitted that any attempt to re-collect his transmission will be incomplete until a general survey of the material scattered in these anthologies, and MSS is carried out. This task is beyond the scope of the present work, and we must content ourselves with a general account which, if it cannot give the exact

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1. Irshād VII. 169.

amount of Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions, at least sketches the scope of his efforts in this field.

Abū 'Ubaida's extant books, as well as the list of his lost works given in *al-Fihrist*, *al-Irshād* and *al-Wafayāt*, furnish us with the clues needed in such a general survey. In these books and others, there are many references which indicate that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted particular *dīwāns*. These references serve as a starting point from which one may attempt to detect how much Abū 'Ubaida transmitted of a particular *dīwān* in such sources as *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* *al-Aghānī*, *al-Khizāna* and others.

Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions may be grouped under two distinct headings:

(a) Poetry pertaining to one poet. The list of Abū 'Ubaida's works does not indicate that he compiled poet - *dīwāns*. This, probably, is what made Goldziher in his previously-mentioned article think that the collection of the tribe-*dīwāns* formed the labours of the most important philologists of the Abbasid period.[1] And "possibly Abū 'Ubaida followed in the same path with his monographs on the *Ghaṭafān*, *Aus* and Khazraj, as also the *Banū Māzin*."[2] This assumption, however, is open to objection: one may ask how far these monographs can be considered tribe-*dīwāns*, or more simply whether these monographs are really anthologies. By and large it would seem that they are not. Anthologies, as is known, assume either the name of the anthologist, e.g. al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt, named after its compiler al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī, and al-Aṣma'iyyāt after al-Aṣma'ī, or they are given a title which indicates the subject matter of one of the chapters of the anthology, such as al-Ḥamāsa; or they are prefixed by the word ash'ār followed by the name of the tribe as e.g. Ash'ār Banī Asad. Thus, the books of Abū 'Ubaida taken by Goldziher to be examples of tribe-dīwāns are as Pellat rightly notes, historical works.[1]

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[1] *JRAS* 328.
[2] *Ibid*. 328-329.

(b) Poetry pertaining to one subject. An example of this is Kitāb al-Khail, in which Abū 'Ubaida collected what the Arab poets had said on horses. The Kitāb al-Naqā'id, and al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara, furnish other examples. It must be noted that in these books, Abū 'Ubaida interpolates into his poetical transmissions historical and linguistic explanations.[2]

The following pages will be devoted to a discussion of his poetical transmissions, firstly in the dīwāns and secondly in the anthologies.

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[1] Al-Jāḥiẓ wa Athar al-Jaww al-Baṣrī fīhi 199-200. In considering these books historical does not include the possibility that these books may contain a certain amount of poetry.

[2] It could be seen that we excluded in this categorization the collection of poetry pertaining to one tribe or more, such as Kitāb Ash'ār al-Qabā'il of Abū 'Ubaida. This exclusion is based on the fact that this book is lost and is not going to be discussed.

Dīwān al-A'shā:

This dīwān was edited by R. Geyer in 1928. The edition was based mainly on the Escurial MS.[1] which contains 73 poems, transmitted and annotated by Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā Tha'lab. That Tha'lab was the transmitter of the dīwān in question has been mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm.[2]

Although no allusion is made by Abū 'Ubaida's biographers to his being a transmitter of al-A'sha's poetry, al-Baghdādī refers to Yūnus b. Mattā's transmission,[3] and elsewhere to Abū 'Ubaida's transmission.[4] And in this present dīwān also there is a clear reference which undoubtedly confirms al-Baghdādī's statement that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted al- A'shā's poetry. Thus in the prefatory notice to poem no.37 we read:

"Abū 'Ubaida said, 'Alqama died in Ḥawrān, where he

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1. The editor refers to other MSS. One is preserved in Cairo, the second in Leiden, the third in Paris. These MSS do not differ from each other, says Geyer, and contain 15 poems only. They are poems nos. 3, 6, 12, 15, 18, 29, 55, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82 in the present dīwān. Cf. Dīwān. Introduction, XIV, XX.
2. In fact Tha'lab was not the only transmitter of the dīwān. Ibn al-Nadīm refers also to al-Aṣma'ī, Abū 'Amr (probably al-Shaibānī) al-Sukkarī, al-Ṭūsī, Ibn al-Sikkīt, and Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim. Fihrist 74.75,78,158.
3. Yūnus b. Mattā is the "official" rāwiya of the poet. Cf. Khizāna IV. 197.
4. Ibid, III. 216.

was the governor of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. Al-A'shā said, satirizing 'Alqama and praising 'Āmir

The verses ..."

"This poem has been referred to in the seventh kirrās, after it being the poem rhyme in ṣād which begins..."[1]

That Tha'lab's transmission was based mainly on Abū 'Ubaida's we can see from the fact that he relates most of Abū 'Ubaida's explanations, comments and variants. Tha'lab's second sources is Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', on whose authority a considerable number of poems were transmitted.[2]

In his introduction, R. Geyer assumes that the poems transmitted by Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' are nos. 6, 11, 28, 29, 30, 57, 65 and 66, while poems transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida are nos. 1, 29, 34, 55, 58, 59 and 60."We do not know" Geyer adds "the transmitter of the other poems."[3]

Geyer, however, has no ascertainable grounds on which to base his assumption. It goes without saying that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted more than the seven poems cited. Judging from the dīwān, Abū 'Ubaida transmitted and/or authenticated or refused to authenticate the following poems:

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[1] p.173.
[2] In this respect, we disagree with Shawqī Ḍaif who assumes that the present dīwān was based mainly on a kūfite transmission. Cf. Al-'Aṣr al-Jāhilī (Cairo 1960) 340.
[3] Dīwān introduction, XVII.

Poem No. 1. "Abū 'Ubaida transmitted saying..."

" " 6. "Abū 'Ubaida said that he transmitted the poem on the authority of Abū 'Amr ..."

" " 7. "Abū 'Ubaida said, he [i.e. the poet] said in praise of ..."

" " 13. "Abū 'Ubaida related that Abū 'Amr admitted that he composed this verse, [the second in the poem], and he [i.e. Abū 'Amr] asked God to forgive him." Abū 'Ubaida did not transmit this verse."

" " 15. "Abū 'Ubaida said that the poet [i.e. al-A'shā] composed the poem satirising 'Umair b. 'Abdullāh b. al-Mundhir."

" " 29. "Al-A'shā said in praise of Ayās b. Qubaiṣa, transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida on the authority of Abū 'Amr."

" " 32. "Abū Bakr did not transmit verse no.41 because Abū 'Ubaida did not authenticate it."

" " 33. "Abū 'Ubaida said, "Al-A'shā said in praise of al-Muḥallaq"

" " 34. "Abū 'Ubaida said, "Al-A'shā said in Kisrā..."

" " 42. "Abū 'Ubaida said, "Al-A'shā said in praise of Yazīd and 'Abd al-Masīḥ from al-Ḥārith."

Poem No. 51. "Abū 'Ubaida related on the authority of Misma'."[1]

" " 54. "Abū 'Ubaida said that this poem was ascribed to al-Mukhāriq al-Māzinī."[2]

" " 55. "The commentator said that this poem was found written by Abū 'Ubaida himself."

" " 56. "Abū 'Ubaida said that this poem was ascribed to Saif b. Dhī Yazan."

" " 57. "Abū 'Ubaida transmitted this poem on the authority of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'."

" " 58. "The commentator said that this poem was transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida."

" " 59. "The commentator said that this poem was transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida."

" " 60. "The commentator said that this poem was transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida."

" " 62. "Abū 'Ubaida said that this poem was ascribed to Nābigha of Banū Shaibān."

In addition to these poems, we may add to this list the following poems on the grounds that Abū 'Ubaida's name is referred to as a commentator, either explaining the meanings of words or giving variants for some verses. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 35, 36, 38, 39, 52, 53. Against the deduction made above regarding poems 2, 3, 4 ... 53, the objection might be raised that although Abū 'Ubaida's remarks and comments are cited by Tha'lab, this is no proof that he accepted these poems as authentic and transmitted them. This objection is, however, a weak one. Abū 'Ubaida's comments on these poems are not general comments which can be quoted to fit any poem or text. They are comments arising from the particular poems concerned, with which Abū 'Ubaida must have been fully acquainted. However, to substantiate our argument, we should like to refer to the verses which Abū 'Ubaida quoted in evidence in his books, *al-Majāz*, *al-Naqā'iḍ* and *al-Khail*.

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[1] This poem is repeated, with one or more verses, in poem no.61 of the diwān.

[2] The first 18 verses were transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. The rest of the poem, five verses, on the authority of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' (Dīwān. 197).

*Table No. 1*[1]

| *Dīwān* | *Al-Majāz* |
|---|---|
| 1 | I 299,351,325 |
| 2 | I 664; II, 159 |
| 3 | I 38, 101; II, 181 |
| 4 | I 208; II, 164, 313 |

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[1] The numbers in the first column refer to the poems as numbered in the *dīwān* edited by R. Geyer, and those in the second column refer to the pages in which different pieces from the same poem are cited.

| Dīwān | | Al-Majāz |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | I | 117, 408; II, 35, 120, 218 |
| 7 | I | 126, 345; II, 191 |
| 8 | II | 165, 201 |
| 9 | I | 72, 136 |
| 11 | I | 74 |
| 12 | II | 248 |
| 13 | I | 62, 293; II, 97, 125 |
| 14 | I | 82 |
| 15 | I | 302 |
| 16 | I | 401; II, 307 |
| 18 | I | 36; II, 89, 286 |
| 19 | I | 153 |
| 22 | I | 267 |
| 25 | II | 129 |
| 32 | II | 135 |
| 33 | I | 244; II, 75, 179 |
| 34 | I | 61, 283 |
| 35 | I | 218; II, 116 |
| 54 | II | 283 |

### Table No.2

| Dīwān[1] | | Al-Naqā'iḍ[2] |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | I | 478 |
| 16 | I | 64 |
| 19 | II | 960 |
| 20 | II | 654, 749 |
| 26 | II | 645 |
| 33 | I | 62 |
| 40 | II | 644 |
| 56 | II | 645 |
| 57 | II | 645 |

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[1] Geyer's edition.
[2] Bevan's edition.

## Table No.3

| Dīwān | Al-Khail[1] |
|---|---|
| 56 | 125 |
| 57 | 125 |

Comparing with the above tables the poems which Abū 'Ubaida commented on and certain verses for which he gave variants, it can be seen that the assumption that those poems were transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida is a defensible one.

Among the poems from which Abū 'Ubaida quotes in his book al-Majāz and al-Naqā'id, there are further poems which are not mentioned in the dīwān of al-A'shā as transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida. These poems, which must be added to the list of poems transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida, are nos. 25, 35 (cited in Majāz), 20, 26, 40 (cited in Naqā'iḍ). Other sources refer to two more poems of al-A'shā transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida. One of these exists in the dīwān cited but without reference to Abū 'Ubaida as a transmitter, namely verse (no. 205 in the supplement of the dīwān cited) which is to be found in al-Aghānī.[2] The second poem is to be found in al-Khizāna[3] 21 verses of which al-Baghdādī transmitted saying that Abū 'Ubaida and Ibn Duraid had ascribed it to al-A'shā.[4]

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[1] Ḥaidarābād 1939.
[2] VIII. 85.
[3] (Cairo 1349 A.H.) III. 213-216.
[4] Cf. "The Pearl-driver of Al-A'sha" an article written by C.Lyall concerning this poem in JRAS (1912) pp.499-502.

All in all, the poems of al-A'shā which Abū 'Ubaida transmitted and authenticated are as follows:

19 poems in the dīwān cited concerning which there are clear allusions to Abū 'Ubaida as the transmitter.

22 poems in the dīwān cited on which Abū 'Ubaida commented.

5 poems part of which Abū 'Ubaida cited in al-Majāz and al-Naqā'iḍ.

1 poem in al-Khizāna.

1 verse in al-Aghānī.

48

Whether these 48 are all what Abū 'Ubaida transmitted and authenticated of the poems of al-A'shā is not easy to determine, nor can it be said that they represent the total poetic production of al-A'shā. There are in the dīwān under discussion another 33 poems ascribed to al-A'shā by other transmitters, and 140 pieces with which the editor supplements his edition. All these poems and fragments are said to be al-A'shā's, and in the absence of detailed critical study, we must either accept them and consequently regard Abū 'Ubaida's transmission as incomplete, or reject them as spurious and regard Abū 'Ubaida's tramsmission as complete, though clearly some have a good line of transmission through transmitters other than Abū 'Ubaida as e.g. al-Aṣma'ī or Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'.

## *Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim*:

Al-Baghdādī in his *Khizānat al-Adab* tells us expressly that he had in his possession a kūfite MS of Bishr's *dīwān* from the hand of Abū 'Ubaida.[1] Ibn al-Nadīm, on the other hand, states that al-Aṣma'ī, al-Sukkarī, and Ibn al-Sikkīt collected the poetry of Bishr,[2] but he makes no mention of Abū 'Ubaida's collection.

Abū 'Ubaida, as Dr. 'I. Ḥasan, the editor of the *dīwān* presumes, was the first *rāwī* to write about Bishr and his poetry.[3] His concern with Bishr was due, firstly, to the fact that Bishr took part in the *Ayyām* of his tribe, the Banū Asad, and especially in the *yaum* of al-Nisār and al-Jifār,[4] and secondly, that Bishr was one of the great pre-Islamic poets. Abū 'Ubaida, indeed, names him side by side with al-Nābigha as a great poet (*faḥl*).[5] According to Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', it was the poem in *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, the opening verse of which is:-

احقٌ ما رأيتُ ام احتلامُ
ام الاهوال اذ صحبي نيامُ

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1. (Cairo 1349 A.H.) IV. 355.
2. *Fihrist* 157, 158.
3. *Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim al-Asadī* (Damascus 1960) 5.
4. *Ḥayawān* VI. 275, 278.
5. *Aghānī* IX. 164.

that entitled Bishr to the epithet of *faḥl*.[1]

Abū 'Ubaida's transmission and his commentary are lost, save for some extracts found in *al-Khizāna*, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* and other works.

A. Hartigan, in an article on the poet,[2] sketches the poet's life and collects, with comments, six of his poems. In 1960, Dr. 'I. Ḥasan edited the *dīwān*. This edition was based on two MSS., the commentator being unknown. It seems, however, that this *dīwān*, which consists of 46 poems and 12 other pieces, is a combination of many transmissions, one of which is Abū 'Ubaida's, though there is insufficient evidence to reconstruct Abū 'Ubaida's transmission. We can, however, avail ourselves of quotations made by Abū 'Ubaida in his books and utilize other sources such as *al-Khail*, *al-Naqā'iḍ*, *al-Khizāna*, *al-Aghānī* and others.

The following tables show the number of the poems in the *dīwān* cited in part by Abū 'Ubaida in his writings.

*Table 1*

| *Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim* | *al-Khail*[3] |
|---|---|
| No. 39 | p. 32 |
| " 41 | pp. 116, 125 |
| " 15 | pp.117, 118, 150 |
| " 38 | p. 119 |

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[1] *Dīwān* 201.

[2] "Bisr Ibn Abī Ḥāzim" in *M.F.O.U.S.J.* (Beirut 1906) 1. 284-302.

[3] Ḥaidarābād 1939.

Table 2

| Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim | al-Naqā'id[1] |
|---|---|
| No. 1 | I. 241 |
| No. 2 | I. 241 |
| No. 3 | I. 243-245 |
| No. 4 | II. 917 |

'Abd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī in his Khizāna, presumably, availed himself of the Kūfite MS. of this poet's dīwān, which he was said to possess (Cf. supra) and if this is so, the quotations he makes would have been drawn from Abū 'Ubaida's collection. In fact, al-Baghdādī terminates his chapter on Bishr by saying "In conclusion, this is his story which I have quoted from his [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] Kūfite handwriting."[2] (min Khaṭṭihi al-Kūfī).

The poems quoted in al-Khizāna, compared with Bishr dīwān, are as follows:

| Dīwān Bishr Ibn Abī Khāzim | al-Khizāna |
|---|---|
| No. 29 | IV. 335 |
| No. 31 | IV. 336 |
| No. 5 | IV. 336 |
| No. 46 | IV. 336 |

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1. Bevan's edition.
2. Khizāna IV. 339.

In addition to these, the following poems have been stated, in the works listed below, to have been transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida.

| Dīwān Bishr | Aghānī |
|---|---|
| No. 41 | IX. 164 |
| No. 31 | XV. 87 |
| | Al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt [1] |
| No. 15[2] | p. 660 |
| No. 38 | p. 677 |
| | Mu'jam al-Buldān |
| No. 41 | I. 584-585 |

Some of these poems are of course, repeated in the previous sources, so that the total number of poems transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida are twelve: viz. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 15, 29, 31, 38, 39, 41, 46.

Comparing the total number of poems in the *dīwān* (46 and 12 fragments) with the 12 poems which Abū 'Ubaida is said to have transmitted, one begins to wonder, why the amount of material which Abū 'Ubaida transmitted is so scanty.

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1. Al-Mufaḍḍal chose four poems from Bishr for his anthology (Nos. 96, 97, 98, 99), two of them transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida.
2. In this poem al-Mufaḍḍal relates, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, that verses nos. 41 and 42 belong to a poet from the Tamīm tribe, and not to Bishr (*al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* 677), and that verse no.45 belongs to al-Ṭirimmāḥ (*Ibid*. 676).

Al-Jāḥiẓ, however, states that a great deal of unauthentic poetry was ascribed to Bishr by rāwīs, and refers specifically to poem no.7 in the dīwān,[1] and elsewhere to poem no.5.[2] Abū 'Ubaida himself ascribed poem no.40 to al-Mussayyab b. 'Alas,[3] and Ibn Qutaiba ascribed one particular verse to Bishr, which Abū 'Ubaida ascribed to al-Ṭirmmāḥ.[4]

Owing to the suspicion which surrounds Bishr's poetry, one might expect Abū 'Ubaida's transmission to comprise considerably less material than the dīwān.

Dīwān al-Mutalammis:

Al-Mutalammis' poetry was collected by al-Sukkarī and al-Aṣma'ī among others.[5] The transmission of these reciters are lost except for a part of al-Aṣma'ī, which was put together with that of Abū 'Ubaida and that of Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī as we shall see later.

L. Sheikho was the first to publish al-Mutalammis' poetry in his book Shu'arā' al-Naṣrāniyya. Sheikho based his edition, for the most part, on the Khedīwī Library MS.[6] This

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1. Ḥayawān VI, 279-280.
2. Ibid., VI. 280.
3. Al-Muwashshaḥ 76.
4. Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 145 quoted by Brockelmann Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī I. 131.
5. Fihrist 158.
6. Shu'arā' al-Naṣrāniyya (Beirut 1890) I. 330-349.

collection consists of 18 poems supplements with 3 fragments, two of them consisting of one verse each and the third of four verses, said to be found in other literary sources.

In 1903 K. Vollers edited the dīwān, collating three MSS.[1] Vollers' edition consists of 17 poems and 24 fragments found in other sources. (al-'Iqd al-Farīd, al-Ḥamāsa, Lisān al-'Arab, Jamharat al-Amthāl, Kitāb al-Aghānī, al-Aḍdād and also Shu'arā' al-Naṣrāniyya).

The MSS. of this dīwān are full of discrepancies in the number and arrangement of the poems and verses. Hence, the two editions, that of Sheikho and Vollers, differ from each other, and both in turn differ from the MS of the India Office Library, as the following table shows.

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[1] Madīna, Cairo and British Museum. But Vollers mainly depends on the MS preserved in the Khedīwī Library, written by Muḥammad Maḥmūd b. al-Talāmīd al-Shinqīṭī in Madīna, dated 12th Dhū al-Qi'da 1296 A.H. Thus, the MS of the Khedīwī Library is, in fact, copied from the MS of Madīna. It must be noted also that the MS of the dīwān which is preserved in the India Office Library (No. 110) was written by al-Ḥajj 'Abdullāh al-Makkī on the 20th of Rabī' al-Awwal 1200 A.H. Cf. E. Denison Ross Catalogue of Two Collections of Persian and Arabic Manuscripts preserved in the India Office Library (London 1902) 72.

(a) Arrangement of Poems:
(b) Number of Verses.

| Vollers Edition | | Sheikho Edition | | India Office Library MS | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) |
| 1 | 19 | 7 | 19 | 1 | 20 |
| 2 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 6 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 22 | 5 | 22 | 5 | 18 |
| 5 | 13 | 6 | 14 | 11 | 4? |
| 6 | 18 | 9 | 16 | 14 | 17 |
| 7 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| 8 | 8 | 11 | 8 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 9 |
| 10 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 3 |
| 11 | 4 | 12 | 4 | 9 | 4 |
| 12 | 8 | 13 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| 13 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 16 | 6 |
| 14 | 10 | 15 | 10 | 16 | 10 |
| 15 | 15 | 16 | 15 | - | - |
| 16 | 2 | 17 | 2 | 17 | 2 |
| 17 | 12 | 18 | 12 | - | - |
| 18 | 2 | - | - | 18 | 2 |
| 19 | 2 | - | - | 19 | 2 |
| 20 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 21 | 1 | - | - | - | - |

| Vollers Edition | | Sheikho Edition | | India Office Library MS | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) | (a) | (b) |
| 22 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 23 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 24 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 25 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 26 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 27 | 1 | 19 | 1 | - | - |
| 28 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 29 | 1 | 20 | 1 | - | - |
| 30 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 31 | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| 32 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 33 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 34 | 4 | - | - | - | - |
| 35 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 36 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 37 | 4 | 21 | 4 | - | - |
| 38 | 3 | - | - | - | - |
| 39 | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 40 | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| 41 | 1 | - | - | - | - |

Yet, in the prefatory note to Voller's edition we read "The diwān of the poetry of al-Mutalammis al-Ḍuba'ī, transmitted by al-Athram and Abū 'Ubaida on the authority of al-Aṣma'ī."[1] In the prefatory note to the British Museum's MS (Add. 24,349) we read, "Al-Mutalammis' poetry transmitted by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Athram on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī, al-Aṣma'ī and others."[2]

The difference between the two statements, raises certain problems. The first statement implies that the whole diwān (17 poems altogether) was transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida, in co-operation with Abū al-Ḥasan al-Athram, on the authority of al-Aṣma'ī, and that Abū 'Ubaida was not an original source. The second statement, on the other hand, suggests that Abū 'Ubaida was an original source, but transmitted only a part of the whole diwān. The second statement is almost certainly the correct one. It may be indeed that the first statement should be read with waw in the place of 'an, and vice-versa. viz. "... on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī ..." this emendation is based, firstly on the fact that al-Athram, being the pupil of Abū 'Ubaida, is more likely to have related on the authority of his teacher rather than to have co-operated with him, and secondly on the fact that in the diwān itself, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Athram relates on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida."[3] This remark, of course,

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1. Dīwān 18.
2. Fol. 4a.
3. Dīwān 18.

means that Abū 'Ubaida was an important source to al-Athram in his attempt to collect al-Mutalammis' poetry.

But how can Abū 'Ubaida's transmission be distinguished from those of the other two chief sources, al-Aṣma'ī and al-Shaibānī.

Undoubtedly, the first three poems (according to the arrangement of Vollers' edition) were transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida, because these three poems deal with one subject. The reason why al-Mutalammis satirised 'Amr b. Hind, how the latter wrote to his governor in al-Baḥrain ordering him to kill the bearers of his letter, al-Mutalammis and Ṭarafa, and how al-Mutalammis discovered the plot, and threw away the letter, was described by Abū 'Ubaida, along with the three poems related to it.[1]

Apart from these poems, the dīwān itself gives no clue as to whether Abū 'Ubaida transmitted other poems, and if so, which and how many. The Kitāb al-Aghānī in this respect is of great help, since, in his biography of al-Mutalammis, Abū al-Faraj relates on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. Clear references in this source indicate that four of al-Mutalammis' poems (nos. 1, 4, 5, 6 in Vollers' edition) were transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida.[2]

In his Majāz, Abū 'Ubaida quotes from three poems of al-Mutalammis (nos. 4, 9, 36 in Vollers' edition).[3]

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1. Ibid. 18-28.
2. Aghānī XXI. 187, 198, 201.
3. Majāz I. 406; II. 73, 158.

Lastly, Hibatullāh b. Ḥamza al-'Alawī, in his Dīwān Mukhtārāt Shu'arā' al-'Arab transmits four poems on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida (nos. 1, 3, 4 in Vollers' edition, and one single verse which is not in his edition).[1] Thus, it can be stated, with fair certainty, that the 8 poems and one verse transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida are as follows:-

(a) poems nos. 1, 2, 3 in the dīwān itself;

(b) (Excluding the repeated poems) poems nos. 4, 5 and 6 in al-Aghānī;

(c) (Excluding the repeated poems) poems nos. 9 and 36 in al-Majāz.

(d) (Excluding the repeated poems (one single verse in Dīwān Mukhtārāt Shu'arā' al-'Arab.

Here, the question poses itself, whether these 8 poems and one single verse are all that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted and authenticated of al-Mutalammis' poems.

Although no definite answer can be given, two facts should be borne in mind. Firstly, al-Mutalammis was one of those poets who left few poems (muqill). Abū 'Ubaida himself is reported to have said "It was agreed that the best of the muqillīn poets in the pre-Islamic period were al-Mutalammis, al-Musayyab b. 'Alas and al-Ḥuṣain b. al-Humām."[2] Secondly, Abū 'Ubaida was suspicious of the additional poetry ascribed to al-Mutalammis, and it is related by Abū 'Ubaida that some of Bashshār's poems were ascribed wrongly to al-Mutalammis.[1]

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[1] Mukhtārāt (Cairo 1306 A.H.) 31, 33, 35, 36.

[2] Aghānī XXI. 187.

In the light of these facts, it would seem that Abū 'Ubaida was cautious regarding al-Mutalammis' poetry and transmitted only the few poems that he felt certain were genuine.

Dīwān Imru 'ul-Qais:

Ibn al-Nadīm says "Imru 'ul-Qais' poetry was transmitted by Abū b. al-'Alā', Khālid b. Kulthūm and Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb."[2] He adds "Abū Sa'īd al-Sukkarī put together those transmissions excellently. Abū al-'Abbās al-Aḥwal, although he did not finish his work, and Ibn al-Sikkīt also collected them."[3]

It would appear then at first sight that Abū 'Ubaida neither transmitted nor collected this dīwān. However, this is far from being the truth. A clear allusion in Kitāb al-Khail shows that Abū 'Ubaida did in fact transmit and collect this dīwān.[4]

The poetry of Imru 'ul-Qais was first published by De Slane, who based his edition on two MSS. of al-Shantamrī's Dawāwīn al-Shu'arā' al-Sitta.[5] In 1870, Ahlwardt edited al-Sukkarī's transmission supplementing it with some further poems and fragments said to be by Imru'ul-Qais. Imru'ul-Qais' _dīwān_ was subsequently published many times in Egypt, India and Persia, the best critical edition being that published in Cairo in 1958 by Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. This latter would also seem to be the most complete, containing all that has been ascribed to Imru'ul-Qais, and being based on the following six different transmissions:-

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[1] Aghānī III. 48-49.
[2] Fihrist 78, 158.
[3] Ibid. 158.
[4] Al-Khail 136, 141.
[5] Le Dīwān D'Amro'lkais (Paris 1837) Préface X-XI. Cf. also Dīwān Imri'il-Qais (Cairo 1958) introduction 8.

1) _Al-A'lam al-Shantamrī's transmission_.

This consists of 28 poems and pieces. Al-Shantamrī transmitted the dīwān on the authority of Abū Hātim al-Sijistānī and al-Aṣma'ī.[1]

2) _Al-Ṭūsī's transmission_.

This has three parts:

(a) 42 poems transmitted on the authority of al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī.

(b) 7 poems transmitted on the authority of al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida. Al-Ṭūsī called this part "_min al-qadīm al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-manḥūl_" by which he meant that these poems are unauthentic according to al-Mufaḍḍal, but authentic according to other reciters.[2]

(c) 26 poems which have been added to al-Ṭūsī's transmission by an unknown scholiast, called as a group

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[1] _Dīwān Imri'il-Qais_. (Cairo 1958) Introduction, 10.

[2] _Ibid_. 13.14.

"*al-manḥūl al-Thānī*".

3) *Al-Sukkarī's transmission.*

67 poems and fragments, collected from "different transmissions" (*min mukhtalif al-riwāyāt*) by al-Sukkarī.[1]

4) *Al-Baṭlayūsī's transmission.*

30 poems and fragments.[2]

5) *Ibn al-Naḥḥās' transmission.*

56 poems and fragments transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī.[3]

6) *Abū Sahl's transmission.*

59 poems and fragments, the commentaries on which were transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī.[4]

The transmission of Abū 'Ubaida cannot be extracted easily from all these sources, although Ahlwardt in his introduction to "*The Dīwāns of The Six Ancient Arabic Poets*" assumes that al-Sukkarī's copy of this *dīwān* was based on the text handed down by Abū 'Ubaida, who probably received it from his teacher Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'.[5] This assumption is, however, a doubtful one, since Ibn al-Nadīm clearly states that al-Sukkarī put together all the available transmissions.[1] Dr. al-Asad, on the other hand, thinks that there is no essential difference between Abū 'Ubaida's transmission and that of al-Aṣma'ī.[2] Yet the total of the poems transmitted by al-Aṣma'ī according to Dr. al-Asad, is twenty-seven.[3] But is it possible to accept this conclusion and regard al-Aṣma'ī's transmission as if it was that of Abū 'Ubaida? Despite the conclusion of Dr. al-Asad which at first sight seems acceptable, the question is a complex one and it would seem that the amount of Abū 'Ubaida's transmission can only be known by an examination of the Dīwān and other sources.

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[1] *Ibid.* 15.
[2] *Ibid.* 17.
[3] *Ibid.* 18.
[4] *Ibid.* 20.
[5] *The Dīwāns of the Six Ancient Arabic Poets* (Paris 1913),6.

In the dīwān of Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, there are seven poems in the transmission of al-Ṭūsī, and fifty-six poems in the transmission of Ibn al-Naḥḥās which are said to have been transmitted on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī.

Regarding these two transmissions, the following points arise: (a) The striking difference in number between the two transmissions. (b) Neither al-Ṭūsī, nor Ibn al-Naḥḥās mention specifically which the poems were transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida and which by al-Aṣma'ī. (c) There is disagreement between al-Ṭūsī and Ibn al-Naḥḥās regarding a

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1. Fihrist 158.
2. Maṣādir al-Shi'r al-Jāhilī 489.
3. Ibid. 514.

few poems. The former mentions poems nos. 47, 50 (53, 48, 49, 52 in the edition of Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm) as transmitted by both al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida, whereas Ibn al-Naḥḥās, who is supposed to have been transmitting on the authority of both al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida, does not refer to them. (e) Neither transmission is altogether reliable. Abū 'Ubaida himself, for example, states that poem No.46 (48 in Abū al-Faḍl's edition) in al-Ṭūsī's copy was falsely ascribed to Imru'ul-Qais.[1]

It would seem that the best method of establishing Abū 'Ubaida's transmission is to consult the references to Imru'ul-Qais' poems in Abū 'Ubaida's books.

The following tables show the poems from which Abū 'Ubaida quotes.[2]

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1. Al-Khail, 160
2. In this table and in the following two, the numbers in the first column refer to the poems as numbered in the dīwān edited by Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, and that of the second column refer to the pages in which different pieces from the same poem are cited.

Table No.1

|  | Dīwān | al-Khail |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | 1[1] | 51, 57, 116, 127 |
| 2. | 2 | 87, 90 |
| 3. | 3 | 91, 94, 102, 137 |
| 4. | 8 | 80, 100 |
| 5. | 9 | 100 |
| 6. | 29 | 48, 70, 91, 94 |
| 7. | 49 | 117 |
| 8. | 60 | 48, 72, 75 |

Table No.2

|  |  | al-Majāz |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | 2 | I, 76; II, 6, 180 |
| 10 | 3 | II, 17 |
| 11 | 11 | I, 383 |
| 12 | 12 | II, 13 |
| 13 | 21 | I, 318 |
| 14 | 26 | II, 2 |
| 15 | 27 | II, 272 |
| 16 | 29 | II, 12 |
| 17 | 32 | II, 17 |

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1. Al-Baghdādī in his "Khizānat al-Adab" (III. 406) transmits this poem on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. Also, Abū al-Faraj, in his biography of al-A'shā, transmits one single verse from this poem on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida (Aghānī, VIII. 78). Lastly, al-'Askarī quotes a few verses from the same poem, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. Cf. Sharḥ mā Yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf 223.

## Table No.3

| Dīwān | | Al-Naqā'iḍ |
|---|---|---|
| 18 | 19 | 259 |
| 19 | 20 | 459 |
| 20 | 93 | 459 |

Excluding the poems repeated in the second table (No.2.3.29), the total number of poems transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida is 17. Yet, this is not all that he transmitted. The following poems which are unquestionably alluded to in the dīwān itself as being transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida must be added. viz. Nos. 10, 13, 14, 15 and 18.

Other sources also refer to a few poems being transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida. In Sharḥ mā Yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf, al-'Askarī quotes a few verses from poems 1, 3, 4, 17 in the Dīwān,[1] among which only poem nos 4 and 17 ~~is~~ are not referred to in any other source.

The total of Abū 'Ubaida's transmission of Imru'ul-Qais' dīwān is then, as follows:

8 poems in Kitāb al-Khail,
6 poems in Al-Majāz (excluding three poems already given in al-Khail .
3 poems in al-Naqā'iḍ,
5 poems in the dīwān,
2 poem in Sharḥ mā Yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf
(excluding two poems already given in al-Khail and the dīwān).
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[1] P, 83,87,223,231,235,236,238,239,246.

It has already been mentioned that Dr. al-Asad assumes the transmission of al-Aṣma'ī to be the same as that of Abū 'Ubaida.[1] It is true that the two are almost unanimous with regard to the number of poems they authenticate for this poet. Al-Aṣma'ī transmitted 27 poems, Abū 'Ubaida 24. Yet, they disagree on which poems are to be ascribed to Imru'ul-Qais. To see the difference between these two transmissions, we refer to the numbers of the poems transmitted by al-Aṣma'ī (a) and Abū 'Ubaida (b) respectively.

(a) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.[2]

(b) 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 29, 32, 49, 60, 93.

The number of poems in Abū 'Ubaida's transmission compared with the total number in the dīwān is therefore scanty. This is due to the fact that the early reciters were suspicious of much of the poetry ascribed to Imru'ul-Qais. It is reported that "most of the poetry ascribed to Imru'ul-Qais is not his, but it belongs to some young poets (fityān) who were with him, such as 'Amr b. Qumai'a."[3]

Dīwān 'Abīd Ibn al-Abraṣ:

'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ, one of the pre-Islamic poets, belongs to the tribe of Asad, and was contemporaneous with the celebrated poet, Imru'ul-Qais. "No information has reached us as to the scholar who first put together the surviving poems of 'Abīd into a dīwān",[1] Lyall says. The poetry of this poet was collected, annotated and handed down without any clear allusion to the rāwī who compiled them. The dīwān, or what is supposed to be the dīwān, was published by Lyall in 1913, with a long introduction on the poet and his poetry. Lyall supplements his edition with a full translation of the poems,[2] and historical and linguistic notes as well.[3]

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[1] Maṣādir al-Shi'r al-Jāhilī, 489.

[2] Ibid. 515-521.

[3] Al-Muwashshaḥ. 34.

Concerning the transmission of this dīwān we need add nothing to what the editor has already said. "From the observation of Ibn Sallām it would seem that when he wrote the Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā' al-Jāhiliyyīn they [the poems] had not yet been collected."[4]

"Yet" says Lyall, "Abū 'Amir al-Shaibānī ... is referred to in our commentary no less than ten times, as acquainted with several of the poems; he is also the authority for the version of the story of 'Abīd's inspiration as a poet with which the __dīwān__ opens."[1] Lyall says "Al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Ubaida are each cited in the Scholia three times, Khālid b. Kulthūm twice, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Athram once.[2] But the authorities most frequently mentioned in the Scholia for the interpretation of the poems are Ibn Kunāsa and Abū al-Walīd."[3]

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[1] The Dīwāns of 'Abīd Ibn al-Abras of Asad, and 'Āmir Ibn al-Ṭufail, of 'Āmir Ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a. Ed. by C. Lyall (London 1913) Introduction 9.
[2] In an article written by F. Gabrieli, entitled "La poesia di 'Abīd Ibn al-Abraṣ" in A.D.R.A.T. (Rome 1940) XVIII. 242, the writer notices that some verses which assume particular difficulty were omitted in the translation.
[3] The volume published by Lyall contains also the poetry of 'Āmir Ibn al-Ṭufail and 'Āmir Ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a.
[4] Dīwān, introduction 9.

The editor goes on: "The many citations of 'Abīd's poems in the work of Jāḥidh are good evidence of the existence of the __dīwān__ (or the poems composing it) early in the third century, while Ibn Qutaibah attests its currency later in the same century."[4]

However, it seems that Abū 'Ubaida, being the earliest __rāwī__ amongst those mentioned by the editor, was, along with Al-Aṣma'ī an important source of the poetry of 'Abīd. And the __dīwān__, and particularly the __Mukhtārāt__ of Ibn al-Shajarī, clearly prove that Abū 'Ubaida had transmitted the poetry of 'Abīd and related some anecdotes concerning his life.[5]

These two works are the most important sources regarding 'Abīd's poetry. The former does not reveal all that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted from 'Abīd, while al-Shajarī, on the other hand, did not collect all 'Abīd's poems, but only a selection of 12 poems, which seem to have been transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida.

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[1] __Ibid.__ Introduction 9.
[2] __Ibid.__ The places in which those recitors were cited are, 11, 41, 52, 41, 52, 59, /41, 52,/37 respectively.
[3] __Ibid.__
[4] __Ibid.__ Introduction 10.
[5] "__Mukhtārāt__ 83. Cf. __Aghānī__ XIX, 85.

Ibn al-Shajarī opens his selection saying: "A selection from the poetry of 'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ; Abū 'Ubaida, Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā said..."[1] The author ends his selection saying: "This is what I have chosen from the poetry of 'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ."[2] The collection of Ibn al-Shajarī suggests that there was, at his disposal, a large number of 'Abīd's poems if not perhaps all of them. Why al-Shajarī transmitted only the twelve poems is, perhaps, a moot point. In fact, those poems, compared with other poems of 'Abīd, are not the best, so that we may infer that al-Shajarī chose the best of 'Abīd's poetry as any compiler usually does when he sets out to compile an anthology. There remains one possibility, and that is, that al-Shajarī chose only such poems as Abū 'Ubaida had transmitted and authenticated.

The twelve poems transmitted by al-Shajarī on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida are:-

1. The tent-traces of Sulaima in Dakādik are all effaced and desolate; the violent tearing winds have swept them away. 18 verses.

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1. *Ibid.* 83.
2. *Ibid.* 108.

[1]

2. O! My two friends! stay a little while and question
the abode that is fading away of the folk of al-Hilāl.
17 verses.

[2]

3. O! Thou that threatened us, for the slaying
of thy father, with vile abasement and death. 25 verses.

[3]

4. Changed are the abodes in Dhū-d-Dafīn
And the valleys of al-Liwā, and the sand of Līn.
17 verses.

[4]

5. Is it at tent traces whereof the trench round the
tents has become thin, scarcely to be seen,
And at vanished abodes that thy tears are falling fast?
21 verses

[5]

6. Whose are these camels, bridled for a journey before the dawn,
About to start for regions to us unknown? 14 verses.

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1. *Mukhtārāt*, 87, in the *Dīwān*, 51. Abū 'Ubaida's name was referred to.
2. *Ibid*. 88, *Dīwān* 58. Abū 'Ubaida's name was mentioned in the *Dīwān* 58.
3. *Ibid*. 90, *Dīwān* 27. Abū al-Faraj transmitted 23 verses from this poem on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida in his biography of 'Abīd *Aghānī* XIX, 85.
4. *Mukhtārāt* 92. *Dīwān* 44.
5. *Ibid*. 94. *Ibid*. 71.

[1]

7. O Home of Hind! There have wrecked it showers continuous
and heavy
In al-Jauw it lies, like a precious staff of al-Yaman,
ragged and tattered. 18 verses.

[2]

8. The phantom glided among us while we lay in the vale
from Asma's folk! but it came not pledged to visit us
there. 12 verses.

[3]

9. Night's rest she broke with her railing: no time that
for her tongue
Why didst thou not wait for dawn to ply thy trade of
reproach? 15 verses

[4]

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1. *Mukhtārāt* 96. *Dīwān* 60.
2. *Ibid*. 97. *Ibid*. 23.
3. *Ibid*. 99. *Ibid*. 69.
4. *Ibid*. 100. *Ibid*. 75. Al-Jāḥiẓ (*al-Ḥayawān* VI, 131-132) referred to this poem, and quoted two verses on the authority of Abū ʻUbaida, who, al-Jāḥiẓ says, preferred the poem of Imru'ul-Qais on the description of rain to this poem of ʻAbīd which deals with the same theme.

10. Still to see are the traces at ad-Dafīn, and
in the sand-slope of Dharwah, the sides of Uthal.
33 verses.[1]

11. Whose is the abode that has become desolate at al-Jināb
effaced all but a trench and traces like writing in a
book. 18 verses.[2]

12. Nay, there is no avoiding the encounter of noble knights
When they are called to an alarm, at once they ride forth.
18 verses[3]

Apart from these poems, Abū 'Ubaida also transmitted the *mu'allaqa* of 'Abīd (No.1 in the edition of Lyall), despite the fact that Ibn al-Shajarī does not refer to this in his anthology. Abū 'Ubaida cites this poem in his *Majāz*.[4]

In *al-Naqā'iḍ*, Abū 'Ubaida transmits three verses from 'Abīd in his account of yaum al-Nisār.[1]

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[1] *Mukhtārāt* 102. *Dīwān* 36. In *Mukhtārāt* (102) the word *Uthāl* in the verse is *dhiyāl*.

[2] *Ibid.* 105. *Ibid.* 73.

[3] *Ibid.* 106. *Dīwān* 14. al-Shajarī did not transmit the first eleven verses which are to be found in the *dīwān*.

[4] I.30. Abū al-Faraj in his biography of al-Ḥuṭai'a also cited one verse from this poem on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida (*Aghānī* XVI. 39-40)

In light of the fact that Abū 'Ubaida authenticated 14 poems of 'Abīd's, Ibn Sallām's statement that 'Abīd's poetry is "in a state of disorder and confusion and passing out of men's memories" and that he "knows no other poem other than "Malḥūb is desolate and its folks are gone"[2] seems untenable. A modern scholar, F. Gabrieli, in a paper discussing and analysing the poetry of 'Abīd, concludes that "the inclusive authenticity of the poetry of 'Abīd, against all criticism, results from an intrinsic examination of the dīwān itself which presents us with a character oddly unitarian and artistically coherent."[3] Again, in his article on 'Abīd in the E.I. Gabrieli says, "The very distinct archaism in the structure and the language of the dīwān is a strong argument for its authenticity."[4]

Naqā'iḍ Jarīr Wal-Farazdaq:

Al-Naqa'iḍ (flytings)[5] is a collection of diatribes

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1. I.245.
2. Aghānī XIX. 84.
3. A.D.R.A.T. 241.
4. EI$^2$ ('Abīd Ibn al-Abraṣ) I.99.
5. G.S. Fraser says "Flyting; a word used by late medieval Scottish poets for a personally cynically insulting poem. There is no equivalent word in Standard English. An equivalent phrase might be 'Comic invective'" Cf. "The Modern Writer and His World" (London 1964) 58.

on parallel themes, composed mainly by the two great Umayyad poets, al-Farazdaq (Hammām b. Ghālib) and Jarīr b. 'Aṭiyya. Its satirical nature has never been disputed, though Shawqī Ḍaif thinks that al-Naqā'iḍ are literary debates aimed at amusing the Arab communities of Baṣra.[1] Goldziher, on the other hand, thinks that they are poetical competitions "to be regarded as the most genuine expressions of the spirit of the Umayyad period."[2]

This collection was transmitted, as Ibn al-Nadīm states, by:[3]

1) Abū 'Ubaida.
2) Al-Aṣma'ī.
3) Abū Sa'id al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥusain al-Sukkarī.
4) Abū al-Mughīth al-Audī, on whose authority Tha'lab transmitts. [4]

Ibn al-Nādīm states explicitly that Abū 'Ubaida's transmission is the best one.[5] This statement may explain the continued existence of Abū 'Ubaida's transmission, while all others are lost. Abū 'Ubaida's transmission was passed down on the authority of al-Zīyādī, on the authority of al-Sukkarī, on the authority of Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida.[1]

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[1] Al-Taṭawwur wal-Tajdīd fī al-Shi'r al-Umawī (Cairo 1959) 200-204.
[2] A Short History of Arabic Literature, 27.
[3] Fihrist I.158.
[4] Al-Ghannāwī puts forward the view that al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī was the first reciter to transmit al-Naqā'iḍ, according to an allusion in al-Naqā'iḍ itself. Cf. his study entitled "Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq" 123.
[5] Fihrist I. 158.

It might be supposed from the title of the collection that *al-Naqā'iḍ* consists only of poems composed by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq. In fact, the first thirty poems by Jarīr are directed not against al-Farazdaq but against other minor poets and these are accompanied by 13 poems written by these poets against Jarīr. The total number of poems constituting the collection is 113, distributed as follows:

62 by Jarīr
38 " al-Farazdaq
6 " al-Ba'īth
5 " Ghassān b. Dhuhail
1 " 'Uqba b. Mulaiṣ
1 " Numair b. Shuraik, known as al-A'war al-Nabhānī.

The question inevitably arises whether Abū 'Ubaida collected all of the *naqā'iḍ* which al-Farazdaq and Jarīr composed against each other. Shawqī Ḍaif assumes that he did not, because there are in the *Dīwāns* of both poets some satirical poems not found in the collection and because he considers it unlikely that the two poets should have composed only a hundred poems (viz. the contents of the *Naqā'iḍ* excluding the thirteen poems written by al-Ba'īth, Ibn Dhuhail,

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[1] *Al-Naqā'iḍ* (S) (Cairo 1936) I.1.

Ibn Mulaiṣ and al-Nabhānī), a comparatively scanty number considering the long period (about 45 years) of dispute involved.[1]

To the best of our knowledge, the earliest attempt to reconstruct *al-Naqā'iḍ* was made by A.A. Bevan, the first editor of this collection. Bevan's edition was based upon three MSS., the first belonging to the Bodelian Library, the second to the British Museum, the third to the University of Strassburg. The first MS. consists of 113 poems, the second of 70 poems, the third of 88 poems.[2] By collation of these, Bevan attempts to reconstruct the complete collection of *al-Naqā'iḍ*. A further attempt was made by Dr. Muḥmūd al-Ghannāwī in his study "*Naqa'iḍ Jarir wal-Farazdaq*". Besides the three MSS. upon which Bevan based his edition, al-Ghannāwī found a fourth in Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya

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[1] *Al-Taṭawwur wal-Tajdīd fī al-Shi'r al-Umawī*, 222. The dispute, Brockelmann assumes, started in the time of 'Abdullah b. al-Zubair (65-67/684-686), and lasted until the death of al-Farazdaq about 110/728. Cf. *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabi* (I.217). Also Aḥmad al-Shāyib "*Tārīkh al-Naqa'iḍ fi al-Shi'r al-'Arabī*" (Cairo 1946) 282. Al-Gannāwī, on the other hand, rightly thinks, that the dispute between Jarīr and Ghassān b. Dhuhail started some time between 42 and 46 (A.H.), and that the dispute between Jarīr and al-Farazdaq started in 66/685. Cf. *Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq* 66, 73.

[2] The missing poems in the second MS. are 1-5,8-26,37,38, 79,80,88,90,91,102,103, in the third 8-13,49,50,53-56, 63-66, 71-74, 88,104-106, 109. Cf. *al-Naqā'iḍ*, introduction XII.

(No. 18 sh.) which contains 106 poems.[1] Al-Ghannāwī attaches much importance to this MS., because, he says, it not only helps us to rectify and correct the text, but also contains some verses not found in the other three MSS.[2] However, this fourth MS. does not answer the question whether Abū 'Ubaida put together all the poems which Jarīr and al-Farazdaq composed against each other. Al-Ghannāwī agrees with Shawqī Ḍaif that the extant collection of al-Naqā'iḍ is incomplete, but tries to discover the missing poems. He was able to add 31 poems ranging from one verse to seventy-seven verses in length.[3]

Obviously, all attempts to reconstruct the Naqā'iḍ transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida are invalid, unless we can ascertain the number of poems which Abū 'Ubaida transmitted as naqā'iḍ. We cannot simply add any satirical poem composed by Jarīr against al-Farazdaq or of al-Farazdaq against Jarīr

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1. The missing poems are, 85, 86, 88, 104, 105, 106, 109. Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq, 30.
2. Ibid. 32.
3. Ibid. 426-437. We may add another naqīḍa to this supplement which is to be found in an old edition of the dīwān of Jarīr published in (Cairo 1313 A.H.) II.54. This naqīḍa starts with al-Farazdaq's two verses:

فاني انا الموت الذي هو واقع    بنفسك فانظر كيف انت مزاوله
وما احد يا ابن الاتان بوائل    من الموت ان الموت لاشك نائله

Jarīr answers with the following two verses:

انا البدر يغشى نور عينيك فالتمس    بكفيك يا ابن القين هل انت نائله
انا الدهر يفنى الموت والدهر خالد    فجئني بمثل الدهر شيئا يطاوله

to the *Naqā'iḍ*, since it is not known whether Abū 'Ubaida had in mind, when he transmitted the *Naqā'iḍ*, the aim of collecting all the satirical poems of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq against one another. This assumption, however, can neither be substantiated nor accepted as a working hypothesis for the sake of argument. If Abū 'Ubaida's aim was to collect all the satirical poems of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq against one another, one may ask why Abū 'Ubaida then excluded certain satirical poems from his collection.[1] Abū 'Ubaida, it would seem, had a specific conception of the term *naqīḍa* which, by definition, excluded some poems and included others.

Etymologically[2] a *naqīḍa* should, figuratively speaking, put down, destroy or reverse the allegations of another poet. In other words a *naqīḍa* must be a reply in the same rhyme, repudiating or refuting an allegation. Thus a *naqīḍa* is not simply any satirical poem. The collection undoubtedly reveals that Abū 'Ubaida *did* have this concrete conception of the term naqīḍa in accordance with the above definition. For, to Abū 'Ubaida a naqīḍa must have a counterpart, dealing with the same theme, and having the same rhyme. Concerning naqīḍa no. 107 for instance which was composed by al-Farazdaq and directed against al-Bāhilī, Abū 'Ubaida says, "When al-Bāhilī found himself unable to repudiate it, Jarīr replied."[1]

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[1] It is almost certain that Abū 'Ubaida's intention was not to collect all the satirical poems composed by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq. Thus Muḥammad b. al-Mubārak in his book "*Muntahā al-Ṭalab min Ash'ār al-A'rab*, observes that one of the satirical poems he chose by Jarīr in his collection "does not occur in the *Naqā'iḍ*". Cf. "Notes of an Unknown Anthology of Ancient Arabic poetry". *JRAS*. (1937) 439.

[2] The word *naqaḍa* means "to pull down a house, to break a compact, to reverse a judgment or untwist a rope". Cf. *Lisān* (*naqḍ*) VII.242.

On other occasion Abū 'Ubaida says in regard to the following naqā'iḍ (nos. 16,17,18,19, and 24 composed by Jarīr)

A naqīḍa has not been heard of...[2]
A naqīḍa has not been found of ...[3]
We have not found a naqīḍa of ...[4]
It has no naqīḍa.[5]
It has no naqīḍa.[6]
It has no naqīḍa.[7]

Undoubtedly, Abū 'Ubaida would not have made such statements, had he not held a conception of naqīḍa which considered a counterpart to be an essential feature of the art-form.[1]

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[1] Naqā'iḍ II. 1031.
[2] Ibid. (S) I.28.
[3] Ibid. (S)
[4] Ibid. (S) I.29.
[5] Ibid. (S)
[6] Ibid. (S) I.30.
[7] Ibid. (S) I.36.

The difference between Bevan's attempt to reconstruct *al-Naqā'iḍ* and that of al-Ghannāwī is that the former aimed at putting together the poems which Abū 'Ubaida actually transmitted and considered *naqā'iḍ* in the sense defined above, while the latter aimed at putting together every thing he considered to belong to the *naqā'iḍ* of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, regardless of whether Abū 'Ubaida transmitted it or not. Hence, it would seem that the collection of Bevan is nearer to the actual transmission of Abū 'Ubaida.[2]

One problem concerning the *Naqā'iḍ* may be mentioned briefly, namely that of order. It is commonly agreed that the present order does not relate to any chronological sequence. Bevan observes that "the order of the poems differs so widely in the three MSS. It is manifestly illegitimate to assume that any one MS. gives us the order which was adopted by Abū 'Ubaida himself."[1] No attempt is therefore made by the editor to re-arrange the Naqā'iḍ chronologically, but al-Ghannāwī does make an attempt, and using internal evidence provided by the poems themselves, arrived at an order which differs widely from that of Bevan collection.[2] It is unlikely however that al-Ghannāwī has thereby come closer to the order adopted by Abū 'Ubaida, unless Abū 'Ubaida attempted to arrange the poems in chronological order and this of course we do not know that he did.

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[1] It is true that these poems without ripostes or counterparts such as *naqā'iḍ* nos.36,37,38 by al-Ba'īth and *naqīḍa* no. 88 and 104 by Jarīr. In Bevan's edition of *al-Naqā'iḍ*, it appears that the counterpart of *naqīḍa* 88 is *naqīḍa* 89. But a careful examination shows that *naqīḍa* 89 is in fact the counterpart of *naqīḍa* 87 judging from the similarity in theme, and more or less of rhyme. (*naqīḍa* 87 rhymes in *qāf alif* as e.g. *rīqā*, and *naqīḍa* 89 in *qāf* as e.g. *mūthaqu*.) Hence, it would seem that *naqīḍa* 88 is without a counterpart, and was inserted between *naqīḍa* 87 and 89 arbitrarily. On the other hand, the counterpart of *naqīḍa* 104 by Jarīr is to be found in his *dīwān* (I.111) published in Cairo 1313 A.H.

[2] We should like to note here that we by no means suggest that the 31 additional poems discovered by al-Ghannāwī are not *naqā'iḍ*. They are in fact part of *al-Naqā'iḍ* in so far as they were 'flytings' composed by the two poets concerned. Due to our primary concern with Abū 'Ubaida's transmissions these *naqā'iḍ* are disregarded.

Al-Khail and al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara:

Two other "anthologies" still exist apart from al-Naqā'iḍ. They are Kitāb al-Khail and al-'Aqaqa Wal-Barara.

To call these two "anthologies" is rather an overstatement, since the first is a book on horses with a number of poems describing them. The second treatise is a very small pamphlet containing a few poetical pieces dealing with "filial ingratitude". However, they are considered as anthologies here because they comprise an independent source containing a considerable body of poetry dealing with a distinct subject, attributed to a number of pre-Islamic and

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1. Naqā'iḍ, introduction I.XVI.
2. Naqa'iḍ Jarīr wal-Faradaq 116-121.

Islamic poets. Apart from the prose element, the feature which differentiates these two anthologies from al-Naqā'iḍ is that they contain extracts and selected pieces, while the latter is made up of complete long poems.

Dr. 'E. Musṭafa, discussing anthologies based on extracts, points out that "the arrangement of the anthology [i.e. Ḥamāsa of Abū Tammām] is, however, completely new. Before al-Ḥamāsa no anthology or dīwān or collected poetic work of any type, was arranged according to subject matter."[1] Since however Abū 'Ubaida's anthologies conform to this criterion this statement is hardly acceptable. From the historical point of view therefore the priority in this respect must be given to Abū 'Ubaida.

Bearing in mind the fact that in al-Khail and al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara attention was focussed on extract, rather than complete poems, the question as to the criteria according to which selection was made comes to the fore.

At the beginning of the selection of poetry in al-Khail, Abū 'Ubaida simply states "And [something] of what the Arabs have said in their poetry on the description of horses",[2] but this prefatory note does not indicate his criteria. Thus, we have to go through the pieces themselves in order to see if any criteria for inclusion can be found.

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[1] 'Ezzedīn Ibrāhīm Muṣṭafā "The Methods and Techniques of the Early Arab Anthologists"(Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1963) 183.

[2] Al-Khail, 146.

Abū 'Ubaida allowed himself great latitude in selecting, and it seems that he was influenced by his own personal taste and the selection undoubtedly shows an inclination towards poetry that possesses philological rather than literary value.

However, two further points arise from the collection as a whole. Firstly the reputation of the poet in regard to the description of horses, and secondly whether the piece chosen is excellent as such, irrespective of the poet who wrote it.

It was made clear by the compiler himself that he had chosen seven poems by one poet, Abū Dūwād, because he "was the best amongst Arab [poets] in describing horses."[1] ? He also states that Ṭufail al-Ghannāwī was called Ṭufail al-Khail and al-Muḥabbar because of the excellence of his poetry.[2] Further, he chose the two well-known poems of Imru'ul-Qais and 'Alqama al-Faḥl on the description of horses.[3] He did therefore choose the poems because of their excellence and the specialised knowledge of the poets.

The anthology is unique in its treatment of a particular and specialized subject. In other Arabic anthologies, the pieces selected usually deal with a few conventional subjects, such as "Apologies", "Self-praise", "Dirges", "Satires", "Panegyrics" and "Description". As an anthology devotes to one subject Kitāb al-Khail stands unrivalled.

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[1] *Ibid.* 141

[2] *Ibid.* 150-151.

[3] *Ibid.* 136-137.

Looking for the main characteristics of this anthology; three features stand out (a) the shortness of the piece cited, (b) the unity of the piece, (c) archaic vocabulary.

The number of verses in those pieces ranges from 3 to 26 (in the longest poem, that of Ṭufail al-Ghanāwī). The shortness of the pieces is quite justifiable, since one may assume them rightly, to be extracted from longer poems. As is generally known, the Arabic qaṣīda consists of many parts. It starts with the traditional erotic prelude and the description of the desolate encampment and proceeds to describe the journey of the poet to the person whom he intends to praise. This, in fact, gives the poet ample scope for describing the terrors of the desert and for comparing his camel or horse to various animals of the desert.[1] Thus, descriptions of horses, when they occur, would occupy usually only a small part of the whole qaṣīda, but the pieces extracted have an organic unity in themselves both because of the way in which they have been chosen and because of the

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1. Krenkow, EI$^{(1)}$ (ḳaṣīda) vol.2. part 2. p.796.

nature of the qaṣīda since it deals with a number of more or less unconnected themes.

Judged by diction and imagery, it could be said that this anthology reflects to a great extent Bedouin life and spirit, and allied to the rough, unpolished diction one finds archaic vocabulary. The images are strange or beyond the imagination of the modern reader, but the structure is tightly knit, grand and stately. Even the poems by Islamic poets, al-'Ajjāj and Ibn Qais al-Ruqayyāt for instance, show the same features.

The poems are assembled haphazardly, neither metre nor the name of the poet nor chronology being taken into account. A few poems by Abū Dūwād, for example, are assembled in one place,[1] and then another piece by the same poet is given elsewhere.[2] The whole collection consists of 53 poems by 37 poets, distributed according to their metre to (10) poems in khafīf, (9) in baṣīṭ, (8) in kāmil, (7) in mutaqārib, (6) in ṭawīl, (5) in ramal, (3) in wāfir, (2) in rajaz (2) in hazaj and (1) in munsariḥ.

As for al-'Aqaqa wal-Barara, the prefatory note indicates that Abū 'Ubaida's aim was to collect poems on "filial ingratitude".[3]

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[1] Ibid. 141-145.
[2] Ibid. 147.
[3] 'Abd al-Salām Harūn, Nawādir al-M~~u~~akhṭūṭāt (No.7) (Cairo 1955) 352.

Almost all the poets whose poems are cited in this very small anthology are, with the exception of al-Ḥuṭai'a and A'shā Sulaim, obscure and unimportant.

The pieces are short, ranging from 1 to 8 verses, with the solitary exception of Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd's poem which is believed to be complete and consists of 34 verses.

The whole collection consists of 30 pieces by 21 poets.

Unlike the previous anthology, Abū 'Ubaida transmits each piece with an editorial note explaining the occasion on which the poem was written.

Owing to the fact that these poems are expressions of strong momentary feelings, the collection is characterised by two distinct features. Firstly, the shortness of the pieces and secondly simplicity and ease of diction and tender and ardent passion.

With regard to Abū 'Ubaida's transmissions one further point should not be forgotten. The few dīwāns and anthologies that have been discussed in order to find out the amount of Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions certainly do not contain all his contributions in this field. It has already been made clear in this thesis that Abū 'Ubaida was a prolific transmitter of pre-Islamic poetry. Although Ibn al-Nadīm does not refer to Abū 'Ubaida's activities in this respect, the mere fact that he was not only a reciter, but a philologist, a chronicler and a commentator, required a vast knowledge of Arabic poetry and a memory that could store all that had been composed in pre-Islamic times. A glance at the poetical insertions in the Ayyām suffices to demonstrate the abundance of his poetical transmissions, as the quotations in the Ayyām constitute themselves a sizeable anthology or martial poetry.

Only those dīwāns have been examined in which some definite allusions to Abū 'Ubaida being a transmitter have been found. As the transmission of those dīwāns was more often than not the work of a number of transmitters, it seemed desirable to try and isolate Abū 'Ubaida's contribution.

In the process of transmitting poetry, Abū 'Ubaida was engaged in a two-fold task: on the one hand, setting right the discrepancies contained in the texts, and authenticating poems the authorship of which was doubtful, and on the other hand evaluating and judging the poems and poets. The first may be called "textual criticism", the second "literary criticism". In the following chapter these two questions will be discussed in more detail.

# CHAPTER V

## Method of Transmission

With regard to the transmission of poetry, Abū 'Ubaida's work can be considered under two main and complementary headings. He was concerned on the one hand with problems of authenticity, including questions of naḥl and intiḥāl, ṣan'a, and taṣḥīf and taḥrīf; and on the other with analysing and evaluating that poetry. These are really two aspects of the same critical task, the first part deals with textual criticism in so far as it tackles the text itself to the exclusion of purely aesthetic judgments. The second part is more or less literary and comparative, and is mainly concerned with evaluating the poetry as such.

These two aspects of Abū 'Ubaida's activities are the subjects of the present chapter, which deals first with problems of authenticity.

### Textual Criticism:

Textual criticism for Abū 'Ubaida deals with three questions, namely naḥl and intiḥāl (false ascription, and wrongfully claiming poetry), ṣan'a (forging) and al-taṣḥīf wal-taḥrīf (roughly, mistakes of orthography and vocalization).

It is generally agreed that Arab critic-reciters came up against these questions from the very beginning of their endeavours to collect and pass down Arabic poetry. Abū

'Ubaida made many observations in this respect which indicate the great importance he attached to these questions, and the critical outlook with which he examined and scrutinized transmitted material, in order to separate spurious from genuine verse.

Problems of authenticity were referred to by early Arab authors, notably Ibn Sallām, and have been investigated at length by a number of modern scholars.[1]

### Naḥl, intiḥāl and tanaḥḥul:

It is fairly clear that modern scholars, Ṭāha Ḥusain in particular, have used the term *naḥl* to indicate forgery (i.e. *ṣan'a*). In fact, these two terms are not synonymous. *Naḥl* and *intiḥal* existed, as literary phenomena, in the pre-Islamic period, while *ṣan'a* occurred in Islam as a result of social, political and religious factors.[2] Thus al-A'shā, a Jāhilī poet, refers to this phenomena in his poetry. He says:

"What a disgrace! Being accused of plagiarism (*Wantiḥālī al-qawāfī*) in my old age."[3]

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[1] D. Margoliouth in "The Origins of Arabic Poetry" in *JRAS* (1925): pp.417-449. Dr. Ṭāhā Ḥusain "*Fī al-Adab al-Jāhilī*" (Cairo 1927): Dr. M. A. 'Azzām "*A Critical Study of the Poetry of the Sīra of Ibn Hishām*" Thesis, University of London 1953: Dr. W.'Arafāt "*A Critical Introduction to the Study of the Poems Ascribed to Ḥassān Ibn Thabit*" Thesis, University of London, 1954, and "Early Critics of the Authenticity of the Poetry of the Sira" in *BSOAS*, (1958) pp. 453-463.

[2] Ṭ. Ḥusain "*Fī al-Adab al-Jāhilī*" 117-181.

[3] *Lisān* (*naḥl*) XI. 651.

Other poets tried to make certain that their poems would not be claimed by others or wrongly ascribed, by mentioning their names in it, or by leaving a specific sign to indicate their authorship as Bashāma b. Ghadīr did.[1]

There was genuine difficulty, however, for the Arab reciters in attributing a poem to the correct author, since wrongly ascribing and claiming poetry has long been familiar phenomena, and were widely practised. What probably makes definitive judgment more difficult is the comparative lack of recorded dīwāns and other documents.

Abū 'Ubaida refers to the term tanaḥḥul and gives it a clear definition namely "al-tanaḥḥul is [falsely] claiming and plagiarising poetry"[2] a definition substantially the same as that of Ibn Manẓūr.[3]

Abū 'Ubaida, it is reported, used not to accept the ascription of a poem without examination and verification. He once heard Abū al-Za'ara' reciting a verse said to be by Ṭarafa. As Abū 'Ubaida had previously attributed it to Yazīd b. al-Ḥakam al-Thaqafī, he asked Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' about it, and the latter (clearly accepted as a reliable authority in this case) said that Abū al-Za'arā' was right.[4]

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[1] The Ḥamāsa of Abū Tammām (Bonn 1828) I. 194.

[2] Naqā'iḍ (S) II.32.

[3] Lisān (naḥl) XI. 650.

[4] Aghānī XI. 104.

Elsewhere, Abū 'Ubaida says: "Qirād b. Ḥanash was one of the poets of the Ghaṭafān, and a good one. Other poets of the Ghaṭafān used to claim his poetry. One of them was Zuhair b. Abī Sulmā who claimed these verses [following] ..."[1] The story suggests that Abū 'Ubaida realised that one of the reasons which tempt poets to claim as their own the poetry of others is the excellence of the poem concerned.

The terms intiḥāl and naḥl can therefore be differentiated as follows: whereas a false claim to the poetry of another (intiḥal) was a deliberate action on the part of the claimant, as in the case of Zuhair, naḥl results from the ignorance of the reciters concerning an author's identity.

Abū 'Ubaida has left some valuable examples of naḥl especially in Kitāb al-Khail. The following are a few representative examples:-

1. Regarding Yazīd b. Ḍabba's poem, he says, "Some people have [wrongly] ascribed it to Abū Dūwād."[2]
2. Concerning one of Imrū' ul-Qais' poems he says, "This poem is mixed with material by Rabī'a b. Jashm al-Nimrī."[3]
3. In regard to Ibrāhīm b. 'Imrān's poem, he states, "This poem is wrongly ascribed to Imru' ul-Qais."[4]

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1. Sharḥ Dīwān Zuhair b. Abī Sulmā (Cairo 1944) 334; al-Muwashshaḥ 47; Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā' 568.
2. al-Khail 141.
3. Ibid. 139-141.
4. Ibid. 160.

4. In regard to Ṣa'ṣa'a's poem he comments, "These verses are [wrongly] ascribed to Hāritha b. Badr al-Ghundānī."[1]
5. Abū 'Ubaida transmitted three pieces by an unknown poet saying that people used to ascribe them wrongly to Abū Dūwād.[2]

These few examples demonstrate his interest in establishing the real author of any particular poem. His extensive knowledge and consequently his correct conclusions acquired for him a fine reputation, and people used to consult him about poems, when they did not know to whom they should be attributed.

(b) Ṣan'a':

The problem of spurious poetry (al-ṣan'a) was clearly referred to by Ibn Sallām who "points out that when Islam came, the Arabs occupied themselves with other matters to the neglect of poetry and that when later on they turned to it again, they found they had too little poetry, and therefore tried to supplement it."[3]

Al-Jāḥiẓ in his Ḥayawān speaks of the abundance of poetry in some Arab tribes and its scarcity in others, thus indirectly corroborating Ibn Sallām's statement.[1]

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[1] Ibid. 15.
[2] Ibid. 54-55. Another example al-Iqtiḍāb 324.
[3] "Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā'" 39-40 as summarized by Dr. W. 'Arafāt BSOAS (1958) 453.

It should be noted, however, that early reciters such as Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' and al-Aṣma'ī had noticed the existence of this literary phenomenon and to some extent took part in it.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida, as we have seen in his transmissions of poetry, seems to have accepted pre-Islamic poetry as genuine, though with some reservations, and hence he authenticated but little by each poet. He did not trust any source whatever, even the Bedouins in Baṣra. Abū 'Ubaida, as Ibn Sallām reports, rejected the poems recited to him by the son of Mutammim b. Nuwaira when he realised that Mutammim had not composed them.[3]

However, he added to the poems which he heard from his teachers if he was quite certain that the new verses formed part of the original piece, and, conversely, he deleted any verses if he was uncertain of their authenticity. Tha'lab, for instance, in "Sharḥ Dīwān Zuhair Ibn Abī Sulmā", transmitted a poem and, having reached verse 38, says "This is the end of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā's transmission, whereas Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī have transmitted [the following]..." and he added another seven verses.[4] On the other hand,

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1. "Ḥayawān" IV. 380.
2. Tārīkh Ādāb al-'Arab I. 383. Aghānī III. 23.
3. Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā' 40.
4. Dīwān 141. For another example Cf. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Anbārī, "Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl al-Jāhiliyyāt" (Cairo 1963) 115.

al-Jāḥiẓ relates on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida part of a poem by al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza and rejects the rest of it because Abū 'Ubaida had said it was spurious.[1]

In the light of this scrupulousness, it can be said that there is no solid ground for the charge made by Goldziher against Abū 'Ubaida that he was a forger and that he did not hesitate to fabricate poems in order to support one particular party,[2] or for the accusation made by Ṭāha Ḥusain to the effect that both Abū 'Ubaida and al-Aṣma'ī fabricated the two well-known poems on horses ascribed to 'Alqama and Imru' ul-Qais.[3]

For this charge, however, no supporting evidence is to be found, whereas the evidence of his honesty abounds. 'Alī b. al-Madīnī, for instance, states: "He [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] was a most correct transmitter of traditional literature: never did he give as a genuine production of the desert Arab a piece which was not authentic."[4]

It is noteworthy that charges of forgery have been made against Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' and al-Aṣma'ī, let alone the two notorious reciters, Ḥammād and Khalaf,[5] but nothing of this sort was alleged in ancient times against Abū 'Ubaida.

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1. Ḥayawān III, 449-450.
2. Quoted by Pellat in "al-Jāḥiẓ wa-athar al-Jaww al-Baṣrī fīhi" 201.
3. "Fī al-Adab al-Jāhilī" 223-224.
4. "Wafayāt" III. 391.
5. "Tarīkh Ādāb al-'Arab" I. 383.

Having discussed Abū 'Ubaida's efforts at ascertaining the authenticity of the Arabic poetry he transmitted, it now becomes necessary to investigate his method of dealing with the problems of nahl and san'a and to examine the criteria by which he distinguished genuine poetry from spurious and established the true identity of the author of a poem.

Abū 'Ubaida established his method on external and internal evidence. The external evidence is concerned with the circumstances which led to the production of the poem and then to its transmission. The internal evidence is derived from a comparison of the characteristics of the poem under consideration with the acknowledged distinctive qualities of the poet it is ascribed to, or to be ascribed to.

In his account of Yaum al-Nisār, Abū 'Ubaida does not accept as authentic the poem of 'Auf b. 'Aṭiyya al-Taimī, in which al-Aswad is mentioned as having been the head of al-Ribāb on that Day, on the grounds that al-Aswad was not even present at that particular battle.[1]

Again he considered spurious the poem by Hind d. al-Nu'mān which he transmitted because no other trustworthy reciter knew it.[2]

As for internal evidence, Abū 'Ubaida attaches much importance to the main characteristics of the poet concerned which serve as a "touchstone". A poem which is incompatible with the distinctive qualities of the poet can not be by him and is therefore spurious. Two examples may suffice to demonstrate this.

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[1] al-Naqā'iḍ (S) I. 225.

[2] al-Muzhir I. 180.

Abū 'Ubaida relates that the son of Mutammim b. Nuwaira had come to Baṣra, and that Ibn Nūḥ and he went to see him. Having satisfied him and met his needs, they asked him about his father's poetry, which he recited to them. When he had finished his father's poems, he started fabricating poems falsely attributed to his father, purely for monetary gain. Abū 'Ubaida and his friend soon realised that the latter poems differed from Mutammim's real poetry, despite the fact that he (i.e. Mutammim's son) was capable of imitating his father's poems skilfully, mentioning the places his father had visited, and the battles in which he had taken part. Nevertheless when he continued, Abū 'Ubaida said, "We realised that he was forging."[1]

The second story demonstrates the same thing. Abū 'Ubaida related that he heard Bashshār once reciting a verse said to be by al-A'shā, but Bashshār rejected it on the grounds that it was not in keeping with al-A'shā's poetry. Abū 'Ubaida admired this remark and considered Bashshār a good critic. Later on, Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' admitted that he wrote this verse and had ascribed it to al-A'shā.[2]

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1. Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā' 40.
2. Aghānī III. 23.

Abū 'Ubaida's method seems to be based on, firstly, the consensus of the reciters; secondly, on the consistency of the events described in the poems with the actual events; and thirdly, the compatibility between the general characteristics of the poet's work and the poem under consideration. This method is sound as long as it can be applied to every suspect poem, but this is a very onerous task. Besides, it is not infallible. The better the poetry, the less likely is this method to detect it, and we are informed that forgers were often too competent to leave any trace which might smack of forgery. Al-Mufaḍḍal is reported to have said that the corruption which poetry suffered through Ḥammād could never be repaired, "for Ḥammād is a man skilled in the language and poetry of the Arabs and in the styles and ideas of the poets, and he is always making verses in imitation of someone and introducing them into genuine compositions by that author, so that the copy passes everywhere for part of the original, and cannot be distinguished from it except by critical scholars: and where are such to be found?"[1]

(c) Taṣḥīf and Taḥrīf:

Al-Taṣḥīf, as Ibn Manẓūr says, "is a mistake in the ṣaḥīfa", while al-Taḥrīf is a changing of the meaning of a word.[2] Essentially, both terms signify a corruption in the usage of words which causes a change of meaning.

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[1] Aghānī (D) VI. 89.

[2] Lisān (ṣuḥuf) IX. 187, (ḥarf) 43.

To the ancient reciters there was no definite distinction between these two terms. Al-Suyūṭī, for instance, writes a chapter "On Knowing *al-Taṣḥīf* and *al-Taḥrīf*",[1] but he does not use the second term at all in his discussion. Furthermore, the anecdotes he relates about early eminent reciters indicates that they[2] do not use the term *taḥrīf* to signify a particular kind of mistake. Al-Aṣma'ī, however, in his statements, and Ibn Duraid, in one statement, use the verb "*akhṭa'a*" (made a mistake) to explain *al-taḥrīf*.[3] In this respect Abū 'Ubaida was no exception. He used to criticise those who committed *taṣḥīf*, although he himself was accused of being a musahhif. In his book *Sharḥ mā yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf*, al-'Askarī has a chapter on "Abū 'Ubaida's mistakes",[4] and he relates on the authority of Kīsān that once Abū 'Ubaida recited a verse by 'Abdullah b.

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[1] *Muzhir* II 353 sqq.

[2] Such as Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', 'Īsa b. 'Umar, Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī, al-Jāḥiẓ Abū Bakr al-Zubaidī, Ḥammād, Ibn Duraid, Abū 'Ubaida.

[3] *Muzhir* II 360, 364, 358. According to 'Abd al-Ṣalām Hārūn, it was Ibn Ḥajar who first accurately distinguished these two terms when he used the term *taṣḥīf* to indicate confusion (*iltibās*) in the pointing of letters of the same shape (such as *fa* and *qaf*,or *bā'* and *tā* etc) and *taḥrīf* to signify the changing of the form of the letters. Cf. *Taḥqīq al-Nuṣūṣ wa Nashruhā* (Cairo 1954), 51. This distinction came rather late, as Ibn Ḥajar was born in 773/1371, and accordingly the confusion in employing these two terms would seem to have been current at least until the beginning of the eighth century.

[4] pp.82-88.

Rawāḥa and said "Khazītu lahu", Kīsān said "By God, O Abū 'Ubaida, you have made a mistake, [the word] is "khadhītu lahu", on which Abū 'Ubaida replied, "You are right, O Abū Sulaimān".[1]

Abū 'Ubaida uses the term taṣḥīf to indicate alterations in words and, more generally, discrepancies in transmission. Thus when al-Aṣma'ī recited the verse:

والواح وهبٍ كأن النسوعَ        أُبِّنَّ في الدف منها سطارا

Abū 'Ubaida accused him of being a musahhif, as the verse should run:

والواح وهبٍ كأن النسوعَ        بَيَّنَّ في الدف منها سطارا [2]

Again, he said with regard to the verse:

من السُّح جوالٍ كأن غلامه        يُصرِّف سبداً في العنان عمرّدا

that "al-muṣaḥḥifūn of this word sibd are many; they say sīd [a wolf] while it is actually sibd, with bā'. It has been said fulān sibdu asbād."[3]

Abū 'Ubaida's remarks in this connection are numerous and deal with two points. Firstly alterations in vowelling and grammar; e.g.

1. In dīwān Zuhair, يغشى السفائنَ موجَ اللجةِ العَرِكُ
   Abū 'Ubaida transmitted يغشى السفائنَ موجُ اللجةِ العَرِكُ [4]

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[1] Sharḥ mā yaqa' fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf, 83-84.
[2] Ibid. 106.
[3] "al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā'" 21.
[4] p.167. Cf. also al-Zubaidī "Laḥn al-'Awāmm" (Cairo 1964) 57.

ومستدبرٍ بالذي عنده

2. In diwān al-A'shā ومستدبراً بالذي عنده [1]

Abū 'Ubaida transmitted

Secondly in the letters. The following are a few examples out of the many which can be found in the sources.[2]

1. al-Mufaḍḍal recited واذا المرضيابها طُرِقَتْ

Abū 'Ubaida recited واذا المرضيابها طُرِفَتْ [3]

2. Tha'lab recited وبلدةٍ يرهب الجوال دلجتها

Abū 'Ubaida recited وبلدةٍ يهرب الجوال دلجتها [4]

3. Tha'lab also transmitted بينْ بني تَرَجان في البأس رُجُح

Abū 'Ubaida transmitted بينْ بني بَرَجان في الناس الرُّجُح [5]

In putting right all these misconstructions, misspellings and wrong vocalizations Abū 'Ubaida based his corrections on his understanding of the text and the harmony of the particular word with the whole verse. Abū 'Ubaida's comment on the following verse discloses his method.

زوجك يا ذات الثنايا الغُرِّ الرتلاتِ والجبين الحُرِّ

He says of this verse "al-Muṣaḥḥifūn and those who rely on manuscripts recite this as al-rabilāt. What is the connection between al-rabilāt (the origins of the thigh) and al-thanāya (the teeth) and al-jabīn (the forehead)?" "Al-rabilāt", he goes on, "means the origins of thigh. One says rajulun arbalun, if he has a big thigh; therefore the word must be

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1. p.21.
2. See notably al-'Askarī's book "Sharḥ mā yaqa' Fīhi al-Taṣḥīf wal-Taḥrīf" and "Dīwān al-A'shā".
3. "al-Fāḍil" 82.
4. "Dīwān al-A'shā" 83.
5. Ibid. 37.

al-ratilāt with a tā'. [The Arabs] say thaghrun artalun, meaning a mouth, the front teeth of which are separated."[1]

Another example is furnished by the verse:-

وعدتَ وكان الخلف منك سجية
مواعيد عرقوب اخاه بيثرب

in which Abū 'Ubaida rejects Yathrib and suggests instead "Yatrib". His justification of this is that 'Urqūb mentioned in the verse is one of the 'Amālīq and that Yatrib is their homeland, so that it is more appropriate that the word should be Yatrib than Yathrib, where the 'Amālīq had never lived.[2]

Discrepancies in poetry were almost inevitable however. Gibb asks sceptically, "Was it really possible, given the utmost good faith of the rāwīs, to preserve the authentic original texts over so long a period from errors, revisions, some polishing here and there, or (especially in view of the rather loose articulation of the Arabian ode) from omissions or misplacements? Might not reciters make mistakes over authorship, attributing poems to the wrong poet, or transferring verses with like metre and rhyme from one poem to another"?[3]

Faced with such difficulties, the reciters considered it part of their task to put everything right, and so for the sake of passing down the exact text they engaged in

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1. al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 21.
2. Lisān (turb) I. 231.
3. Arabic Literature, Second (revised) edition (Oxford 1963) 20.

correcting poetry as, for instance, Khalaf al-Aḥmar did, when he corrected a verse by Jarīr.[1] It may be worth mentioning that Khalaf himself advised al-Aṣma'ī to correct poetry because "the rāwīs used to correct the poetry of the ancient poets."[2]

What Abū 'Ubaida had done was actually in keeping with the general attitude of Arab reciters to problems of authenticity. Of course one cannot presume that all Abū 'Ubaida's attempts in this respect were justified. Mention has been made of the fact that even Abū 'Ubaida was accused of making mistakes, particularly in regard to taṣḥīf and taḥrīf. But in each individual case close examination will show that good reasons, such as the consistency of the word in question with the context or the general meaning of the verse, actuated Abū 'Ubaida to make his correction.

Textual criticism, however, for Abū 'Ubaida was not divorced from literary questions, and was concerned with evaluation and comparison. It is now time to examine this more closely and in detail.

## Literary Criticism:

In the process of transmitting Arabic poetry, Abū 'Ubaida manifests great interest in authenticating poetry, side by side with analysing and evaluating poetry. It would

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1. al-Muwashshaḥ 145.
2. Ibid. 125.

seem that Abū 'Ubaida's views on poetry and poets were propounded in his book entitled *al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā'* to which Ibn al-Nadīm refers,[1] or *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'* as other scholars call it.[2] This book is a study of poets according to the *Ṭabaqāt* conception.

## The Concept of Ṭabaqāt:

*Ṭabaqāt*, to quote Heffering, means "similar, lying above one another, and with regard to time, following one another ... [therefore] ... titles of books like *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'* indicate that in them successive generations of poets, singers, jurists, traditions etc., are dealt with, that men living at the same time form a *ṭabaqa*, a generation, stratum, or category."[3]

This definition is rather general. In poetical studies, the term *ṭabaqāt* has assumed a more definite significance. According to Ṭāha Ibrāhīm, this term came into existence when the reciters and philologists of the first century started to compare the three Umayyad poets, al-Farazdaq, al-Akhṭal and Jarīr, and regarded them as one class (*ṭabaqa*), possessing the same poetical standards and renown. Thus, the conception regarding some particular poets, on account of their standards, fame and other considerations, as one class became clear in the mind of the reciters of the second century of Islam including Abū 'Ubaida.

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[1] *Fihrist* 54.

[2] 'A. Mukhliṣ "Naqadāt" in *R.A.A.O.* (1927) VII. 553: Brockelmann *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* II. 143;
J. Zaidān *Tārīkh Ādāb al-Lugha al-'Arabiyya* (Cairo 1912) II. 101.

[3] *EI* (*Ṭabaḳāt*) Supp. 214.

According to this conception, poets were looked at both chronologically (in regard to their time), and aesthetically (in regard to their poetic standards).

Chronologically, four classes were distinguished:-

1. Al-Jāhiliyyūn (the pre-Islamic poets), who lived before Islam, and whose poetry was authoritative in reagrd to language, grammar and poetic structure.
2. Al-Mukhaḍramūn who lived before and partly in Islamic times. They were so termed because the word khaḍrama means to "cut off". This appellation was used figuratively as if the poets were cut off from paganism.[1]
3. Al-Islamiyyūn (Islamic poets) who were born and lived in Islamic times.
4. Al-Muḥdathūn (Modern poets), who were born and lived in the first 'Abbāsid period and after. They had absolutely no authority in regard to language and grammar, but they did have authority with respect to the rhetorical sciences. The appellation was given to them because of their recentness.[2]

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[1] Muzhir I. 296. Lisān (khiḍrim) XII. 185. The poets of this class were also called muḥaḍramūn. Cf. Lisān (ḥaḍram) XII. 137.

[2] Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon. Preface I. IX. EI$^{(1)}$ vol.III. part II. p.795. The poets of this class were also called muwalladūn. (Ibid.)

Aesthetically, the poets of each period, say the *Jāhiliyyūn*, were classified into three, sometimes more, classes, each class consisting of a certain number of poets, the number varying according to different critics. Again, poets of each class, say the first class of the *Jāhiliyyūn*, were arranged according to their poetical standards into the first poet, the second poet, the third poet, etc..[1]

Abū 'Ubaida was probably the first critic to give this conception special application in his book *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*, a fact which must be taken into account in a study concerned with this conception, and its development in literary studies.

In spite of the loss of this book, an approximate sketch can be drawn, based on information which other literary sources afford us.

*Abū 'Ubaida's classification of poets*:

Abū 'Ubaida accepts the chronological classification of poets, though he does not recognize the second class (*al-Mukhaḍramūn*). The justification for his overlooking this class seems fairly reasonable. Poets of this class, according to Abū 'Ubaida, must either be grouped with the *Jāhilī* poets if they are nearer to them in spirit, or with the Islamic poets if they are nearer to the Islamic spirit. Al-Ḥuṭai'a, for instance, was a mukhaḍram, but the main characteristics of his poetry seem to be those of the Jāhilī period, hence it is reasonable to group him with the pre-Islamic poets as Abū 'Ubaida did.[1] On the other hand, Ḥassān Ibn Thābit, who was also a mukhaḍram, was considered an Islamic poet, because the Islamic influence upon his poetry was conspicuous, and Abū 'Ubaida therefore grouped him with the Islamic poets.[2]

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[1] It must be noted, however, that classifying poets aesthetically has assumed another form in which poets were classified according to their poetical standards, and given the terms *khindhīdh*, *mufliq*, *shā'ir*, and *sha'rūr*, instead of the first, the second ... Cf. Ibn Rashīq, *al-'Umda* (Cairo, 1907) I. 74.

Abū 'Ubaida, then, recognizes, chronologically, three classes, each one consisting of many poets. Of the classification of poets according to their quality as conceived by Abū 'Ubaida, we have only a rough idea. Indeed, the information on this question is rather contradictory. An attempt has been made, notwithstanding, to sketch this classification as conceived by Abū 'Ubaida, followed by an exposition of his opinions regarding the poets of each class.

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1. Cf. Table No.1.
2. Cf. Table No.2.

## Table No. 1

## The Jahiliyyūn

### First Class

1) Imru' ul-Qais[1]
2) Zuhair Ibn Abī Sulmā[2]
3) Al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī[3]
4) Al-A'shā[4]

### Second Class

1) Ṭarafa Ibn al-'Abd[5]
2) Al-Ḥārith Ibn Ḥilliza[6]
3) 'Amr Ibn Kulthūm[7]
4) Suwaid Ibn Abī Kāhil[8]

### Third Class

1) Al-Muraqqash[9]
2) Ka'b Ibn Zuhair[10]
3) Al-Ḥuṭai'a[11]
4) Khidāsh Ibn Zuhair[12]
5) Duraid Ibn al-Ṣimma[13]
6) 'Antara Ibn Shaddād[14]
7) 'Urwa Ibn al-Ward[15]
8) Al-Nimr Ibn Tawlab[16]
9) Al-Shammākh Ibn Ḍirār[17]
10) 'Umar Ibn al-Aḥmar[18]
11) Aus Ibn Ḥajar[19]
12) Al-Nābigha al-Ja'dī[20]

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1-3 Al-Qurashī *Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab* (Būlāq 1308 A.H.) 34.
4. *Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā'* (Leiden 1902) 141.
5-8 *Ibid*. 92. 141.
9-18 *Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab* 35.
19-20 *Aghānī* X. 6. *Khizāna* IV. 286.

## Table No. 2

### The Islamic Poets

| | First Class[1] | Second Class | Third Class |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) | Ḥassān Ibn Thābit | Nil | Nil |
| 2) | Al-Farazdaq | | |
| 3) | Jarīr | | |
| 4) | Al-Akhṭal | | |

#### Second classification of the first class[2]

1) Al-Akhṭal
2) Jarīr
3) Al-Farazdaq

#### Third classification of the first class[3]

1) Al-Akhṭal
2) Al-Farazdaq
3) Jarīr

### The Muḥdathūn

#### First class[4]

1) Al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī
2) Bashshār Ibn Burd
3) Abū Nuwās )[5]
4) Al-Ṭirimmāḥ)

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[1] Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab 35.

[2] Aghānī VII. 172.

[3] Al-Mubarrad al-Fāḍil (Cairo 1956) 108. It is worthy of note that Ibn Sallām considers the three Umayyad poets mentioned above as one class, and adds another one, namely al-Rā'ī al-Numairī. Cf. Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā' 249-250.

[4] Aghānī VII. 4.

[5] Khizāna I. 315. Aghānī (D) VI, 95.

Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on the pre-Islamic poets:

The *Jāhilī* poets held a high position in Abū 'Ubaida's mind. In this, doubtless, he reflects the general predilection for these poets, a trend which dominated the literary life of his time. Four amongst these were, unanimously, considered the best, namely Imru' ul-Qais, Zuhair, al-Nābigha and al-A'shā. The early critics disputed a good deal on the question of who was the best of these four and this disagreement led them to explore their poetry in search of a justification of their views. Thus, a preference for one or another poet was no longer based on vague liking as was the case in earlier Islamic times. "The interest in the classification of poets" Von Grunebaum observes, "and their interdependence widened and naturally resulted in an increasingly close scrutiny of the extant works."[1]

Abū 'Ubaida records considerable divergence of opinions in regard to the four above-mentioned poets. Imru' ul-Qais, he relates, was preferred to the others because he introduced new elements into poetical style which have been adopted ever since.[2] To other critics, however, al-Nābigha was preferable because his poetry was devoid of useless verbiage and obscenity,[3] while another group of critics gave priority to al-A'shā, because he composed longer poems and was extremely versatile.[1] Lastly some critics acclaimed Zuhair because he was the best panegyrist.[2]

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[1] "Arabic Literary Criticism in the 10th Century A.D." in JAOS (1941) 51.
[2] *Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā'* 52, 53.
[3] *Ibid.* 78.

Abū 'Ubaida himself gives precedence to Imru' ul-Qais, the second poet to him being Zuhair, followed by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī. "Al-A'sha" Abū 'Ubaida says is the fourth among the Jāhiliyyūn. He is preferable to Ṭarafa because he composes longer poems, had greater ability to write at length on wine, and to praise and satirize."[3]

Another three poets were added by Abū 'Ubaida to the first class according to al-Qurashī in his Jamhara, namely Labīd, 'Amr b. Kulthūm and Ṭarafa. On the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, al-Qurashī relates that "the best poets are the Bedouins, especially Imru' ul-Qais, Zuhair and al-Nābigha". He adds, "To us Abū 'Ubaida's statement [in this connection] is the best one. Imru' ul-Qais must be the first, followed by Zuhair, al-Nābigha, Labīd, 'Amr b. Kulthūm and Ṭarafa..."[4]

In fact, al-Qurashī's additions to the list are suspect and contradicts two statements of Ibn Qutaiba on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. In one of these statements, Abū 'Ubaida says "Ṭarafa is the best [poet], but, I think, he cannot catch up with the great poets [al-fuḥūl], therefore he must be grouped with his followers, al-Ḥarith b. Ḥilliza, 'Amr b. Kulthūm, and Suwaid."[1] In his second statement, Abū 'Ubaida re-asserts his previous judgment saying "As for Ṭarafa, he should be grouped with al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza, 'Amr b. Kulthūm and Suwaid b. Abī Kāhil."[2]

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Ibid. 61.
[3] Ibid. 141.
[4] Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab 34.

In his classification, Abū 'Ubaida groups twelve poets together in the third class as it has been mentioned above, more than in either the first or second class. These poets, however, differ widely in quality, and this creates some doubts as to the correctness of the list.

## Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on the Islamic poets:

In the second half of the first century of Islam, poetry was the prevailing literary form. Many good poets lived at that time, but three, al-Farazdaq, Jarīr and al-Akhṭal, overshadowed the others and dominated literary circles. They attracted the attention of reciters, grammarians and people, and they were looked upon as forming one class. Abū 'Ubaida thinks that they were the best poets of the ahl al-Islam, in other version "shu'arā' al-Islam."

Much has been said of them, and they were often compared with poets of high standing amongst the Jāhilī poets. Abū 'Ubaida compares al-Farazdaq with Zuhair,[4] and relates that Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' used to compare al-Akhṭal with al-Nābigha.[1]

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[1] Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 92.
[2] Ibid. 141.
[3] Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab 35; Aghānī VII. 172.
[4] Khizāna I. 205.

Although the critics put these Islamic poets in one class, they disagreed on who was the best of them. It is related that Yūnus b. Ḥabīb said "I have not seen a majlis in which these two poets [i.e. al-Farazdaq and Jarir] were mentioned, where agreement was reached on which was the best."[2]

As is shown in the table for this class, three classifications were attributed to Abū 'Ubaida. In two of them priority was given to al-Akhṭal, and in one to al-Farazdaq. The former opinion seems to correspond most closely with Abū 'Ubaida's estimation of those two poets. In regard to al-Akhṭal, Abū 'Ubaida observes that "he was more akin to the Jāhilī poets as his style is compact, terse and devoid of rubbish,"[3] whereas "al-Farazdaq borrows ideas and poetry [from other poets]".[4] It is noteworthy, that Abū 'Ubaida reflects Abū 'Amr b. al-'Ala''s opinion on al-Akhṭal who greatly admired him. Abū 'Amr said "Had al-Akhṭal lived for one day in al-Jāhiliyya, I would not prefer any other poet to him."[5]

Ḥassān b. Thābit was regarded as the first among his

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1. Aghānī VII. 172.
2. al-Mubarrad Al-Fāḍil 109. Cf. also Ibn Rashīq al-'Umda (Cairo 1926) I.97.
3. Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 78. Aghānī VII. 172.
4. Al-Muwashshaḥ 110.
5. Aghānī VII. 172.

class according to al-Qurashī. The latter relates reputedly on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, "The best poets after Ḥassān are al-Farazdaq, Jarīr and al-Akhṭal."[1] The priority is given to Ḥassān on the basis that he was the poet of the Prophet, and that "no one [poet] could match the poet of the Prophet."[2] This arbitrary giving of the priority to Ḥassān cannot, of course, be accepted. Firstly, there is good reason to believe that Abū 'Ubaida is unlikely to have given preference to a poet on non-literary grounds. This would be out of character. And secondly al-Qurashī has been shown above to attribute a statement to Abū 'Ubaida which it is improbable that he really did make.

We know nothing about a second or a third class dealing with the Islamic poets.

### Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on the Modern Poets:

In regard to this class, Abū 'Ubaida uses the term muḥdith, and sometimes muwallad. Unlike the poets of the two previous classes the sources furnish us with little information concerning the classification of the modern poets.

The burning issue of literary criticism at this time was the struggle between the conservative (Jāhilī and early Islamic) and modern. Abū 'Ubaida admires pre-Islamic poetry for its own merit and not because it was pre-Islamic, but at the same time he voices his admiration for moderns such as Abū Nuwās, Bashshār b. Burd, al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī and al-Ṭirimmāḥ.[1] He even compares Abū Nuwās in relation to the modern poets with Imru' ul-Qais in relation to the Jāhilīs,[2] though this does not of course imply that he puts the two poets on an equal level.

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[1] Jamharat Ash'ār al-'Arab 35.
[2] Ibid.

Abū 'Ubaida clearly distinguishes between two different classes, each possessing its own features and characteristics. Thus, Abū Nuwās is the best in relation to his class, as Imru' ul-Qais in relation to his.

Abū 'Ubaida's attitude toward the modern poets was liberal in comparison with the general trend and the poetic criteria and values laid down by the philologists and the reciters of whom al-Aṣma'ī was an example, as the following story demonstrates:

> Isḥāq al-Mauṣilī said, "I recited the verses to al-Aṣma'ī:-
>
> Is there a way to get one glance at your face
> to quench the burning thirst of my desire?
> That which means little to you, means much to me
> and the little about her whom you love means much.

Al-Aṣma'ī said "By God, this is khusruwānī silk! Whose poem do you recite to me?" "They were composed last night" Isḥāq

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1. Khizāna I. 315; Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 28; Aghānī VII.4; Aghānī (D) VI. 95.
2. Khizāna I. 315.

said. Al-Asma'ī [then] said immediately, "There is no doubt that traces of artificiality are apparent in them."[1]

In fact, this issue was misunderstood by almost all authorities in poetry during the first two centuries. The modern poetry was evaluated according to the criteria applied to the older poetry, which was a gross error, since it neglected a very important factor in the shaping and creating of any artistic form, namely the factor of "time". Abū 'Ubaida had some conception of the importance of this factor. He understands poetry not as an isolated phenomenon, but as something which emerges from its environment. The relatively great change in the circumstances of life in Iraq at that time was likely to produce poetry different from that of previous ages, and this poetry must therefore be judged according to criteria of its own. Abū 'Ubaida, Muḥammad b. al-Arqaṭ relates, refrained from comparing Ibn Munādhir's poetry with that of 'Adyy b. Zaid, because one was Islamic poet and the other jāhilī.[2] In so doing, Abū 'Ubaida avoids giving absolute preference to Jāhilī poetry and rejecting the modern, unlike his teacher Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' who said, "If they [i.e. the modern poets] utter something fine it is an imitation of something that has been said before, but if they utter something poor that is their own work."[3]

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1. Al-Jurjānī, "al-Wasāṭa baina al-Mutanabbī wa Khuṣūmihi" (Ṣaidā 1913) 47.
2. Aghānī XVII. 12.
3. Ibid. XVI. 113.

It is much to be regretted that the information we possess on the classification and names of the poets of this class is almost nothing. We know that Abū 'Ubaida expressed admiration for Abū Nuwās, al-Ṭirimmāḥ, al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī and Bashshār b. Burd,[1] and very little more of the last two poets he says "the best poets among the moderns are al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī and Bashshār."[2] It may be, therefore, that Abū 'Ubaida considered those four poets as one class headed by al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī and Bashshār.

Abū 'Ubaida's aesthetic judgments of poetry:

On Abū 'Ubaida's conceptions of criticism, Abū al-Faraj in his Aghānī relates the following story: "Abu 'Ubaida said, 'I heard Bashshār reciting from al-A'shā's poetry:

> And she did not know me, and the accidents because
> of which she did not know me...
> Were none other than hoarness and baldness of the
> forepart of the head.

Bashshār denied that this line was al-A'shā's, because it did not resemble his poetry. Ten years later, I [i.e. Abū 'Ubaida] was with Yūnus, and he told me that Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' had composed this verse and ascribed it to al-A'shā." Abū 'Ubaida goes on to say "I was extremely astonished at his [i.e. Bashshār] cleverness, truth, intuition and the excellence of his critical ability."[1]

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[1] Khizāna I. 315; Aghānī (D) VI. 95; Aghānī VII. 4.
[2] Aghānī VIII. 4.

Criticism of poetry to Abū 'Ubaida would seem to consist in "a study of the poet's characteristics", the discovery of the poet's most prominent characteristics being the first step forward evaluating him in relation to other poets.

The application of this concept can be traced in his critical judgments, in which he stresses the 'characteristics' which make a poem good or bad.

The following characteristics are required to be observed in a good poem by his critical canons:

a) In regard to meaning: rarity, originality and clarity.[2]
b) In regard to form: excellence of poetic structure.[3]
c) In regard to the content: absence of offensive description[4] and ability to compose in different styles (aghrāḍ).[5]

In a bad poem the following defects may be observed which must be avoided:

a) In regard to meaning: imitation of others[6] and imperfect expression of an idea.[7]

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[1] Ibid. III. 23.
[2] Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 52-53. al-Muwashshaḥ 359.
[3] Al-Muwashshaḥ 263.
[4] Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 52, 53.
[5] Ibid. 141.
[6] Al-Muwashshaḥ 110, 176.
[7] Tha'lab Sharḥ Diwān Zuhair Ibn Abī Sulmā (Cairo 1944) 145. The same story was related in Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'iḍ al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl al-Jāhiliyyāt 26.

b) In regard to form: weakness of poetic structure.[1]

c) In regard to metre: metrical deficiency (iqwā' and īṭā' for instance).[2]

d) In regard to words: repetition.[3]

As it is clearly observed, Abū 'Ubaida attached equal importance to both meaning and structure, content and form. Thus in a judgment he passed on Abū Nuwās' poetry he says "He [i.e. Abū Nuwās] is like a mason whose tools are perfect, but whose structure is imperfect, though it should have been better."[4]

Jāhilī poetry was characterised by its compact and terse structure, and modern poetry, to Abū 'Ubaida, seems to lack this quality. It is noticeable in this connection that the modern poets themselves were conscious of this fact. We are told that Bashshār b. Burd used occasionally to write poems imitating deliberately jāhilī sentence structure. He once recited to Khalaf al-Aḥmar

بكّرا صاحبي قبل الهجير   إن ذاك النجاح في التبكير

Khalaf said "O Abū Ma'ādh, had you said " بكّرا فالنجاح في التبكير " instead of ان ذاك النجاح في التبكير would it not be better?" to which Bashshār answered "I have composed the verse in pure but unfamiliar Arabic, and thus said ان ذالك النجاح في التبكير as the desert Bedouins would say."[1]

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[1] Al-Muwashshah 263.

[2] Naqā'iḍ 1026. al-Muwashshah 5, 39, 59. Another example: Ibn Qutaiba 'Uyūn al-Akhbār (Cairo 1925) II.157.

[3] Al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' 141.

[4] Al-Muwashshah 263.

However, excellence of structure is not everything in a poem. It is but one face of the coin, the other being the meaning. A poet should invent his images and create his own ideas. In fact, the lack of originality in introducing new elements and motives into poetry meant to Abū 'Ubaida a weakness in poem, and implicitely in the poet. Similarly the repetition of old themes is deemed detrimental to a poet's fame and position, but the enrichment of a conventional motive by a new shading is as highly esteemed as the invention of a completely new one. Thus, Abū 'Ubaida says concerning Dhū al-Rumma's poetry "When he describes he is like Jarīr and there is nothing [new] in that."[2]

In the foregoing pages, we have tried to give an account of Abū 'Ubaida's views on poets and poetry, and the criteria by which he judged Arabic poetry and classified the poets whose poetry he transmitted, collected or commented on.

Yet, there are still two questions which should not be left unanswered, which require to give a brief account of Arabic criticism before Abū 'Ubaida, namely the the questions of the quality and standing of his critical ability.

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1. Aghānī (D) III. 190.
2. Al-Muwashshaḥ 176.

From pre-Islamic times, literary criticism had been concerned with poetry rather than with prose, and with the single verse rather than the whole poem. That is due to the fact that poetry was the prevalent literary form, and to the fact that poetry was composed mainly to be recited and not to be read. Criticism, therefore, originated as personal impression and snap judgment which cannot form a critical theory. The critic, or the listener, declares the verse in question to be the best verse ever composed or the poet under consideration to be the best who ever lived.[1] On this casual manner in treating a poem Von Grunebaum observes that "rarely do the Arabic critics stop to justify their judgment, and when they do, their explanatory remarks are of the most brevity and mostly in a rather misleading terminology."[2]

The turn of the first century, however, marks a new stage in the process of Arabic criticism developing primarily out of the Quranic studies, and characterized by an immense admiration of the classical models.

The philologists, the reciters and the grammarians, necessarily, played an important role in this respect. The problems which the literary life set forth demanded a new outlook to poetry and this outlook was based on a profound and extensive knowledge of language and poetry alike. Literary

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1. Aghānī IX. 162.
2. JAOS (1941) 52.

judgments though not completely were devoid from spontaneous observations depending on the taste of the critic. From the fact that cultural life was dominated by the philologists and grammarians who "have exercised the greater influence on the direction of the new poetic art, and on the activities of the contemporary poets" as Goldziher says,[1] the trend of criticism was somewhat linguistic and grammatical, that is to say, the critics were concerned mainly with vocabulary, syntax and metres. Philologists though Abū 'Ubaida was, he did not altogether share the criteria of the philological school of criticism.

Abū 'Ubaida discerned the importance of taking into account equally both the form and meaning of a poem. Thus he seems to be in favour of endowing the classical forms with fresh meanings and motives.

The kind of criticism Abū 'Ubaida practises can be seen from the fact that his work lay in authenticating and transmitting Arabic poetry, after which analytical criticism became necessary. In dealing with Arabic poetry, he was obliged to explain, comment upon and analyse poetry, because he aimed at the listener and not the poet. It could be argued however, that most of the reciter critics did almost the same,

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1. Quoted by Gibb in "Arab poet and Arabic philologist" in BSOAS (1948) XII. 574.

as the nature of the stage through which Arabic criticism had to pass necessitated this kind of criticism. It was only later, when the stage of transmitting Arabic poetry was over, that the critics began to theorise and give direction to poets, as did Qudāma b. Ja'far in his Naqd al-Shi'r.

# PART III

## CHAPTER VI

## Abū 'Ubaida and the Arabic Language

### Philology before Abū 'Ubaida:

Philology in all nations would appear to have its origin in the differences between two languages or two dialects in the same language. In India this science originated from the contradictions between the Vedic language and the popular dialects: in Babylon, between the Sumerian language and Akkadian language.[1] In the light of this theory, Brockelmann puts forward the factors which brought the Arabs to a methodical study of their language. They are firstly the difference between the tribal dialects, secondly the difference between the tribal dialects on the one hand and classical poetry and the Quran on the other, and lastly the need of the non-Arab elements to study the language of the Quran.[2]

In his introduction to the "Manhaj al-Sālik" of al-Ushmūnī, S. Glazer agrees with Brockelmann's statement summarised above and suggests another two factors which encourage philological studies, namely the opposition between Arabic and Persian, and the fear that the steadily increasing corruption of the purity of the classic tongue would

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1. Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī. II. 128.
2. Ibid.

eventually result in a failure to understand the sacred texts.[1]

The prime factors would in fact seem to be two. Firstly the study of the Quran aiming at proving the inimitability of its style and language. Thus al-Tha'ālibī unequivocally declares that "Whoever loves God most High loves His prophet ... and whoever loves the Arab prophet loves the Arabs. And whoever loves the Arabs loves the Arabic language in which the most excellent of books was revealed to the most excellent of Arabs and non-Arabs. And whoever loves the Arabs must busy himself with it [Arabic] and apply himself to it."[2] Similarly Gibb observes that "Arabic philology undoubtedly arose out of the study of the Quran."[3]

The second factor was the degeneration of the Arabic in the mixed society of Iraq. Corruption of the language was detected even in the life-time of the prophet,[4] and in the Umayyad period this corruption clearly manifested itself among the purely Arab elements, let alone the non-Arabs, and even among poets and reciters.[5] In Iraq, at a later stage, Arabian society ceased to be Arabic and became Islamic and the degeneration was consequently noted on an even larger scale.

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[1] p. XXXIX (New Haven, Connecticut 1947).
[2] "Fiqh al-Lugha" (Cairo 1938) 1.
[3] "Arabic Literature" 52.
[4] Lane "Arabic - English Lexicon" VIII.
[5] Al-Bayān wal-Tabiyyīn I.71.

In early Islamic times this corruption was so insignificant that it did not actuate the Arab to study their language in an attempt to counteract the corruption. But in the second century, the protection of the language clearly became necessary. This corruption had widened the gulf between Classical Arabic and the popular speech, so that the classical language had become almost unintelligible. We are informed that reciters sometimes did not understand the language of particular verses.[1] Al-Suyūṭī, for instance, relates that a man came asking Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' about two verses, and that Abū 'Amr did not know the meaning of them. The man then went to see Abū 'Ubaida, who said, having read the two verses, "God has not informed me with a knowledge of the unseen." The man then asked al-Asma'ī, who answered, "Surely if the poet himself was asked about them, he would not know what to say." Lastly, the man went to Abū Zaid, and asked him to explain the two lines, Abū Zaid said, "This man [i.e. the poet] is a madman, and nobody knows the speech of the madman but a madman."[2] And when Abū 'Ubaida went to visit Umm al-Haitham al-A'rābiyya, she described her illness in unintelligible language. Astonished, Abū 'Ubaida asked "Do people have two languages?"[3] In this regard Haywood,

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1. Viz. both because of the corruption of the popular language and the obscurity of poetic language.
2. Muzhir I 140-141.
3. Lisān (zalhk) III.22.

rightly observes that "*Lugha* was initially the study of words which, though they occurred in the Quran, the ḥadīth and pre-Islamic poetry, were not known to every day *speech*."[1]

Such being the case systematic study of philology was called for. This movement began in Baṣra, but it is difficult to state precisely when it began, and who were the first philologists, though it is generally held that Abū al-Aswad al-Du'alī was the first to initiate this study. Al-Zubaidī said, "He [i.e. Abū al-Aswad] was the first to establish the science of Arabic language, to lay down its methods, and to establish its rules, and that was at a time when the speech of the Arabs became disturbed and people high and low came to make mistakes. So he laid down the rules of the *fā'il*, *maf'ūl* and *iḍāfa*, and in the noun and verb *raf'*, *naṣb*, *jarr* and *jazm*.[2] But this and similar stories are not acceptable to scholars such as Brockelmann, and Aḥmad Amīn.[3] Haywood, on the other hand, accepts it and thinks that "there seems no particular reason to doubt the story that the first grammarian was Abū al-Aswad, even though no philological works by him are extant."[4]

"We hear vaguely", says Gibb, "of one or two

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1. *Arabic Lexicography* (Leiden 1960) 17.
2. *Tabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 13.
3. *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* II.128. *Ḍuḥā al-Islām* II.285.
4. *Arabic Lexicography* 11.

names in the Umayyad period, but it is not until close on the turn of the century that we find definite historical figures. The first systematic expositions were made by al-Khalīl."[1]

Although it is true that al-Khalīl's is the first systematic exposition of grammar, some philologists had already made efforts to collect and study the language, though their attempts are not separable from their study of poetry, grammar and history. Among them we can mention Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā (d. 145/762), 'Īsā b. 'Umar (d. 149/766) and Yūnus b. Ḥabīb (d. 182/798).

Abū 'Amr was considered one of the seven authorities on the Quran, and was one of the teachers of al-Khalīl. His activities were directed towards compiling classical poetry, and to studying the Arabic language. Out of religious fervour, it was said, he put all his works into the fire and devoted himself entirely to studying the Quran.[2]

'Īsā b. 'Umar al-Thaqafī was a remarkable grammarian and 'reader' of the Quran. He is said to have composed two books on grammar. His student Sībawaihi is said to have based his al-Kitāb on the Jāmi' of his teacher.[3]

Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, a freed slave of an Arab tribe, was

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1. Arabic Literature 53.
2. Irshād IV. 217.
3. Ibid. VI. 100. Manhaj al-Sālik p. XXXIX.

a student of Abū 'Amr. He collected peculiarities of language, dialects, proverbs and words. He studied also syntax and wrote Kitab al-Qiyās fī al-Naḥw.[1]

The methodology of the early philologists:

Arabic philology began with collecting vocabulary from the mouths of the pure Bedouins, either by travelling to the desert, or by drawing from informants in Baṣra. Ibn al-Nadīm refers to some of these, such as Abū al-Baidā' al-Riyaḥī, Abū Mālik 'Amr b. Karkara, Abū Sawwār al-Ghanawī, Shabīl b. 'Ar'ara al-Daba'ī.[2] This method of seeking information from Bedouins seems to have been developed in Baṣra under the stimulus of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā'.[3] This method was a source of pride to the Baṣran.Later on, when another school of language and grammar of different characteristics was established in Kūfa, Abū al-Faḍl al-Riyāshī, a Baṣran scholar, boasted that they drew their linguistic material "from the pure Bedouins, hunters of lizards and eaters of jerboa, while the Kūfites draw their language from the semi-Bedouins, the people of al-Sawād."[4]

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1. Ibid. VII. 310-312.
2. Fihrist 44-45.
3. B. Lewin EI$^2$ (al-Aṣma'ī) I 717.
4. Fihrist 86. Akhbār al-Naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn 90. Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 263 "al-sawād" used to indicate the district between Baṣra and al-Kūfa with the towns around them. Sometimes it indicates the district of towns and villages and cultivated land of Iraq. Cf. Lane IV 1462, Lisān (Sawād) III 225.

Abu 'Amr b. al-'Alā', whom Krenkow speaks of as a lexicographer[1] would seem to have been the head of the Baṣran school and his opinions to have passed down through his pupils, notably Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī, Yūnus b. Ḥabīb and others though none of his books have in fact survived.

In the collecting of lexical entries, the first concern of the early philologists would appear to have been the collecting of the gharīb and the nawādir (peculiarities of language).[2] Al-Qālī in his Amālī relates on the authority of Al-Aṣma'ī saying "I came to Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' one day and he asked me "Where do you come from Aṣma'ī? I said, "From Mirbad". "Tell me, what have you heard there?" he said, so I recited to him what I had in my papers and six words occurred whose meaning he did not know. Abū 'Amr said then "You have surpassed me in al-gharīb." And he left me hurriedly."[3]

Treatises and monographs were written on al-gharīb and nawādir by almost all men learned in language.[4]

In the second century of Islam, philology made a little headway towards more classification and systemisation.

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[1] "The Beginnings of Arabic Lexicography till the time of al-Jauharī, with a Special Reference to the Work of Ibn Duraid" in JRAS (Centenary Supplement) (1924) 256.

[2] Fihrist 88. Muzhir I, 234.

[3] III. 182.

[4] Fihrist 44. 45.

Treatises were written on one subject, such as al-Khail, al-Ibil, al-Ḥasharāt and so on.[1] These were, in fact, small dictionaries which led the way to more comprehensive ones.

However, with al-Khalīl's magnum opus Kitab 'al-'Ain, the Arabic dictionary reached its apogee. In "al-'Ain" al-Khalīl arranged his dictionary according to the manner in which the various Arabic letters are produced.[2]

Al-Khalīl, however, was not a mere compiler, he was a man of remarkable standing in the "Arabic Sciences" in general and a philologist of great ingenuity and sensibility in particular. He "had laid the foundations for the study of Arabic from internal evidence."[3]

With time, this movement flourished and the philologists did not confine themselves to collecting and classifying vocabulary, but tried to "define the correct modalities of high Arab speech and to preserve the pure idiomatic usage of the peninsula".[4] Nevertheless Arab philologists were not

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1. Fihrist 41.
2. Lisān I, 14. Ibn Jinnī states that the arrangement of al-Khalīl is confused and advances another markedly different arrangement. Cf. Sirr Ṣinā'at al-I'rāb (Cairo, 1954), 50.
3. Arabic Lexicography 41.
4. Gibb, Arabic Literature 54. Fück in his book "al-'Arabiyya" admirably comments on the linguistic situation in all its aspects. He calls the activities of the philologists to protect the purity of Arabic "Harakat tanqiyat al-lugha" (Cf. particularly chapter 5 of the Arabic version).

at one concerning the correct usage of language,[1] and the difference between them sometimes went so far as to give the impression that each held a different opinion on issues of some importance. Ibn Sīda, for instance, considered the word ḍirs (tooth) as either masculine or feminine in gender, while al-Aṣma'ī denied that the word was feminine basing himself on a verse by Dukain which he quotes in support of his opinion. Furthermore, the plural of the word according to Ibn Sīda is aḍrās, according to al-Aṣma'ī aḍrus, according to Sībawaihi ḍaris, and according to Abū 'Ubaida ḍurūs.[2]

Such discrepancies, it would seem, was inevitable as long as their methods of collecting linguistic information from the Bedouins were not fully systematized. One can indeed observe certain deficiencies in their method:

1) They did not differentiate, when quoting verses in evidence, between the language of poetry and the language of prose;

2) They largely neglected the systematic description of tribal dialects and the differences between them.[3]

3) In the process of transmitting poetry[4] they rectify and correct the language of verses according to their own criteria of correctness. Thus, they tend to eliminate the

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1. Al-'Arabiyya 61.
2. Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ (Cairo 1316 A.H.) I.146.
3. Cf. however Chapter VII in which their method of collecting this information are discussed.
4. Cf. Chapter V.

linguistic peculiarities of each tribe.

Had their activities, particularly the collecting of the gharīb and of dialect material, been systematised, and their linguistic data geographically distributed, many problems concerning synonyms, homonyms, phonetics and morphology would have been solvable.

Their works on language, however, are still a potential field for study. They made many observations on almost all branches of linguistics, and although we by no means suggest that they rigorously applied scientific method, nevertheless, to some extent, they touched upon the methods that modern linguistics is applying to language.

From what has already been said, it can be understood that the Arab philologists studied language synchronically, and not as a product of evolution (diachronically), and consequently they did not trace its growth and development through all its stages and from the times of its earliest records. They did, however, have some comprehension of the impact of Islam in introducing new words, and this suggests that they may have had some conception of linguistic evolution. But to do them justice, it must be admitted that the historical method could not have been applied by them, since any historical and comparative study would have required a knowledge of other Semitic languages, and also complete records of ancient Arabic texts on which to base their theories.

They accomplished indeed almost as much as they could do, in that they prepared the material required for historical studies which they themselves could not initiate.[1]

Abū 'Ubaida's works on language:

Abū 'Ubaida wrote on almost all branches of the "Arabic sciences" and interesting linguistic data can be found in most of his books. Yet, it cannot be said for sure how many books he wrote on language, since firstly nearly all his books have been lost and secondly the titles of his books as preserved in our sources give no adequate idea of their contents. However, it is possible to refer to some of his books whose titles imply that they deal with some aspect of language.

Lexicography

1. Gharīb al-Qur'ān (Obscure vocabulary in Quran)
2. Gharīb al-Ḥadīth ( " " " Ḥadīth)
3. Khalq al-Insān (The physical characteristics of man)

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[1] W.P. Lehmann says, "Outside the Indo-European family historical linguistics has tremendous opportunities and obligations. Historical grammars of individual languages, of languages families and their branches are almost universally needed, as are studies in dialect geography, vocabulary and etymology. Even in a set of languages so well known as the Arabic, historical grammars must now be produced on the basis of the descriptive grammars which are becoming available for its various dialects. When we have an adequate historical grammar of Arabic, we hope that the other West Semitic branches will be similarly equipped." Cf. "Historical Linguistics: An Introduction" (New York 1962) 241.

4. *Al-Asnān* (On teeth)
5. *Al-Khail* (On horses)
6. *Asmā' al-Khail* (On the names of horses)
7. *Al-Ḥayyāt* (On serpents)
8. *Al-'Aqārib* (On scorpions)
9. *Al-Ḥamām* (On turtle-doves)
10. *Al-Bāzī* (On falcons)
11. *Al-Khuff* (On feet of camels)
12. *Al-Saif* (On swords)
13. *Al-Baiḍa wal-Dir'* (On helmets and armour)
14. *Al-Qaws* (On bows)
15. *Al-Sarj* (On saddles)
16. *Al-Lijām* (On bridles)
17. *Al-Bakra* (On pulleys of draw-wells)
18. *Al-Raḥl* (On camel saddles)
19. *Al-Zar'* (On cornfields)
20. *Al-Nawādir* (On rare words)
21. *Fa'ala wa Af'ala* (On triliteral and quadriliteral verbs)

### Dialects

1. *Al-Lughāt* (On dialects)
2. *Mā Talḥunu Fīhī al-'Āmma* (On the errors of the vulgar language)
3. *Al-Aḍḍād* (On hymonyms)
4. *Al-Ibdāl* (On replacement & substitution)

Grammar

1. *Al-jam' wal-Tathnīya* (On the plural and dual)
2. *I'rāb al-Qur'ān* (On desinential inflection in the Quran)

Style

1. *Majāz al-Qur'ān* (On tropical expressions in the Quran)
2. *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* (On rhetorical expressions in the Quran)

Studying language to Abū 'Ubaida was a multiple task. It seems that he more or less conceived of language as a system of sounds used for the purpose of communication. Thus, language is not only a corpus of vocabulary, but also groupings of vocabulary arranged in certain ways: it is not an abstract system but rather a social phenomenon.

Arab philologists were at variance as to whether language is of divine origin (*Tawqīfiyya*) or a social product (*Iṣṭilāḥiyya*).[1] Ibn 'Abbās for instance, maintains that language is of divine origin according to the verse "And He taught Adam the names of things, and then set them before the angels and said 'Tell me the names of these things if you are right." (II. 31)

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[1] Ibn Tarmiyya thinks that this question was never disputed before Abū Hāshim al-Jabbā'ī, when the latter disputed with al-Ash'arī on the origin of languages. Abū Hāshim said that it is *Iṣṭilāḥiyya* while al-Ash'arī said, it is *Tawqīfiyya*. Cf. *Al-Īmān* 36 quoted by al-Jawīnī in *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Cairo 1959) 242. De Boer says "the question was discussed whether language is the result of ordinance or a product of nature, but gradually the philosophic view preponderates that it came by ordinance." *History of Philosophy in Islam* (London 1903) 134. But we can hardly agree with Boer in his last assumption.

This theory is also to be found in Judaism. In Genesis we read "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them, and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."[1] (II.19)

Abū 'Ubaida does not state his opinion of the origins of language unequivocally nor is it certain that he ever consciously asked or answered such a question, or set himself to reflect on the origins of language, and still less likely is it that he framed a specific speculative theory. Nevertheless in studying language he did adopt a certain attitude towards it, and through an examination of his writings it ought to be possible to sketch his opinions in broad terms.

We are told that he said "the first [man] who spoke clear Arabic was Ismā'īl [and that was] when he was fourteen."[2] Again al-Suyūṭī relates that once Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī

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1. It is noteworthy that the Indians call the Sanskrit, "the language of God". Cf. I.J.S. Taraporewala Elements of the Science of Language (Calcutta 1951) 10.
2. Bayān III. 145. Cf. also "Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl al-jāhiliyāt" 254.

asked al-Aṣma'ī "Why is the *muthannā* (dual) called *muthannā*?" al-Aṣma'ī did not know. Abū Ḥātim then asked Abū 'Ubaida who answered "I was not with God when he taught Adam the names of all things, to ask Him about the derivation of nouns."[1]

These statements imply that he accepts the theory of the divine origin of language, but the linguistic observations he makes infer that he believed language to be a social phenomenon. Some references[2] suggest that he half conceived of language as an onomatopeoic phenomenon[3] namely that human speech originated as an imitation of the sounds produced by animals and of other natural sounds. Certainly he believed that a certain relation exists between the 'symbol' and the 'referent'.

As examples of his etymological theories, e.g. he says that the word "*saif*" (a sword) is derived from the word "*sāfa*" which means "to perish":[4] that the word "*Jahannam*" (Hell) is derived from *al-jihnām*, which means "the unfathonable well."[5] Abū 'Ubaida however goes further and proposes that once a word refers to an object, the word and the object become one. It was reported that once Abū al-'Abbās was asked about whether the symbol (al-ism) was the referent (al-musammā). He answered "Abu 'Ubaida said that the symbol is the referent itself."[1]

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[1] *Muzhir* I, 353.

[2] Abū 'Ubaida notices that "the word *'ṣilṣāl* means unbaked dry clay. When tapped, it produces a sound called *ṣalṣala*; when baked it is called *fakhkār*. Everything that produces this sound (*ṣalṣala*) is *ṣilṣāl*." (*Majāz* I.350). In another place he also states "*ṣilṣāl* is unbaked dry clay which produces a sound when tapped by reason of its dryness." (*Ibid* II. 243)

[3] Often referred to as "The bow-bow theory" Cf."*Dictionary of Linguistics*" 154.

[4] *Jamhara* III. 41.

[5] *Ibn Duraid Ishtiqāq* (Cairo 1958) 355. Other examples in *Lisān* (*ghair*) V. 41, (*laqā*) XV 253.

Languages would seem to equip themselves first with sensory words describing concrete objects, and primitive languages consist of almost entirely of such sensory words.

In pace with the development of the community, sensory words come to signify abstract ideas.[2] Abū 'Ubaida

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1. Lisān (samā) XIV. 402.
2. Among early Arab authors who entertained this theory was al-Zamakhsharī who in his "Kashshāf"attempted to trace the abstract meanings of words back to their sensory origins. Among such words are "qaddasa", "sabbaha" and "tathrīb". Cf. "Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān" 165.

   This theory has its supporters among European scholars as well. Whitney says "It is not to be denied that concrete things are first to be recognized, distinguished and classified in the earliest synthetic operations of the intelligence; so are they also in the inferior intelligences of the lower animals." (Language and the Study of Language (London 1870) 424). Jesperson observes that "The aborigines of Tasmania had no words representing abstract ideas ... neither could they express abstract qualities such as "hard", "soft", "warm", "cold" ... (Language, its Nature, Development and Origin (London 1922) 429). Entwistle notices that "The informative value of language grows with civilization, and passes from the concrete to the abstract." (Aspects of Language (London 1953) 20). As for Vygotsky, he also asserts that "Primitive peoples think in complexes, and consequently the word in their language does not function as the carrier of a concept but as a "family name" for groups of concrete objects belonging together, not logically, but factually." (Thought and Language (U.S.A. 1962) 72). Cf. also Fischer "The Necessity of Art" (London 1964) 24.

seems to have noticed this though not in a precise manner. In regard to the word "*taṣ'īr*" (haughtiness) for example, he says that the word is derived from *ṣa'r*, which a disease inflicts the camel in his neck,[1] and thus that the abstract derives from the concrete.

This statement also implies that vocabulary and language in general are in a state of constant motion. Abū 'Ubaida's remarks, apart from the one we have already mentioned, in this connexion are worth mentioning.

In regard to the word "*ḥanīf*" Abū 'Ubaida observes the change in meaning saying, "*Al-ḥanīf* in pre-Islamic time was used to denote the one who was circumcised and had performed the pilgrimage. Today [viz. in Abū 'Ubaida's time] the word means a Muslim."[2]

Again in regard to the word *iṣ' ād*, Abū 'Ubaida states that the word originally means "to ascend a mountain", then it used to mean "ascend stairs", then "to go through the land, and towards a land higher than the other."[3]

### *Abū 'Ubaida's philological method*:

Having propounded his opinions on the origin and nature of language, we should like to consider another aspect of the question, namely Abū 'Ubaida's method in dealing with language.

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[1] *Majāz* II 127.
[2] *Ibid.* I 58.
[3] *Ibid.* I 105. Another example, *ibid.* II. 213.

One cannot fail noticing three factors which shape Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards language.

(a) Poetry

(b) *Al-Samā'* (Hearing)

(c) *Al-Qiyās* (Analogy)[1]

(a) Arabic poetry was of supreme importance to Abū 'Ubaida in matters of language. The pre-Islamic poets were taken as authorities in regard to usage, grammar and lexicography. Unlike other philologists such as al-Aṣma'ī however, he considered the earlier Islamic poets as authorities of equal importance.

Examples in this respect are ample. A cursory glance at Abū 'Ubaida's *Majāz* and *al-Khail* is sufficient to show us that whatever poets say is taken as irrevocable authority. Abū 'Ubaida explains the Quran by poetry and seldom vice-versa. Similarly, poetry is quoted by Abū 'Ubaida, particularly in *al-Majāz*, to explain Arabic modes of expression.[2]

This excessive use of poetry as a criterion in linguistic matters is clearly not without its dangers. When applying poetry to the elucidation of prose it must be borne

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1. For an account of *al-qiyās* in language and grammar Cf. Ibn al-Anbārī, *al-Ighrāb fī jadal al-I'rāb* (Damascus 1957) 93-112.
2. Cf. p. 354 sqq.

in mind that poetic style is not the same as that of prose style, and that the poet's usage of vocabulary differs radically from prose usage.

(b) Al-samā' was, in the lifetime of Abū 'Ubaida and before, an acknowledged method in education, and was highly regarded by almost all Arab scholars.

Ibn Jinnī claimed al-samā' as an essential method in language. He says "A part of it [i.e. the language] cannot be known except by hearing."[1] Al-Suyūṭī says "Language is known by hearing from the authentic ruwāt."[2]

How much importance Abū 'Ubaida attaches to this way of studying language can be seen from the following story. Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī relates that Abū 'Ubaida used to say ḥashīka and ḥashīfa instead of ḥasīka and ḥasīfa. When Abū 'Amr corrected him, Abū 'Ubaida contradicted him saying that he had heard both of them.[3]

(c) As for al-Qiyās, (Analogy), Ibn Jinnī states that it is a method of studying language, maintaining that "A considerable part of language may be known by analogy."[4] Yet he admits the pitfalls that beset this method,[5] which

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1. Munṣif (Cairo 1954) I.3.
2. Muzhir I 82.
3. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn 212; other example 101.
4. Munṣif I. 2.
5. Ibid. I. 3.

compels the philologists to employ *qiyās* with caution. It is said for example, that Abū Ḥanīfa wrongly made the plural of *kalb*, *kulūb* by analogy with *qalb*, the plural of which is *qulūb*.[1]

Analogy with Abū 'Ubaida was the yardstick by which a plural or pronunciation could be judged for correctness. For instance, every word, Abū 'Ubaida says, which consists of four letters, the third of which is either *alif* or *yā'* or *wāw*, must have its first and second letters *maḍmūm* in the plural.[2] And in analogy of *ḍarb* the plural of which is *ḍurūb*, Abū 'Ubaida gives *qufūr* as a plural of *qafr*.[3] These two examples are typical of how Abū 'Ubaida employed the analogical method. Clearly, he does not regard analogy as a general rule applicable to any case. Thus Ibn Manẓūr, having given the meaning of *ma'w* as 'date' with the singulative *ma'wa*, quotes Abū 'Ubaida as saying that this was deduced by analogy and that he himself had not heard it.[4] Analogical method, it would seem, to Abū 'Ubaida is not an inclusive rule,[5] and the validity of the application of it to linguistic questions must be subjected to *samā'*.

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1. *Al-'Arabiyya* 65.
2. *Majāz* I. 320.
3. *Naqā'iḍ* (S) II. 204.
4. *Lisān* (*ma'ī*) XV. 289.
5. The word *'amūd* is a case in point; Cf. *Majāz* I.320, also *Lisān* XV (*laqā*) 253.

## Lexicography:

In the following pages we shall give a descriptive analysis of Abū 'Ubaida's lexical works. Abū 'Ubaida wrote 21 treatises on lexicography,[1] but not one is extant save *Kitāb al-Khail*.[2] Later lexicographers, however, have availed themselves of Abū 'Ubaida's works, and we are in a reasonably good position to describe the subject matter of his books and the method he adopted if we make use of the material existing in dictionaries compiled after Abū 'Ubaida.

## *Kitāb al-Khail*:

We shall begin with this work as the only extant lexical book, and studying it at length enables us to know the methods which Abū 'Ubaida applied in treating this subject.

Abū 'Ubaida composed this book before 188/803. During his visit to Baghdad, which took place in 188, he was asked by al-Faḍl b. al-Rabī' about the book, and we are told that al-Aṣma'ī, who had composed a book on the same subject was present. Al-Aṣma'ī said that his book was in one

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1. Cf. p.226
2. This book was published in 1939 (Ḥaidarābād) by S.Krenkow. The edition is foot-noted with comments and explanations. Quotations which have been made by Arab authors from this work such as Ibn Manẓūr, al-Jawhari, al-Zabīdī, Ibn Sīda, have been referred to. This edition is also supplemented by a short biography of Abū 'Ubaida, and a chapter (183-191) on "The Prophet's Horses".

volume, while Abū 'Ubaida said his was in fifty volumes. Al-Faḍl then challenged them. He brought his horse and said "This is my horse. Come, both of you, and describe it, naming every part of its body as you have written in your books." Abū 'Ubaida replied that he was not a veterinary surgeon, and that the vocabulary had been collected from Bedouins. When al-Aṣma'ī's turn came, he began naming the members of the horse from head to tail, pointing to each and quoting verses connected with it.[1]

The editor of this work doubts the authenticity of this story, particularly regarding the size of Abū 'Ubaida's book. In this he is right. Abū 'Ubaida's book is not as big as he claimed at the court of al-Faḍl. We also doubt the story regarding the method Abū 'Ubaida followed in collecting his material. The story tells us that he drew his vocabulary from Bedouins, but the book shows that Abū 'Ubaida drew his information directly from the poetry which he quotes in evidence. Moreover, we read in the Mukhaṣṣaṣ of Ibn Sīda that Abū 'Ubaida drew all his material from 'Abd al-Ghaffār al-Khuzā'ī's book On Horses, and added some other materials to it, and that Abū 'Ubaida has no real knowledge of horses.[2]

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1. Al-Khail 177. Cf. also "Nuzhat al-Alibbā' 81-82.
2. Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ III. 36. Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn 86.

Furthermore it is related that Al-Aṣma'ī said "If a horse was brought and he was asked to put his finger on every part of the horse's body, he would not know where to put it.[1]

The book was transmitted by Abū Yūsuf al-Iṣbahānī on the authority of Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī. It begins with stories which show the Arabs' love for their horses and what they said about them in poetry. The author, then, proceeds to prove that the interest of Arab Muslims in horses was not less than that of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period, and he quotes as evidence the verse, "And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy." (VIII.60) Following that are 24 traditions and fragments of poetry on "What the Arabs said in the Jāhiliyya concerning horses." The author transmits nine pieces by seven Jāhilī poets and four pieces by four Islamic poets.[2]

Part 2 begins with a description of the outward members of the horse's body, starting from the head, through the ears, eyes, teeth, forehead, eyebrows, neck, chest, upper arms, knees and forelegs to the hoofs.[3]

The following part deals with the internal parts of the horse's body: heart, liver, belly, veins, etc. The author concludes this part saying "The names of the horse's members

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1. Lisān (sahar) IV. 384.
2. pp.10-15.
3. p.16.

are ended, praise be to God."[1]

Another chapter was devoted to the description of horses, male and female, from the time of conception until delivery, and the condition of the foal till teething. The author as usual quotes verses in support of his explanations.[2]

A short passage follows on "Bird Names used for Horses", and another one on "Calling Horses" (Du'ā' al-Khail).[3]

After that a long part deals with "The Defects of Horses"[4] followed by "Marks of Beauty and Excellence in Horses",[5] and a chapter on the differences between male and female, followed by "Names of Horses".[6]

A long chapter is devoted to "What Arabs like in Horses".[7] In this chapter Abū 'Ubaida quotes in evidence more than thirty poets, most of them Jāhilis.

He then writes on "Colours of Horses"[8] and this is followed by a chapter on "Horses and their Characteristics",[9] and by a description of the gait, movements and neighing of horses. Lastly, the author puts together poems on "What the Arabs have said in their poetry on Horses".[10]

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1. p.38.
2. pp.38-45.
3. p.46.
4. pp.47-52.
5. pp.52-63.
6. p.66.
7. pp.68-103.
8. pp.103-114.
9. pp.114-124.
10. pp.136-173.

As with all Abū 'Ubaida's works, especially the lexical ones, later authors quote from Kitāb al-Khail. Thus these are a few of the important writers who quoted from this work:

1. Ibn Qutaiba in his Adab al-Kātib[1]
2. al-Khaṭīb al-Iskāfī in his book al-Khail[2]
3. Ibn Manẓūr in Lisān al-'Arab[3]
4. Al-Qālī in his Amālī[4]

Apart from al-Khail, Abū 'Ubaida wrote other books on the same subject, such as Kitāb al-Dībāj. The title of the book does not suggest the contents, but the many quotations drawn from it indicate that it is also a book on horses.

Ibn Qutaiba, as al-Baṭlayūsī reports, takes complete passages from al-Dībāj in his book "Adab al-Kātib".[5]

Kitāb al-Khail is a systematic book, aimed at giving a detailed account of a subject which was dealt with by almost all Arab philologists, such as al-Kalbī, al-Aṣma'ī' al-Naḍr b. Shumail and others.[1]

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[1] pp.126, 137.
[2] al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī (Cairo 1956) I. 128.
[3] Lisān II. 524; IV. 58, 118, 365; VIII. 125 &c.
[4] al-Khail 177.
[5] al-Iqtiḍāb 138, 140, 141, 142, 333, 360.

As previously stated, the author draws all his information from Arabic poetry. He said, for instance, that an excellent horse must not be of low origin, and the line of its stock must be known. The author goes on, "and the proof of that is what the Arabs said (on this subject) in their poetry" and he quotes verses by 'Alqama b. al-'Abd, Yazīd b. 'Amr al-Ḥanafī, Abū Dūwād al-Ayādī and others.[2]

Vocabulary is treated under headings. Thus Abū 'Ubaida deals with each limb separately, starting with the names by which the Arab used to call that limb and following this up with explanations of each word with verses quoted in evidence. This method is applied throughout the book. Poetry is inordinately quoted. It is Abū 'Ubaida's stock-in-trade, from which he draws his data, and this is true not of this book alone, but of most of his books, e.g. Kitāb Khalq al-Insān (The physical characteristics of Man).

This book is lost, yet many quotations are made, particularly by Ibn Sīda in his al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ, which enables

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1. Dr. Ḥusain Naṣṣār in al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī (I.127) observes that books on horses followed different methods: some of them were historical, that is to say, the author stresses the historical aspect of the subject, and some literary and some linguistic. A comparison of Abū 'Ubaida's book with that of al-Aṣma'ī's, shows that the latter's work is smaller but more systematic, and contains more vocabulary.
2. p.65.

us to give an outline of its contents.[1]

Kitāb Khalq al-Insān:

We should like before we describe Abū 'Ubaida's treatise to say a word on Ibn Sīda's method of treating this subject.

Ibn Sīda devotes about two volumes to this subject. He starts with a passage on "The Meaning of [the word] Insān" followed by passages on pregnancy, delivery, weaning, teeth, head, hair, ears, face, eyebrows, eyes, nose, lips, mouth, tongue and arms by which the first volume is completed. The second volume deals with the palm of the hand, fingers, back, stomach, sexual organs, thighs, legs, feet, etc.

Comparing this method of handling the subject with that of al-Aṣma'ī, we find some resemblances between them, especially in that the general introduction is followed by a general description of the parts of the human body starting from the head and finishing with the feet.

Despite the loss of Abū 'Ubaida's book, it is likely that he treated his subject systematically, as he did in al-Khail. Thus a quotation in al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ concerning "the characteristics of the legs" for instance, suggests that Abū 'Ubaida discussed the subject in a logical order dealing firstly with the eyebrows.[1]

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[1] Throughout the first book of al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ Abū 'Ubaida's name recurred about 69 times: pp. 24, 28, 33, 54, 55, 58, 65, 86, 87, 89, 90, 97, 105, 106, 127, 145-149, 161, 162, 165-168. In the second book pp. 4, 6, 9-10, 14, 17, 19, 22-27, 31-38, 40-46, 48-51, 54, 55, 57, 61, 65, 75, 88, 90, 96, etc. Cf. M. al-Ṭālibī al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ li Ibn Sīda (Tūnis 1956) 46.

Regarding the subject matter of Abū 'Ubaida's book, some features which characterise the book could be summed up as follows:-

1. The description of Man's characteristics is dealt with under short headings starting with the head and ending with the feet.[2]
2. References were not made to be vocabulary only: duals, plurals and variant readings were also given.[3]
3. Poetry was quoted in evidence, and used as a source for the definition of vocabulary.[4]

Kitāb Gharīb al-Ḥadīth and Gharīb al-Qur'ān:

Other examples of Abū 'Ubaida's lexical works are his two books Gharīb al-Ḥadīth and Gharīb al-Qur'ān.

Books on al-Gharīb were composed by Arab philologists before Abū 'Ubaida. The first to write on Gharīb al-Qur'ān was 'Abdullah b. 'Abbās, followed by Abū Sa'īd b. Taghlib al-Bakrī, al-Yazīdī, al-Naḍr b. Shumail and others.[1]

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[1] "Abū 'Ubaida said [that] rajulun azajjun 'a long-legged man's (compare) imra'atun zajjā'u (the meaning of) zajaj (narrowness and length of eyebrows) has been referred to before" al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ II. 54.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid. I. 104; II. 41.

[4] II. 6, 17, 37, 38, 40, 51.

On Gharīb al-Ḥadīth it is said that Abū 'Ubaida's work is the earliest of its kind.[2]

At first glance, identifying books on al-Gharīb with lexicography seems to be a doubtful proposition. De Slane does not regard the two books composed by Abū 'Ubaida on the obscure vocabulary in Quran and Ḥadīth as lexical in the strict sense of the word.[3] However, his deduction is not well-grounded and not based on a thorough investigation of the books written on this subject. On the other hand, Dr. A. Darwīsh in his "Al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad and the Evolution of Arabic Lexicography", Dr. Ḥusain Naṣṣār in his "Al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī" and J.A. Haywood in his "Arabic Lexicography" rightly considered books on this subject (viz. Gharīb in the Quran and Ḥadīth) as lexical works.[4]

According to Ibn al-Athīr Gharīb al-Ḥadīth was a small treatise in which the author collected the rare vocabulary of Ḥadīth.[5] That the treatise was small, as Ibn

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1. Al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī I. 39. Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī I.33.
2. Tārīkh Baghdād XII. 405. Dr. Naṣṣār in his al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī (I.50) thinks that Abū 'Adnān 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Abd al-A'lā' was the first to write on this subject.
3. Wafayāt III. 391.
4. I. 117; I. 39, 50 and 96 respectively.
5. Nihāyat Gharīb al-Ḥadīth (Cairo, 1904) I.4.

al-Athīr points out, does not mean that Abū 'Ubaida was not fully acquainted with Gharīb al-Ḥadīth, since:-

1. Abū 'Ubaida was the first to write on the subject, and all new work starts on a small scale and is then added to by subsequent writings.
2. People at that time still had considerable knowledge of the Classical language, and it was not as urgent for an author to deal at length with al-Gharīb as it became later.[1]

It is noteworthy that the "traditions" in this work have no Isnāds[2] and secondly that Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām depended on Abū 'Ubaida's book.[3] Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī says that he found forty-five spurious traditions in Abū 'Ubaida's work.[4]

Abū 'Ubaida composed a treatise on Gharīb in the Quran, but we know nothing about it, although some scholars think that this book is al-Majāz itself.[5]

The aim of the two books mentioned before was to elucidate the rare vocabulary in the Quran and Ḥadīth. Ibn al-Athīr's statement in this connection is clear enough, and it can be presumed that Abū 'Ubaida selected particular traditions, arranged them and gave explanations after each.

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Tārīkh Baghdād XII. 405.
[3] Irhsād VI. 163.
[4] Tārīkh Baghdād XII. 413.
[5] Cf. Chapter VIII.

It would therefore seem that we should group them with Abū 'Ubaida's lexical works, in which vocabulary is dealt with according to the subject.

## Kitāb al-Qaws and other Lexical Works:

Ibn Duraid in his Jamharat al-Lugha preserves a few extracts from Kitāb al-Qaws. He wrote a chapter on "Rare words on bows and their description on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida"[1] and gives a few extracts on arrows, strings and arrow-heads.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida's method in this work in so far as we can judge it from these extracts does not differ from the method applied in Kitāb al-Khail. He sometimes refers to the correct usage of a word,[3] and the different words used by particular people, probably dialect words.[4] He also gives synonyms,[5] or derivations occasionally.[6]

Finally, there are these lexical works composed by Abū 'Ubaida according to morphological patterns, like the Kitāb Fa'ala wa Af'ala. This book marks a new type of

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1. III. 456.
2. III. 457-458.
3. III. 458, 459.
4. III. 456.
5. III. 457.
6. III. 458.

contribution to lexicography.

Books on fa'ala wa af'ala, that is to say on triliteral verbs and derived themes augmented by hamza, usually deal with the following:

1) Verbs which may be used either in the pattern fa'ala or af'ala viz. where there is no difference in meaning when one is replaced by the other.

2) Verbs in which these two patterns have different meanings.

3) Verbs in which these two patterns are without difference in meaning but where one pattern is used by one tribe and the other by another tribe (viz. lughāt).

Abū 'Ubaida's book on Fa'ala wa Af'ala is lost, but whole passages have been preserved in the Jamharat al-Lugha of Ibn Duraid.[1]

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[1] I chanced to find in the British Museum an MS. (Or.4178) without title or author's name. In this MS. were fragments of an early lexical work and among these was an extract on Fa'ala wa-Af'ala of the Jamhara (F. 31b-40a). This MS. is written in fine old, carefully vocalised naskhī, apparently, as Charles Rieu the compiler of "Supplement to the Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the British Museum (London 1894, 568) says, in the 11th century.

The author is referred to by his kunya Abū Bakr. Mr. Rieu thinks (Ibid. 569) that "the work belonged to the celebrated Lexicographer, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Al-Ḥasan b. Duraid."

In the margins are observations and remarks ascribed to a writer designated now as Abū 'Amr, now as al-Jaramī. Presumably, he is the grammarian Abū 'Amr Ṣāliḥ b. Isḥāq al-Jarmī, who died in 225/839.

One cannot fail however to notice some differences between the text preserved in Al-Jamhara and that in this MS. in which a number of lines are missing. Cf. Jamhara III. 442, MS. 41a, 42a, and III 440, MS. F 39b, 40a.

Presumably nothing of significance in Abū 'Ubaida's work was left out of the *Jamhara*. Later philologists also quoted from Abū 'Ubaida's treatise, such as Ibn Qutaiba or his *Adab al-Kātib*, who wrote a chapter on *Fa'ala wa-Af'ala* with similar meaning,[1] and Ibn al-Sikkīt in his "*Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq*" who wrote a chapter on "*af'alta* used by the vulgar instead of *fa'alta*", and another chapter on "*fa'alta* used by the vulgar instead of *af'alta*".[2] Others have briefly referred to Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on this subject, like Ibn al-Qūṭiyya, Ibn Manẓūr, al-Zubaidī and Ibn Jinnī.[3]

The use of the quadriliteral pattern instead of the triliteral one was a familiar phenomenon in popular speech and the Baṣrans and the Kūfites had been treating subject of *fa'alta wa af'alta* since the time of al-Aṣma'ī and Quṭrub.[4] Arab grammarians and philologists, of course, paid full attention to the other dervied verbs whether formed by prefixes or infixes, as also to the conjugational prefixes and suffixes equally, and the functions these affixes have;[5] but since prefixation of *hamza* does not change the meaning of all verbs, it became necessary to sort such verbs out, in an attempt to make their usage clear and unambiguous.

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[1] p.150 and after.

[2] p. 251 and after.

[3] *al-Af'āl* (Leiden 1894) 161, *Lisān* (*ghabash*) VI, 323; XV. 398; *Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn* 70 and *al-Munṣif* I. 75, 77 respectively.

[4] *al-'Arabīyya* 138.

[5] Cf. *al-Munṣif* I, II and after.

The text of the Jamhara preserved was entitled[1] "Chapter on what Abū Zaid and Abū 'Ubaida agreed regarding what the Arabs said regarding fa'altu wa af'altu. Al-Aṣma'ī was strict on this point and did not authorise the use of most of them."[2]

The more important features of this treatise can be summed up as follows:-

1. Abū 'Ubaida was as concerned with giving the meaning of these words, as much as interested in defining them.
2. Where the triliteral pattern augmented with hamza differs in meaning from the triliteral one, Abū 'Ubaida states the difference in meaning between the two words as, e.g. the difference between "waḥā" and "awḥā".[3]
3. Verses were quoted in evidence as to the admissibility of the quadriliteral pattern in the sense of the triliteral.
4. Abū 'Ubaida, it seems, conceived that one reason for the existence of this linguistic phenomenon was the difference between Arabic dialects.

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[1] Jamhara III. 434-440.
[2] Ibid. III. 434.
[3] Ibid. III. 435.

## Conclusion:

Little information on Abū 'Ubaida's other lexical works is available, but from what has hitherto been said a few conclusions can be drawn as to his method:-

1. The ultimate goal of Abū 'Ubaida was to collect linguistic facts in general and nawādir in particular. This aim was achieved in two distinct ways.
   (a) by treating vocabulary according to the subject matter;
   (b) by treating words according to their patterns.
2. The first aim necessitates elucidating the meaning and stating the correct usage of words. To Abū 'Ubaida, meaning and usage were determined both by Islamic and pre-Islamic poetical standards and norms. This explains the excessive quotations of verses to be found in his books.
3. The second iam necessitates a brief investigation, some aspects of language, such as phonetics and morphology.

This is quite reasonable. Jesperson observes that "Grammar deals with the general facts of language, and lexicography, with special facts" and that thus, "there are certain things which it will be necessary or convenient to treat both in grammar and in the dictionary" because "grammar and dictionary in some respects overlap and deal with the same facts."[1]

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[1] "The Philosophy of Grammar" (London 1952) 32, 34.

## The Importance of Abū 'Ubaida's Lexical Works:

The historical importance of Abū 'Ubaida's lexical works can be more clearly seen if we bear in mind three points which have been developed in the previous pages: firstly, Abū 'Ubaida's activities in general and his lexical works in particular are part of a larger philological movement in which other philologists participated to a greater or lesser degree. Putting his lexical contribution in its true perspective one can discern a close connection between Abū 'Ubaida and his contemporaries who contributed in this field, and discern thereby the relative importance that he enjoyed in relation to others. Secondly and consequently, the differences, if any, in method, subject-matter and scope between him and others must be analysed. This provides us with a means of estimating Abū 'Ubaida's original contribution in the field of lexicography. Thirdly, the two previously mentioned factors can only be satisfactorily comprehended with respect to a given stage of development in time, account of which has to be taken into consideration.

These points together, are our guide in looking at Abū 'Ubaida's works more closely and more in relation to others, for the determination of the historical importance of any work is no more than pointing out the main characteristics that are new and original, and which contribute to promote a better understanding of a specific branch of knowledge.

"The basic object of lexicological study" Weinreich says, "is the word, as a unit of vocabulary. A word is an invariant relation between a sound complex and a meaning. However, the manifestations of a word are variable, both chronologically and grammatically, as well as semantically. The task of lexicology, accordingly, is the study of the nature of the variations of words against the background of their invariance."[1]

Glancing back to Abū 'Ubaida's contributions in the light of what Weinreich says, it seems that he was far from being a lexicographer in the modern sense. The period in which Abū 'Ubaida was living witnessed the birth of Arabic lexicography. Such being the case, to expect a fully developed nethod and outlook is to expect too much too soon. Abū 'Ubaida's works on lexicography suggest that he assigned to this branch of philology a prominence not comparable with that enjoyed by grammar or rhetoric; this reflects the relative importance of lexicography in his scholarly discipline, and the fact that he was a language-conscious philologist.

His works, as shown before, yield valuable results in so far as they help to clarify the precise use and meaning of words. It is not to be denied that Abū 'Ubaida's descriptive rather than historical approach has to some extent precluded him from seeing words as changing and developing entities although one must admit that he occasionally does do that.[1]

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[1] "Current Trends in Linguistics" (The Hague, 1963) 66. Edited by Thomas A. Sebeok.

On the other hand, his lexical activities, from this standpoint of methodology and subject-matter do not present much originality nor are they a milestone in the development of Arabic lexicography. Nevertheless his works along with those of al-Aṣm'ī, Abū Zaid and other philologists were the raw material for the later lexicographers. These heavily relied on the massive amount of material which the earlier books offer, and with more skill and accuracy tackled lexical problems to produce the improved dictionaries such as the Lisān which are still of great use today.

## Grammar:

Abū 'Ubaida wrote two treatises on grammar.[2] Whether these two treatises qualify him to be considered as a grammarian of high standing is arguable and indeed his position as a grammarian has been hotly debated. Some of his biographers say that he was fully competent in grammar,[3] while others maintain that he was not. Al-Azharī, for instance, acknowledges that Abū 'Ubaida was well-versed in the Ayyām al-'Arab and gharīb, but says that he was awkward in matters of grammar.[1] Al-Askarī also reports, "as for Abū 'Ubaida, al-Aṣma'ī and Abū Zaid, they were not competent grammarians ... and thus they cannot be considered grammarians."[2] The opinions of Al-Azharī and al-'Askarī are unjust. Abū 'Ubaida shows in his works a remarkable understanding of grammar, its problems and its role in speech. Thus Dr. F. Sizgin says "Abū 'Ubaida relies on his linguistic perception in analysing the desinential inflections (i'rāb) of Quranic verses or poetry, disregarding what the grammatical school [presumably: of Baṣra] was laying down. Whence their disapprobation"[3] (i.e. the disapprobation of those who detracted from Abū 'Ubaida in matters of grammar).

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[1] Cf. p.
[2] Cf. p.
[3] Maratib al-Naḥwiyyīn, 76.

It should, however, be recognized that Abū 'Ubaida's concern was not directed towards grammar proper but towards akhbār, lexicography and poetry. Abū 'Ubaida did not contribute to the furthering of the study of grammar, nor did he enjoy in it the same reputation as some of his teachers, or even the reputation he himself enjoyed in respect of other branches of the "Arabic Sciences." He wrote only two treatises on grammar, and this contribution is insignificant, compared with his numerous books in other fields if we base our opinions on quantity rather than on quality. However as long as none of his grammatical works survive, the above-mentioned assumption may be taken as a working hypothesis, and it is fairly safe to conclude that he was not a grammarian in the same sense as Sībawaihi for instance.

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[1] Lisān ('ashā) XV. 58 and (ghair) V. 39.

[2] Al- Askarī, al-Maṣūn fī al-Adab, (Kuwait 1960) 120.

[3] Majāz, introduction, 15.

Abū 'Ubaida's outlook on grammar differs considerably from that of his contemporaries. Grammar as such was not to him a science of intrinsic importance, but only a tool by which speech could be comprehended and appreciated. He does not place grammar above all other studies of speech, rather does he subordinate grammar to language and discourse. For him grammar is a manifestation of style.[1]

If this is accepted, then his attitude towards his fellow grammarians can be fairly understood. The work of the latter consists of subjugating all speech to rigid rules, and to construct criteria for judgments regardless of the reality which often runs counter to their rules.

It is reported that Abū 'Ubaida once said "I have seen nothing more amusing than the sayings of the grammarians. They claim that a feminine ending cannot follow another feminine ending in a word. However they [i.e. the Arabs] said 'alqāt in which the feminine ending is ö followed another feminine ending, namely alif al-maqṣūra."[1] Occasionally, Abū 'Ubaida refers to the grammarians with the words "The grammarians claim"[2] or "According to the sayings of the grammarians."[3]

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[1] Cf. Chapter VIII.

Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on grammar are scattered throughout his books, and as quotations in other literary sources. Some of these opinions are his own, others he relates on the authority of his teachers, notably al-Khalīl, and occasionally he gives more than one explanation of a problem without referring to any specific grammarian or preferring one opinion to another.

In the following pages a few questions illustrative of what has been briefly stated above are discussed.

(a) According to the Baṣra school the muḍāf (adjunct)[4] cannot be separated from the muḍāf ilaihi (correlative noun) except by an adverb or a preposition, because, the Baṣrans maintain, the muḍāf and the muḍāf ilaihi are to be considered as one word.[5] Abū 'Ubaida holds a more flexible attitude and permits their separation by something other than an adverb or a preposition. He instances a saying he heard from an

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[1] Khaṣā'iṣ (Cairo 1913) I. 272.

[2] Majāz II. 150, 152.

[3] Ibid. II. 143.

[4] Viz. a form in the constract state.

[5] Ibn al-Anbārī, "al-Inṣāf fī Masā'il al-Khilāf Baina al-Baṣriyyīn wal-Kūfiyyīn" (Cairo 1954) 249-251.

Arab "inna al-shāta la-tajtarru fa-tasma'a ṣawta - wallāhi rabbihā."[1]

Obviously, the argument of the Baṣra school is not convincing. It is true that the relation between the muḍāf and the muḍāf ilaihi is close, but the two are far from being one word. A word is an independent entity, and the division of it causes not only ambiguity but ordinarily negates meaning. On the other hand, the separation of the muḍāf and the muḍāf ilaihi does not negate the independent existence of each word, nor does it ordinarily cause obscurity. Further, the separation of the muḍāf and the muḍāf ilaihi, by something other than an adverb or a preposition, was in fact permitted by Arab grammarians, as Ibn Mālik indicates: his example supporting his statement, and of course indirectly, Abū 'Ubaida's attitude, are undoubtedly genuine.[2]

(b) In his Majāz, Abū 'Ubaida relates al-Khalīl's opinion that no imperfect should in the subjunctive except after an whether implicit or explicit. Abū 'Ubaida goes on to say "al-Khalīl was asked 'But do not these particles ḥattā, lan, kay and lam al-ta'līl when they precede an imperfect also make it subjunctive?' al-Khalīl replied 'The regent (al-'āmil) here is an'."[3] In this example Abū 'Ubaida was apparently only referring to al-Khalīl's opinion. It cannot be ascertained that he himself agrees with al-Khalīl. In either case, the question was one upon which both the Baṣra and Kūfa schools disagreed,[1] though they both maintain that an can be implicit only in certain cases, namely when the imperfect is preceded by lam al-juḥūd, 'aw, ḥattā, fā' al-sababiyya and wāw al-ma'iyya.[2] Thus, it seems that in cases in which the imperfect is preceded by lan and kay, there is no need to imply an as al-Khalīl says.[3]

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibn Mālik "Alfiyya" (Leipzig 1851) 206-207.

[3] Majāz II. 155.

(c) Concerning the Quranic verse sūratun anzalnāhā (XXIV. 1), Abū 'Ubaida says that the word sūratun is in the nominative because it is abstracted in initial position. He, however, also refers to other grammarians who think that the word in question should be in the accusative in analogy with the expression Zaidan laqītuhu which means laqītu zaidan.[4]

The question here whether Abū 'Ubaida followed the Baṣra school's line in grammar, and could he consequently be regarded as a Baṣran. Abū 'Ubaida in fact was a Baṣran,

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1. 'Abbas Ḥasan "Al-Naḥw al-wāfī" (Cairo 1963) IV. 210-228.
2. Ibid. IV. 240 sqq.
3. Cf. Mahdī al-Makhzūmī "Madrasat al-Kūfa" (Baghdad 1955) 327 for more details concerning the particles lam idhan and others, and why an should be implied.
4. Majāz II.63. Other examples, Majāz I. 87; II.34.

educated under the supervision of Baṣran scholars, and his biographers identify him with the Baṣra school.[1] This identification, however, was based simply on superficial evidence. Abū 'Ubaida, as far as can be seen, never actually expressed his adherence to the Baṣra school.

Before we answer this question, a few words may perhaps be said on the idiosyncrasies of the Baṣra school.

It is generally agreed that to the grammarians of this school, grammar is an analogical system,[2] to which the mass of data, poetry and prose alike, has to be subjected: evidential verses which contradict the rules are ruled out as deviations. Contrarily, the analytical Kūfa school, founded later, allows as idiomatic many forms which diverge from analogy. Fleisch says that to the Kūfite grammarians the first source of grammar is all the material collects in all its diversity.[3]

It is, however, true to say that Abū 'Ubaida disagrees with some of the tenets of the Baṣra school, for language was to him a social reality and a phenomenon not to be judged by reason or logic alone. This is a sensible and pragmatic attitude. In agreement with this view we may quote M. Schlauch. "Grammarians have at times deluded themselves, one cannot keep thinking, into an assumption that language is put together logically. Especially the grammarians who lay down rules for learners are apt to claim an inner logical harmony for the practices of sentences, structure ... yet correct sentences are often put together in a way that, upon closer examination, turns out to be anything but logical."[1]

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[1] Ṭabarī Jāmi' al-Bayān, VIII, 189. Fleisch considers Abū 'Ubaida a grammarian of the Baṣra school. Cf. Traité De Philogie arabe (Beirut 1961) 48.

[2] Traité De Philologie arabe, II. Fleisch comments that when analogy is cultivated for itself, it becomes an obstacle to the development of the language. Ibid.

[3] Ibid. 8.

Grammar to Abū 'Ubaida was not a body of rules which all language has to fit, but a manifestation of linguistic relationships to be observed.

To the Baṣra school the text must fit the rule,[2] whereas to Abū 'Ubaida the rule must fit the text. He accepts all that he draws from the Bedouins even if it apparently contradicts grammatical rules. In this he is diametrically opposed to the Baṣra school which rejects texts which run counter to their formulae. As a typical example of this attitude on the part of Abū 'Ubaida we may remind the reader of the example already referred to above on the permissibility of separating the mudāf and the mudāf ilaihi by something other than an adverb or a preposition.[3] Abū 'Ubaida here

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1. The Gift of Tongue (London 1943) 142.
2. Ḍuḥā al-Islām II. 294-295, Madrast al-Kūfa 341.
3. Al-Inṣāf 249-251.

rejected the formula of the Baṣra school, because he heard his example from a Bedouin, and this is justification enough for him to accept the expression.

Another disagreement with the Baṣra school is illustrated in the following:-

As regards Question 36 in al-Inṣāf the Baṣra school held that the exceptive particle could not be placed at the beginning of a sentence and would not accept a sentence such as illā ṭa'āmaka mā akal zaidun. The Kūfa school rejects this rule and gives as evidence a verse transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida.[1]

It might be argued that Abū 'Ubaida, being at least to some extent, an analogist, must have had much in common with the Baṣra school who assigned to analogy a great importance in determining linguistic questions.

It is true that Abū 'Ubaida employed analogy in questions of language in general, but for him the authority of analogy had to be confirmed by samā'. If analogy is in flat contradiction of the evidence he drew from his informants, it had to be rejected as invalid and priority given to samā'. Here Abū 'Ubaida diverges considerably from the general line of the Baṣra school.

Some examples show that Abū 'Ubaida disagreed on

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1. Ibid. I. 176.

some points with both the Baṣra and Kūfa schools. Al-Baṭlayūsī furnishes us with a typical example.

Regarding the verse of Imru 'ul-Qais

fa-lammā ajaznā sāḥat'l-ḥayyi wa-ntaḥā
binā baṭnu ḥiqfin fī rukāmin 'aqanqalī

grammarians of both schools are at variance as to the apodosis of the particle lammā. The Baṣrans say that the apodosis virtually niltu amalī minhā is suppressed. The Kūfites assume that intaḥā is the apodosis, and that the conjunction wāw is here an otiose particle. Abū 'Ubaida entertains a third opinion, namely that the apodosis is simply the verb haṣirtu at the beginning of the following verse.[1]

Obviously, Abū 'Ubaida's opinion has much to recommend it, since it is not necessary to assume a suppressed apodosis, or to explain away the conjunction wāw. Abū 'Ubaida, following his acute sense and inbiased mind, neither postulates an implicit apodosis nor the otioseness of the conjunction; and indeed the meaning of the first verse seems to the writer to necessitate its completion in the second one.

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[1] Al-Iqtiḍāb 377-378.

Al-Zarkashī refers to another example in which Abū 'Ubaida disagrees with both schools.[1]

Pending the discovery of Abū 'Ubaida's grammatical works, therefore, it can be safely concluded that he did not distinguish himself as a grammarian of high repute or originality. It is also to be noted that he, as far as our data show, disagreed (at least on occasions) with both schools of grammar. The belief that, because Abū 'Ubaida was educated and lived in Baṣra, he must have been with this school in grammar is misleading. Neither can it be proved that he was nearer to the Kūfa school. On important points he shows an independent opinion characterised by flexibility and abhorrence of rigid logical and philosophical tendencies. This is due to a large extent to his literary temperament which was able to appreciate texts as they are, without paying over-much attention to rules or to logic.

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1. Al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1957) III. 124.

# CHAPTER VII

## The Dialects

A dialect is "a particular or characteristic manner of speech, and hence any variety of a language."[1] This linguistic phenomenon, however, is the product of specific circumstances. Anīs observes that a dialect is, more or less, a group of linguistic characteristics which belong to a specific environment.[2] The existence of dialect is, therefore, predictable as long as people do not live in similar social and geographical circumstances. Whitney states, "It is true that a certain degree of dialectic variety is inseparable from the being of any language, at any stage of its history."[3]

It is generally agreed, in regard to Arabic dialects, that their diversity and differences are due to the isolation in which the tribes were living on the one hand, and to the vastness of Arabia on the other.[4] With the advent of Islam, many factors had jointly contributed to the smoothing down of dialectical peculiarities. Among these factors were the levelling influence of the Quran and Arabic poetry, and of the military expeditions,[1] and finally the rise of great towns, particularly in Iraq, such as Baṣra, Kūfa and Baghdad. Other factors, however, played an important rule in speeding up the linguistic unification which directly resulted from the unity of the Islamic community.

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[1] EB (dialect) VIII.155.

[2] Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya (Cairo n.d.) 18, 23.

[3] "Language and the Study of Language" 181.

[4] Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya. 26. O. Jespersen says "The most important cause of a language splitting into dialects ... is want of communication for whatever reason." (Mankind, Nation and Individual) (Oslo 1925) 41.

Yet, this statement should not lead us to the belief that dialects vanished overnight. In fact, the unification of the language evinced itself most in the big cities and among tribes which abandoned willy-nilly their isolation. As for the Bedouins, they still retained their linguistic peculiarities. Thus al-Sijistānī relates that a Bedouin recited from the Quran *ṭībā lahum*, and when the former corrected him saying *ṭūbā*, the Bedouin took no notice and repeated his reading, al-Sijistānī tried over and over again to correct him saying *ṭū*.. *ṭū*.., on which the Bedouin replied *ṭī*.. *ṭī*..[2]

## The Arab Philologists and the Dialects:

The attitude of Arab philologists towards dialects and their method of studying them should be taken into consideration. The commonly held opinion is that Arab philologists did not lend this subject full attention and care.

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[1] J. Fück notices that tribal peculiarities were levelled down in the time of Islamic conquests. Cf. *Al-'Arabiyya* 8.

[2] *Al-Khaṣā'ṣ* I. 77.

C. Rabin in his study Ancient West Arabian states that, "to the Arab philologist the recording of dialect data was a sideline, something that did not form part of his proper business of codifying the laws of the Classical language",[1] and that "the grammarians of the Baṣrian school evinced little real interest in the dialects."[2] Dr. Ṣ. al-Ṣāliḥī says, "It would seem that the ancient philologists did not examine the ancient Arabic dialects in their different aspects."[3] Al-Rāfi'ī also notes that in spite of the fact that the reciters wrote on Arab tribes, their genealogies, Ayyām, etc. they, nevertheless, did not write on dialects.[4]

However, the existence of dialects amongst tribes, to the reciters, must have seemed self-evident, and, indeed, they admitted the occurrence of such peculiarities even in the Quran. Abū 'Ubaida treats some of these peculiarities as majāz in his study of the Quran.[5]

Al-Suyūṭī clearly states that parts of the Quran were revealed in the dialect of the Quraish, others in that of the Hudhail, others again in that of the Hawāzin, and in that of Yemen.[6] Abū Bakr al-Wāsiṭī gives a list of fifty dialects which contributed to the vocabulary of the Quran.[1]

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[1] p.6.
[2] p.7.
[3] "Dirāsāt fī Fiqh al-Lugha" (Beirut 1962) 51.
[4] Tārikh Ādāb al-'Arab II. 134.
[5] Majāz I. 15.
[6] Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1941) I.230.

Thus, a full consideration might have been expected to have been paid to dialects on that account. The comparative indifference of the philologists to this subject can only be understood in the light of the knowledge that the philologists were primarily concerned with explaining dialect form which occurred in their texts. Such forms, however, they considered inferior to those of Classical language as exemplified in the Quran and in pre-Islamic poetry. Dialects were therefore always of secondary importance. Nevertheless, and contrary to what Anīs and al-Rafī'ī maintain, books were written on dialects: by Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, Abū 'Ubaida, al-Farrā', al-Aṣma'ī and Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī.[2]

Because of their basic attitude to dialects, the handling of this material by the philologists reveals two serious defects. Firstly, the dialect peculiarities of all the Arab tribes were never fully recorded. "We have" says Rabin "fairly plentiful information only for three areas within Arabia; Ḥijāz (probably only the Holy Cities), Yemen and Tamīm, for other areas we have some information which permits us to recognize the general character of the dialects spoken there. For the rest of dialects of the peninsula we have little information that we must consider their language totally unknown."[1] Secondly, they did little or nothing on dialect geography to categorise and clarify the physical extension and the boundaries of dialectic peculiarities. Such studies would also have indicated what uniformity there was in the occurrence of idiosyncrasies, vocabulary, syntax ... etc. Rabin again notes that "Philologists speaks of either large tribes or tribal confederations (Tamīm, Qais), or large and ill-defined regions (Yemen, Ḥijāz, Najd, Tihāma)[2].

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ancient West-Arabian 6. Regarding al-Shaibānī's book entitled "al-Jīm" Krenkow in his article "The Kitāb al-Jīm of Abū 'Amr al-Shaibānī" (JRAS. 1925) states that this book "is a dictionary of Arabic dialects ... the author, apparently had always before him his own collection of the dīwāns of the tribes and from these he selects such words as were used by the tribe in question with a meaning not generally used by other tribes." p.307.

When the philologists speak of the Qurashī or the Tamīnī or some other tribal dialect, by so doing they implicitly acknowledge the tribe as a linguistic unit. But a critical investigation of those so-called dialects proves that tribes in fact do not form a dialect unit.[3] Differences in language, as Bloomfield states, can be detected in every village, or at most in every cluster of two or three villages.[4]

Differences within tribal dialects were however attested by the reciters, and these were usually taken for

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1. Ancient West Arabian 16.
2. Ibid. 15.
3. Ibid. The same assumption is implicit in some recent studies. Cf. e.g. Cantinean "Etudes sur quelque parlers de nomades araber d'Orient", in AIEO II (1936. 1-118) and III (1937. 119-236).
4. Language (London 1935) 325.

granted. Thus, for example, al-Jāḥiẓ says "differences are to be found between the upper Tamīm, Lower Qais, higher Hawazin and the correct speakers (fuṣaḥā') of Ḥijāz; and also between these tribes on the one hand and the provinces of Yemen on the other hand."[1]

These differences, were never subjected to close scrutiny. Obviously, the first step in studying dialects is to recognise their phonetic and morphological systems, and it is this which the Arab philologists, because of their basic attitude, have not done. Al-Rāfi'ī, who presumably reflects the ancient philologists' opinion, states that dialects are linguistic curiosities (shawāhid wa nawādir).[2] Rabin maintains much the same view.[3]

Some of these peculiarities were regarded as symptoms of a degeneration which sound correct language must do away with. We are told for example that Mu'āwiya once asked about the tribe which spoke most correct Arabic, and was given the answer by one of his courtiers "that tribe which keeps away from the furātiyya of Iraq, keeps to the right of the kashkasha of Tamīm and to the left of the kaskasa of Bakr, which does not have the ghamghama of Quḍā'a nor the ṭumṭumāniyya of Ḥimyar." Mu'āwiya asked "and who are they?" The man said "My tribe, O Commander of The Faithful". "Of which tribe are you then?" asked the Caliph. "A man from Jarm", the man replied.[1] Similarly, Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' once rejected a dialect form with the words "It is an abominable Tamīmite dialect form."[2]

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[1] Majmū'at Rasā'il (Cairo n.d.) 6. Also Ibn Jinnī al-Khaṣa'ṣ I. 388, 428.

[2] Tārīkh Adāb al-'Arab I. 135.

[3] Ancient West-Arabian 13. In his study "English Dialects" (London 1963) A.G. Mitchell notes that "We should speak of differences rather than of corruption, of characteristics rather than of faults." 20.

Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards the dialects:

Having discussed the dialect position in general, we may turn now to examine Abū 'Ubaida's opinions on this subject.

Abū 'Ubaida employs the word "lugha" (plural lughāt) to signify a dialect, or a dialect form,[3] and it is reasonable therefore to suppose that his book entitled "Al-Lughāt" must have been a book on dialects. Modern scholars indeed, have no doubt in this regard.[4]

Regrettably, this book is not extant, and it has been necessary to collect data on this subject from his other

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1. Al-Mubarrad, al-Kāmil (Leipzig 1864) 364.
2. Tārīkh Adāb al-'Arab I. 150.
3. Rabin enumerates different usages for the word lugha and thinks that the fact that this word has many meanings is a "fertile source of confusion". Ancient West-Arabian. 19.
4. Ibid. C.G. Flügel "Grammatische Schulen der Araber" (Leipzig 1862) 69. Al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī I.9. Lane in his "Lexicon" reckoned this book as a dictionary. (Introduction XII).

books, notably al-Majāz and to some extent al-Naqā'iḍ, and from other linguistic sources which transmitted dialect material on his authority.

Abū 'Ubaida's references to the dialects in his book al-Majāz are those demanded by the text. It is agreed by Arab philologists that the Quran was revealed in seven aḥruf, that is to say, in seven readings (qirā'āt). Some of these readings, Wolfensohn observes, correspond with the Arabic dialects which prevailed in the first century of Islam.[1] Anīs also states that "the seven authoritative readings (of the Quran) can be ascribed to different dialects, particularly, those of the most famous tribes."[2] Thus, the considerable amount of information in the Quran would seem to have stimulated the interest of the philologists in dialects rather than decreasing it, contrary to the common belief that the Quran had superseded the other dialects by employing only the Qurashite dialect.[3] Hence, all Quranic commentators had to deal with the dialects existing in the Quran, and Abū 'Ubaida notes in his Majāz that in the Quran not only the Qurashite dialect also the Yemenite dialects is represented. He said "And well-known Yemenite dialects

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1. Tārīkh al-Lughāt al-Sāmiyya (Cairo 1929) 208.
2. Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya. 39.
3. A. Al-'Alāyilī Maqaddima li-Dāris Lughat al-'Arab (Cairo 1940) 191.

words occur in the Quran."[1] Unfortunately, Abū 'Ubaida does not specify many of these dialect peculiarities to which he refers, although he does so occasionally, as we shall see later.

In the Naqā'iḍ, the dialect in which Abū 'Ubaida was primarily interested as a commentator was the speech of the Tamīm, since the poets of the Naqā'iḍ, al-Farazdaq and Jarīr, were both Tamīmite. For this reason he sometimes refers to this dialect and compares it with others, especially the Qurashite dialect.

As far as can be determined Abū 'Ubaida seems to be acquainted with the following dialects:

1. Lughat Ahl al-'Āliya
2. Lughat Ahl Najd
3. Lughat Ahl Al-Ḥijāz
4. Lughat Banī Tamīm
5. Lughat Bakr b. Wā'il
6. Lughat Quraish
7. Lughat Ahl al-Shām
8. Lughat Qais
9. Lughat 'Uqail
10. Lughat Ahl Makka
11. Lughat al-Ribāb
12. Lughāt Muḍar
13. Lughāt Ahl al-Yaman

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[1] Muzhir I. 211.

Essential it might seem, this localization still lacks sufficient precision and accuracy and helps little to form an idea of the linguistic geography of Ancient Arabia. Obviously, to identify a dialect as that of Muḍar or ahl Najd is to make too broad a generalization. Muḍar was not in fact one tribe; the name denotes a number of tribes, the most famous of which is Kināna, one of whose clans was Quraish.[1]

Abū 'Ubaida occasionally tries to be more accurate and precise. He once identifies a dialect form as a lugha for some of the Tamīm tribe.[2] In another place he localizes a dialect form by saying "It belongs to the Tamīm of Najd."[3]

Apart from the relatively scanty data which are thus localized, he does not define accurately when he refers to dialectical peculiarities and most of his dialect data is therefore difficult to utilize satisfactorily.

## An analysis of the dialect material recorded by Abū 'Ubaida:

Examining the dialect material collected by Abū 'Ubaida is therefore a difficult task, because the spareness of the data hardly allows of any but hypothetical conclusions, and little can be done with it but make a few observations which indicate rather than finalize. In this light we shall

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1. Tārīkh Ādāb al-'Arab I.125.
2. Iṣlāḥ al-Mantiq 317.
3. Ibid. 35.

examine first phonetics, then morphology and syntax.

Consonants - Hamza:

*Hamza*[1] is a glottal stop. The "difficulty"[2] in articulating this sound has been referred to by almost all Arab philologists. Al-Suyūṭī for example says "*Hamza* is the heaviest consonant and its place of articulation is deepest."[3]

The Arabs, Sībawaihi observes, in general elide it (i.e. *hamza*) or lighten it.[4] Ibn Manẓūr also states that hamza could either be retained, replaced, elided or lightened.[1] According to al-Suyūṭī the Qurashites used to replace the hamza by a lengthening of the preceding vowel, thus a became ā, i became ī, and u became ū.[2] This is by and large how the hamza is treated in the modern dialect. The elision of hamza is a marked feature of "every Semitic dialect ... Though only in Aramaic can we observe that it disappeared as completely as in West Arabia."[3]

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[1] It is to be noted that our discussion of the *hamza*, and in fact of all other dialect phenomena, is not intended as a comprehensive survey and is restricted to the observations which Abū 'Ubaida passed down, with short references to what other philologists and grammarians have to say on the points under consideration where these seem appropriate. Arab authors gave *hamza* serious attention and wrote about it at length. We may refer e.g. to Sībawaih'i's *Bāb al-hamza* in *Al-Kitāb* (Calcutta 1887) 892, al-Zamakhsharī in his *al-Mufaṣṣal* (Christianiae 1889) 165, 167, Ibn Manẓūr in the *Lisān* (I. 17-22), and Ibn al-Anbārī in *al-Inṣāf* in regard to the differences between the Baṣra and Kūfa schools concerning the *hamza baina baina*. (question 105). Modern European scholars have also studied the *hamza*, among them C. Rabin in his *Ancient West-Arabian* (130-145) and other places in the book. He also wrote a paper 'L'occlusive glottale en hebreu parlé et l'évolution d'une nouvelle classe de voyelles (Comparaison avec l'arabe classique du Ḥidjāz)' in *GLECS* (1937-1948) III (77-79). Cf. also H. Fleisch in his book *Traité de Philologie arabe*. (98-139): Hans Kofler in his study "Reste Altarabischer Dialekte" in WZKM (1939) (98-106); and M.S. Howell "*A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language*" (Allahabad 1911) 930-988.

[2] I put this word in inverted commas since this is of course a value judgment.

[3] *Al-Itqān*. I. 421.

[4] *al-Kitāb*. 711.

It is commonly agreed that the retention of the hamza is a Tamīmite idiosyncrasy and that its elision is a characteristic of the Qurashite dialect.[4] Abū Zaid, however, limits the elision of the hamza to the people of "Najd, Hudhail, and the people of Mecca and Medina,[5] but does not refer to the tribe or tribes which retain this glottal stop. Ibrāhīm Anīs, however, attempts to show the tribal areas in which hamza did or did not occur. According to his hypothesis, retaining or lightening the hamza was peculiar to the tribes which lived in the middle and east of the peninsula, while the people of Ḥijāz elided it."[1] On the last point Rabin and Anīs are at one. The former notices that "the most celebrated feature of the Ḥijāz dialect is the disappearance of the *hamza* or glottal stop."[2]

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[1] Lisān I. 17. The "lightening" (talyīn or takhfīf) of the hamza is known as hamza baina baina, viz. a sound between a hamza and a semi-vowel (ḥarif lin) which corresponds to the vowel following the hamza. (Ibid. XIV. 66).
Dr. T.M. Johnstone notes in a review of Fleisch "traité de philologie arabe ... that "perhaps an adequate translation of hamza bayna would be "a new breath impulse". BSOAS vol.XXVIII. part I. 147. Thus, this hamza as Fleisch points out "is not a hamza that has disappeared, but which has weakened. Traité de philologie arabe (Beirut 1961) 103.

[2] Itqān I.170. Also A grammar of the Classical Arabic Language Language IV. 934.

[3] Rabin Ancient West Arabian 130.

[4] Lisān I. 22. In another place Ibn Manẓūr also states "that hamza is not a [feature of the] Qurashite dialect." (Ibid. I. 77).

[5] Ibid.

Turning now to Abū 'Ubaida we find that the observations he made on this point, or to be more accurate, the data still extant which were related on his authority, are scanty. Those observations, however, are enough to show that Abū 'Ubaida did not treat the *hamza* in all its aspects. For instance, he does not refer to the lightening (*takhfīf*) of the *hamza*[3] though other aspects, namely its retention, elision and replacement have been treated.

To Abū 'Ubaida *hamza* was a difficult consonant to pronounce and thus the Arabs were inclined to elide it. In fact, if I understand his statements discussed below, *hamza* seems to him a peculiar consonant since on the whole he refers only to tribes which retain the *hamza* or to words in which *hamza* was retained, leaving the reader thinking that the "rest of the Arabs" elide it.

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[1] *Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya*. 58. Unfortunately the author does not refer clearly to his sources.

[2] *Ancient West Arabian*. 130.

[3] In his study of *hamza* Fleisch says that *takhfīf al-hamza* consists of (1) *hamza baina baina*, (2) the replacement of the *hamza* (*qalb*), (3) the suppression of the *hamza* (*ḥadhf*). (Cf. *Traité de philologie arabe*, 103).

(1) According to him, the 'Uqail articulated the *hamza* in the words *fa'ra*, *mu'sa*, *ju'n* and *ḥu't*, contrary to the rest of the Arabs who elided it in these words.[1] This statement obviously does not imply that 'Uqail everywhere retained the *hamza*. Likewise, he states on the authority of Yūnus that the people of Mecca, contrary to the practice of other Arabs, stressed the *hamza* in the three words *nabī*, *bariyya* and *dhurriyya* (viz. pronounced as *nabī'*, *barī'a* and *dhurrī'a* respectively.[2] Al-Suyūṭī, on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, adds a fourth word *khabiyya* (*khabī'a*).[3]

The explanation which Abū 'Ubaida gives for the elision of the *hamza* by almost all tribes in the words listed seems unconvincing, namely that the "Arabs have done away with the *hamza* in four [words] because of the frequent use [of these words in their speech].[4] Rabin points out that "the two words (viz. *nabiyy*, *bariyya*) were of foreign origin and presumably reached Arabic in their Aramaic form without *hamza*."[5] To Horovitz the word *nabiyyun* is borrowed from either Hebrew *nābī*, or from Aramain *n$^{e}$bī'ā*.[6] At any rate even if we accept the word nabiyy as Hebrew and reaching Arabic without alteration of its form, i.e. without hamza, this solution is not relevant in the case of the other words referred to by Abū 'Ubaida.

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[1] *Ḥayawān* II. 307

[2] *Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq* 179. *Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl* 458.

[3] *Muzhir* II. 252. Cf. also *Majāz* II.145.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ancient West-Arabian* 133.

[6] *EI*$^{(1)}$, (*nabī*) vol.III, part II. 802. Horovitz however seems when he gives this form with final *hamza* (before affixation of -ā) to quote the *katīb* form of Ezra (51) which is inferior to the *Qrī* form as a reading.

(2) Ru'ba, says Abū 'Ubaida, used to stress the hamza in two words, thundu'a and sī'a, while other Arabs elided the hamza in these words.[1] This is an odd example. The statement of Abū 'Ubaida suggests that the usage of the two abovementioned words was peculiar to Ru'ba, and is not valid for the poet's tribe, Tamīm. But this interpretation is misleading since the general tendency of the Tamīm is claimed to be the retention of hamza. It may be safe to infer here that the usage of Ru'ba is also valid for the Tamīm generally.

(3) Abū 'Ubaida gives also a few examples of the replacement of hamza by another consonant. Fleisch states that "En commencement absolu, l'affaiblissement du hamza serait possible selon Sībawaihi, comme on l'a vu plus haut ..., mais l'ibdāl ne peut se produire. L'ibdāl est en effet ici de l'ordre de l'assimilation et suppose avant le hamza un agent assimilateur. On ne recontrera donc l'ibdāl qu'a l'intérieur d'un mot ou dans la rencontre de deux mots différents."[2] Fleisch instances from Sībawaihi the word minsa'a which became minsāt as a case in which ibdāl takes

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1. Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq 178.
2. Traité de philologie Arabe 104.

place inside the word.[1] Abū 'Ubaida also refers to this word in his *Majāz* saying that *minsa'atuhu* is one of the words in which "the Arabs did away with *hamza*",[2] and instances two verses by unknown poets in one of whose verses the word occurs as *minsāt* and in the other as *minsa'a*.[3]

(4) The word *ikhtata'tu*, is another example of *ibdāl*. Here the *hamza* was replaced by *yā'* and thus it is pronounced *ikhtataitu*.[4] Similarly, the word *iddara'tu* became *iddaraitu*,[5] and *dha'a*, *yadh'a*, *dha'yan* became *dhawa*, *yadhwā*, *dhawyan*.[6] In his *Majāz*, Abū 'Ubaida refers to the word *bada'tu* and *badaitu* as dialect variants,[7] and instances the verse of 'Abdullah b. Rawāḥa,[8]

بسم الاله وبه بدينا    ولو عبدنا غيره شقينا

In all these examples the *hamza* was replaced by *wāw* or by *yā'*.

(5) In the poetry of al-Farazdaq, the word *tailafu* is used instead of *ta'lafu*. Abū 'Ubaida comments on this that the first variant is a Tamīmite form.[9] In this example,

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[1] *Ibid*.

[2] *Majāz* II. 145.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] *Marātib al-Naḥwiyyīn*. 18.

[5] *Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq*. 176.

[6] *Ibid*. 213.

[7] *Majāz* I. 20.

[8] *Ibid*. I. 21.

[9] *Naqā'iḍ* (S) II. 243. It is worthy of note that Abū 'Ubaida used the terms "*ahl Najd*" and the *Tamīm* as synonymous. Cf. *Majāz*. I. 163: *Naqā'iḍ* (S) II. 68. Needless to say this is an inaccurate identification.

however, the *hamza* has been replaced by *yā'*, contrary to what was claimed to be the general tendency in the Tamīmite dialect which was said to retain the *hamza*. What is certain is that the sound change attested in al-Farazdaq's verse is unlikely to have been poetic license, because retaining the *hamza* in such cases does not change the metre of the verse.

(6) The elision of an initial hamzated non-radical syllable (viz. *af'ala* *fa'ala*) is also reported by Abū 'Ubaida as a dialect phenomenon. He gives a number of examples; thus:-

*ashāda* > *shāda*[1]
*ankara* > *nakara*[2]
*aftana* > *fatana*[3]
*aina'a* > *yana'a*[4]
*asḥata* > *saḥata*[5]
*awrā* > *warā*[6]

The dialects in which these forms occur are not specified except for the first and the last, and in these cases the nature of the statements is rather contradictory. With the first word, namely *ashāda* and *shāda*, Abū 'Ubaida states "*ashāda* and *shāda* are two dialect forms (*lughatān*).

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1. *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* 425
2. *Ibid*. 565.
3 -6. *Majāz* I. 168; II. 202, 21, 252 respectively.

The elision of the alif is a Qurashite dialect variant."[1] On the last word he says "waraitu is of very frequent occurrence and is used by the people of Najd."[2] In the light of the claim that the retention of the hamza is peculiar to the Tamīm and the elision of it to the Quraish, the last example, namely the statement that waraitu and awraitu are used by the people of Najd, acquires a special importance. Taking this word along with the previous example, that is to say the tailafu of al-Farazdaq, a conclusion may be reached with some reservations, namely that although the generalization that Tamīmī and central Najdī dialects retain hamza seems to be true, nevertheless, certain words occur in these dialects in which hamza is elided.

### - Ibdāl in general:

Philologists and grammarians give a good deal of information about ibdāl (the replacement of one consonant by another). They conceive of this replacement as a dialect feature, though their attribution of linguistic phenomena of this kind to individual tribes is not entirely convincing or satisfactory.

The cases recorded by Abū 'Ubaida for consonants other than hamza are discussed below.

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1. Mufaḍḍaliyyāt 425.
2. Majāz II. 252.

1) *ṣ* *s*

Examples:

*miṣlāq* > *mislāq*[1]

*ashkhaṣa* > *ashkhasa*[2]

Al-Khalīl says that every *ṣ* preceding *q* in the same word can be replaced by *s*.[3] : thus *ṣaqr* > *saqr*. Ibn Manẓūr states however that the latter form is a dialect variant. In fact it would seem to be a Tamīmite idiosyncrasy Ibn Manẓūr adds "The Kalb tribe changes the *s* followed by *q* into *z*.."[5]

It is worthy of note that Ibn Manẓūr does not attempt to define the phonetic conditions under which *ṣ* > s as al-Khalīl does.

The process involved in this sound change would appear to be as follows:

(a) since both *s* and *ṣ* are voiceless and their place of articulation almost identical, in general *ṣ* is not replaced by *s*.[6]

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1. *Majāz* II. 135.
2. *Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq* 292.
3. Al-Qasṭallānī IV.3 quoted by Rabin *Ancient West-Arabian* 195.
4. *Lisān* (*saqr*) IV.372. Kofler says that "Mit seltener Einhelligkeit wird den Tamīm, insbesondere den zu Tamīm gehörigen Banū Al-'Anbar, die Substitution von *ṣ* für *s* zugeschrieben". *WZKM* (1939) 88.
5. *Lisān* (*saqr*) IV. 372.
6. I. Anīs, *al-Aṣwāt al-Lughawiyya* (Cairo 1961) 26.

(b) in the contiguity of *q*, but not in contact with it, *ṣ* > *s* in the dialect of the Banū Al-'Anbar of the Tamīm.

(c) in the dialect of the Kalb in comparable conditions *ṣ* > *z*. This argues that *ṣād* in this dialect may have been a voiced sound.[1]

Rabin,[2] following Kofler,[3] suggests that emphasis is a factor of importance in this process.

This explanation accepts that the uvular plosive *q* can be grouped with the emphatic (velarised, *muṭbaq*) consonants *ṣ*, *ṭ*, &c., an equation which is not altogether acceptable. Both however may be grouped together as *ḥurūf musta'liya*[4] (raised sounds) according to the Arab grammarians and this may be a relevant feature. Ibn Duraid, for example, quotes occasional variants such as *ṣūq* < *sūq* for the Tamīm.[5] The regressive assimilation suggested by Kofler however is not one involving emphasis[6] but the *ḥurūf* *musta'liya*.

Even this is not altogether satisfactory, however, since firstly *gh* and *kh* are not reported as having this effect and secondly, according to al-Baṭlayūsī, *'ain* which is not a 'raised consonant' does have this effect.[1]

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[1] Cf. *Ancient West-Arabian* 195.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *WZKM* (1939) 89.
[4] In the articulation of which the tongue is raised towards the palate. Cf. Ibn Jinnī *Sirr Ṣina'at al-I'rāb* 71, and Fleisch *Traité de Philologie arabe* 235. The term "*mufakhkhama*" is sometimes used as a synonymous with "*musta'liya*". Cf. Gairdner, *The Phonetics of Arabic* (Oxford 1925) 107. Fleisch in his *Traité de Philologie Arabe* (226-227) says of *gh* and *kh* that they have 'diminished velarisation' or 'the beginning of velarisation'.
[5] *Ancient West Arabian* 195.
[6] *WZKM* (1939) 89.

2) h *ḥ* > *'* (voiceless pharyngal fricative > voiced pharyngal fricative)

Examples:

*ḍabaḥa* > *ḍaba'a*[2]

*muqdhaḥir* > *muqdha'ir*[3]

*muqmaḥ* > *muqma'*[4]

It is reported that the replacement of *ḥ* by is peculiar to the Hudhail.[5] The philologists called this phenomenon *faḥfaḥa*,[6] although the term is not in fact mentioned by Abū 'Ubaida. The much quoted example in this case is *ḥattā* which becomes *'attā* in Hudhali dialect.[7] Kofler gives other examples such as *ḍabaḥa* and *ḍaba'a*, *biḥrāt* and *bi'rat*.[8]

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[1] *Ibid.* 88.

[2] *Majāz* II. 307.

[3] *Muzhir* (S) II. 207.

[4] *Majāz* II. 157.

[5] *Muzhir* (S) I. 133. Cf. also Howell "*Arabic Grammar*" II.317. *Lane* I. 510.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Kofler extends this phenomenon to cover not only the Hudhail but the Thaqīf as well: he says "Der Wandel ḥ > ', den die Grammatiker als *faḥfaḥat* Hudhail bezeichnen, ist den Hudail und *Ṯaqīf*, einem Unterstamme der Hawāzin" *WZKM* (1939) 110.

[8] *Ibid.*

(3) *ṭ* > *t* (Velarised alveolar stop > dental stop)

Examples:

*quṭr* > *qutr*[1]

*aqṭār* > *aqtār*[2]

Ibn Manẓūr points out that *qutr* is a variant of *quṭr* with the plural forms *aqṭar* and *aqtār*.[3] This suggests that the form with *t* is peculiar to a certain tribe or tribes while the one with *ṭ* is standard Arabic. Neither Abū 'Ubaida nor Ibn Manẓūr refers to the tribe in whose dialect these forms occur, although the latter states that Imru'ul-Qais uses the form *quṭr* in his poetry,[4] and al-Farazdaq the form *taqattara*.[5]

Kofler suggests that *ṭ* quite often becomes either *d* or *t*. He says "Nicht relten wird dialektisch *ṭ* zu *d* oder *t*; meist ist dieser Wandel als Dissimilation zu begreifen, wenn in der betreffenden Wurzel noch ein anderer emphatischer haut vorkommt."[6]

(4) *th* > *f* (Dental fricative > labial fricative)

Examples:

*jadath* > *jadaf*[7]

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1 - 2. *Majāz* I.51, 244. Other examples referred to by Ibn Manẓūr are *haraṭa* and *harata*, *nafaṭa* and *nafata*. *Lisān* II. 103; VII, 416 respectively.

[3] *Lisān* (*qatr*) V. 72.

[4] *Ibid.* V. 107.

[5] *Ibid.* V. 72, with *alif al-iṭlāq*.

[6] *WZKM* (1939) 97.

[7] *Naqa'iḍ* (S) II.86.

Ibn Manẓūr says that the Arabs 'used to substitute the *th* for *f*.'[1] The form *jadath*, plural *ajdāth* is commoner, while the plural of the second form (*ajdāf*) is "abominable", and some philologists denied that such a plural exists or is used.[2] Al-Suhailī, nevertheless, states that the plural *ajdāf* occurs in the poetry of Ru'ba.[3]

This substitution, Kofler notes, is to be found in old Arabic, and still exist in south Arabian and North Africa.[4]

Abū 'Ubaida identifies the form with *th* with the people of al-'Āliya, and the form with *f* with the dialect of the Tamīm.[5] Kofler, quoting Lane who in his turn is quoting al-Faiyūmī's *al-Miṣbāḥ*, identifies the first form with Tihāma and the second form with the people of Najd.[6]

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1. *Lisān* (*jadafa*) IX. 24.
2. *Ibid*. Ibn Jinnī in his book "*Sirr Ṣina'at al-I'rāb*" states that Arabs did not say *ajdāf* (I.250), but Howell (*Arabic Grammar* IV, 1196) disproves Ibn Jinnī's statement.
3. *WZKM (1939) 86.*
4. *Ibid.* The opposite change (viz. *f* *th*) also occurs in *Arabian* dialects. Cf. Socin *Dīwan aūs Centralarabien* (Leipzig 1900-1901) Glossary S.V. *itm* = *fam*.
5. Abū 'Ubaida uses the term *ahl Najd* instead of Tamīm in *Naqā'iḍ* (S) II.86 and in *Majāz* II.163.
6. *WZKM* (1939) 86. Lane *Arabic-English Lexicon* I, 388. According to Ibn Manẓūr the word Tihāma is a name of Mecca and its inhabitants. *Lisān* (*tahima*) XII.72.

(5) z > dh (dental fricative > interdental fricative)

Examples:

yaḥūzu > yaḥūdhu[1]

zabr > dhabr [2]

Ibn Manẓūr says that Abū 'Ubaida used to recite ḥūdhī instead of ḥūzī in a verse of al-'Ajjāj, and that the meaning of both is the name.[3] Al-Aṣma'ī on the other hand used to recite a verse of Abū Dhu'aib in which dhabr occurs instead of zabr.[4] The second form of the second word dhabr is said to be Hudhali dialect.[5]

(6) k > q (velar plosive > uvular plosive)

Example:

kashaṭtu > qashaṭtu[6]

Abū 'Ubaida does not specify which tribe uses which form, but Ibn Manẓūr says that the form with k belongs to the Qais, and that with q to the Asad and Tamīm.[7] On the other hand, Ibn Jinnī attributes the k- form to the Quraish and the q- form to the Tamīm and Qais.[8]

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1. Majāz I. 142
2. Ibid. II. 241. Cf. also Sharḥ al-Qaṣā'id al-Sab' al-Ṭiwāl 526.
3. Lisān (ḥawz) V. 340.
4. Ibid. (dhabr) IV. 301.
5. Ibid.
6. Dirāsāt fī Fiqh al-Lugha. 109.
7. Lisān (kashaṭa) VII. 387. (qashaṭa) 379 respectively.
8. Sirr Ṣinā'at al-I'rab I. 278. In this book Ibn Jinnī referred to these two words as kushiṭat and qushiṭat and points out that the q here is not a substitution of the k but the words are two different dialects. Ibid.

(7) *r* > *l* (alveolar rolled dental lateral)

Example:

*amraṭ* *amlaṭ*[1]

(8) *l* > *n* (dental lateral > alveolar nasal)

Example:

*rifall* > *rifann*[2]

The word *rifall* is reported to have been used by Ibn Mayyāda the poet,[3] and *rifann* by al-Nābigha al-Ju'dī.[4] Ibn Manẓūr points out that the form with *n* is a dialect one,[5] but he does not attribute it to any particular tribe.

No other examples are given by the philologists or recitors as undergoing the phonetic change *r* > *l* or *l* > *n*. Neither Abū 'Ubaida nor the others who recorded these cases have attempted to localize the words by tribes. Howell comments that the "substitution of the *l* for *n* ought not in every case to be named "common", the common being only what is regular or frequent in some dialects like *'aj'aja* in the dialect of Ḳuḍā'a."[6]

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[1] *Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq.* 80.

[2] *Majāz* I. 297.

[3] *Lisān* (*rafl*) XI. 292.

[4] *Ibid.* (*rifann*) XIII. 183-184.

[5] *Ibid.* XI. 292.

[6] Viz. this is not a regular sound change. Cf. Howell, *Arabic Grammar* IV. 1189.

Vowels:

The treatment of the vowel system in the works of Arab philologists was reasonably adequate, except as regards the ḥarakāt and in their ignorance of the function of vocal cords.

Abū 'Ubaida's remarks on the subject are rather random, and indeed they are no more systematised than his remarks on the consonants. I. Anīs, however, generalises this phenomenon to all Arab philologists whose statements on phonetics, he says, are vague and defective."[1]

Abū 'Ubaida's observations in this respect are scanty and are hardly a satisfactory survey of the subject. However, the few remarks at our disposal are discussed below.

In a statement Abū 'Ubaida made that "the Ḥijāzis give full weight to every sound (yufakhkhimūm al-kalām) except for the word 'ashra which they shorten. The Najdis do not give full weight to sounds except in this one word which they pronounce 'ashira."[2] Thus Abū 'Ubaida puts his finger on an important phonetic difference between the Eastern dialects and those of the West. These examples clearly show a tendency to elide an unstressed vowel in the Eastern dialect while the Hijāzī dialect retains it, with the exception of the form quoted. The Eastern dialect, as

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[1] Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya 67. In this he adopts the usual European view.

[2] Itqān 220, quoted in "Ancient West-Arabian" 98.

Rabin says, elide not only the unstressed i but also the u, thus reducing both fi'il and fu'ul to fi'l and fu'al.[1] Abū 'Ubaida's examples, moreover, show that it is not only the i and u are subject to elision but the a as well, so that khalaf becomes khalf and athar becomes athr.[2]

Another Eastern feature is vowel harmony, namely the assimilation of unstressed to stressed vowels.[3] Such assimilation in Arabic is more frequently regressive than progressive.[4] Abū 'Ubaida gives a number of examples of progressive assimilations thus:

yabs > (*yabes) > yabas
qadr > (*qader) > qadar
'adhl > (*adhel) > 'adhal
ṭard > (*ṭared) > ṭarad
sham' > (*shame') > shama'[5]

Ibn al-'Arabī is reported to have said that the first pattern (namely, fa'l) is more correct.[6] The two Umayyad poets, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq use both patterns in their poetry.[7]

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[1] Ancient West-Arabian 97.
[2] Majāz I. 170.
[3] Ancient West-Arabian 99.
[4] Al-Lahajāt al-'Arabiyya 51.
[5] Adab al-Kātib 551 sqq.
[6] Ibid. 553.
[7] Islāḥ al-Manṭiq. 109.

Abū 'Ubaida also records a few examples in which the form fa'ila > fa'ala (as e.g. naqima > naqama) and of fa'ula > fa'ala (as e.g. nazula > nazala: bakhula > bakhala)[1]

Abū 'Ubaida gives few examples of regressive vowel assimilation. The data we have gives only one example in which the form fu'al > fa'al; thus zulam > zalam.[2]

Other cases recording variant of patterns are given by Abū 'Ubaida, as e.g. a case in which i and a are variant, as nihy and nahy.[3] The first pattern was attributed to the Tamīm of Najd, the second to other unspecified tribes.[4] This suggests that the second pattern was in more general use than the first.

Similar to this is the example in which i is a variant of u, as for example, ṭiby and ṭuby.[5] In this instance Abū 'Ubaida does not localize the dialects in question. Rabin thinks that in a smaller number of cases the Ḥijāzī dialect has i against Eastern u in the neighbourhood of uvular and emphatic consonants in most instances combined with labials: Ḥijāz misḥaf against Tamīm musḥaf."[6] He adds,

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1. Majāz I 170; II. 155.
2. Ibid. I. 153.
3. Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq 35.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. 43.
6. Ancient West Arabian 101. Ullendorff puts forward, however, a different opinion in regard to the word "misḥaf": he states that the Ethiopic mäs'haf (book) being a loan word in Arabic, appears as musḥaf, misḥaf and very rarely as masḥaf. Cf. "The Semitic Languages of Ethiopia" (London 1961), 161.

"as against this, there are some instances in which the Ḥijāzī dialect has *u* against classical *a* as e.g. *lumā* and *lamā*."[1] This phenomenon was also recorded by Abū 'Ubaida and he gives many examples such as:

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|---|---|
| *maulā* | *mūlā* |
| *salam* | *sulam* |
| *malāwa* | *mulāwa* |
| *sharb* | *shurb*[2] |

Abū 'Ubaida also records *fi'l* and *fi'al* as variants. Thus he gives *qim'* and *qima'*, *dil'* and *dila'*, *niṭ'* and *niṭa'*.[3] Ibn al-Sikkīt referring to Abū 'Ubaida's statement in this connection says that the first pattern is characteristic of the Tamīm and the second as Ḥijāz.[4] Rabin identifies the second pattern, *fi'al* with the Hudhalī dialect.[5] However, the variant pattern *fi'al* seems not to be peculiar to Ḥijāzī or Hudhalī, nor the pattern *fi'l* to Tamīm. It is likely that the pattern which is said to belong to Tamīm represents Eastern dialects in general and that the pattern which reportedly belongs to the Hudhail and the Ḥijāz represents the Western dialects. Rabin, having mentioned that there is tendency in Ḥijāzī to avoid consonant clusters by means of anaptyctic vowels, doubts whether the vowels in the aforementioned words really are anaptyctic, or "whether the full forms are not the original ones, and those of the CL (viz. Classical Arabic) due to the elision of the post-stress vowel."[1]

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[1] *Ibid.* 101.

[2] *Majāz* I.251, 250, 234; II.89 respectively. If these examples can be taken as indicative of any sound change, it would seem that *a* > *u* in this dialect in the contiguity of the labials. This of course occurs fairly regularly in certain modern dialects such as Iraqī.

[3] *Iṣlāḥ al-Manṭiq*, III.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Studies in Early Arabic Dialects* (Thesis 1939. University of London) 70. This thesis was published with some differences under the title "*Ancient West-Arabian*" from which many quotations were made in the present chapter.

A few examples are given by Abū 'Ubaida in which the pattern _fu'ul_ is a variant of _fa'l_ as e.g. _'umur_ for _'amr_, _ḍu'uf_ for _ḍa'f_ and _mukuth_ for _makth_.[2] In the _Lisān_, the first word has a third variant, namely, _'umr_,[3] and the second a variant _ḍu'f_.[4] Ibn Manẓūr refers to _ḍa'af_ as a dialect variant of _ḍa'f_.[5] The use of _a_ (_ḍa'f_)against _u_ (_ḍu'f_) is said to be Eastern and the latter "the language of the Prophet."[6]

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1. _Ibid_. 70.
2. _Majāz_ II. 106.
3. _Lisān_ (_'amr_) IV. 601.
4. _Ibid_. (_ḍa'f_) IX. 203.
5. _Ibid_.
6. _Ancient West-Arabian_. 100.

*Total consonant assimilation*:

One of the phonological features of dialects is *idghām* (total assimilation of consonants).[1] Abū 'Ubaida notes that final *lām* of the interrogative particle *hal* may or may not be assimilated by a following *tā'*. Thus, *hal ta'lam* or *hat-ta'lam*. In the second instance in Abū 'Ubaida's phraseology the *lām* is suppressed (*yakhmudūnahā*), and the *I* doubled (*thuqqilat*).[2] This of course is a clear example of regressive assimilation.

Arab grammarians also speak of another kind of *idghām* which they call *idghām al-mithlain*, by which they mean the replacement by a geminate consonant of two identical letters separated by a short vowel. The phonetic process in this case is conceived of as the elision of one of these two consonants, and the doubling of the other. Fleisch says "deux *ḥarf* remblables, sèparés par in *ḥaraka* entrent en contact par *l'iskān* du premier (suppression de son *ḥaraka*); *l'idghām* les réunit en un *ḥarf* *mushaddad*. Ainsi مَدَدَ devient مَدْدَ puis مَدَّ C'est l'idghām *al-miṭlayn*,

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[1] "*Idghām*" is a Kūfite term. The Baṣra school uses the term "iddighām" Cf. (*Traitê de philologie arabê*) 243. In terms of modern linguistics assimilation is "a phonetical process in which two phonemes, adjacent or very near to each other acquire common characteristics or become identical". Cf. (*Dictionary of Linguistics*), 20. For an account of idhham in Arabic Cf. (*al-Lahajat al-'Arabiyya*) 51-56. H. Fleisch (*Traitê de philologie arabe*) 141 sqq.

[2] *Majāz* II.9.

"l'idghām de deux (ḥarf) semblables."[1]

Abū 'Ubaida in *Naqā'iḍ* relates Jarīr's verse *"faghuḍḍu al-ṭarfa"* in which the consonant *ḍ* is geminate in the word *faghuḍḍu*,[2] and this would seem to indicate that the retention of *idghām* is peculiar to the Tamīm tribe while dispensing with it is peculiar to Ḥijāz. Ibn 'Aqīl, in fact, notes this in his commentary.[3]

Abū 'Ubaida also records an example of *idghām al-mutaqāribain*. In this kind of *idghām* the assimilation occurs between two similar consonants. Fleisch observes "Assimilation; l'*idghām* est précédé d'une assimilation quand les *ḥurūf* entrant en contact n'etaient pas semblables, mais proches."[4] However, Abū 'Ubaida records that some people, whom he does not identify, say *watid*, others, also unidentified, *watad*; but the people of Najd say *waddun*.[5] The phonetic process involved is not explained by Abū 'Ubaida, but it is quite clear that in this case the *t* has been assimilated by the *d*. According to Ibn Jinnī, (quoted by Fleisch) "on a dérobé au *tā'* son *kasra* (*iskān*) (soit وَتِدٌ > وَتْدٌ ), puis

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1. *Traité de philologie arabe*. 243.
2. *Naqā'iḍ* (S) II.150.
3. *Alfiyyat*, 380.
4. *Traité de philologie arabe*, 243.
5. *Iṣlāḥ al-Mantiq* 113.

changé le tā' en dāl ( وَدْدٌ > وَتْدٌ ) et fait l'idghām وَدٌّ "[1]

Morphology and Syntax:

Arabic dialects, as the previous pages show, differ from the standardised language not only in the vocalic structure of various patterns, but also in morphology and syntax. The differences in morphology are partly a result of the differences in phonetic features.

The observations of Abū 'Ubaida in this regard by no means cover the whole range of dialect differences. Only the few examples related by Abū 'Ubaida will be discussed in the light of what other philologists have had to say on the same cases.

(1) Hallumma:[2] Abū 'Ubaida states that in the dialect of the people of al-'Āliya this form is not inflected for number or gender, and that it was considered as a verbal noun.[3] On the other hand, the people of Najd have halumma for the masculine singular, halummī for the feminine singular, halummā for the dual, masculine and femine, halummū for the

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[1] Traite de philologie arabe, 243. I have not succeeded in consulting the Arabic source.

[2] Halumma (come on!) is a compound of hā' and lumma. The first particle is ḥarf tanbih (hā' to attract attention). For an account of the "hā'" and its function, Cf. Ibn Hishām "al-Mughnī al-Labīb" (Cairo n.d.) II. 349, sqq.

[3] It is called in Arabic "'ism fi'l", an inflexible particle having verbal force.

plural masculine and halumna for the plural feminine.[1]

The difference of usage was referred to by almost all the philologists and grammarians. However, there is some disagreement about the dialects in which this occurs. Sībawaihi, for example, says that the people of al-Ḥijāz do not inflect this word, while the people of Najd do.[2] al-Laith, on the other hand, states that it was only the Banū Sa'd who inflected the word.[3] al-Mubarrad points out that the inflected form is peculiar to the Banū Tamīm.[4] But, it is agreed upon that the Ḥijāzī uninflected usage of this word is more correct,[5] and this, presumably, is due to the fact that in the Quran the word is twice used without inflection (VI. 150. XXXIII. 18).

(2) bara':

Abū 'Ubaida notes that the people of al-'Āliya do not inflect this word, while the people of Najd use the word barī' and inflect it for number, gender and case.[6] According to al-Suyūṭī the word barā' is peculiar to the Ḥijāzis, and that this form is not used by the "rest of the Arabs", who use the form barī'.[7] al-Suyūṭī goes on to say that "both dialect forms occur in the Quran."[1] In fact, the Qurān employ the word *barī'* ten times, and the form *barā'* only once.[2]

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[1] Majāz I. 208.
[2] Lisān (halumma) XII. 617-618.
[3] Ibid. XII. 618.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Majāz II. 203.
[7] Muzhir II. 276-277.

The disagreement between Abū 'Ubaida and al-Suyūṭī in this connection is obvious. Firstly, Abū 'Ubaida attributes the uninflected form to the people of al-'Āliya, while al-Suyūṭī says that it was peculiar to the Ḥijāzis, This, in fact, is not a serious disagreement. As has been shown in the preceding pages, Abū 'Ubaida, occasionally, used the terms "Najd" and "Tamīm" rather inaccurately, as if they were synonyms;[3] so also with regard to the terms "Ḥijāz" and "'Āliya". In fact, he expressly states concerning the word *halumma*, that the people of al-'Āliya did not inflect it, and afterward he repeats the same thing saying "and the Hijāzis do not inflect it."[4] Needless to say Abū 'Ubaida here uses the term "Ḥijāz". as synonymous with "al-'Āliya."[5] Thus, we can see that there is an agreement between Abū 'Ubaida and al-Suyāṭī that the usage of the uninflected form is Ḥijāzī.

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[1] *Ibid.* II. 276.

[2] M.B. Al-Bāqī *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li al-fāẓ al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cairo 1945) 117.

[3] Cf. p. 279

[4] *Majāz* I. 208.

[5] In spite of the somewhat ambiguous definition given by Yāqūt for *al-'Āliya* it could be seen that the word covers the western parts of Arabia against the Red Sea, from Madīna in the north till Tihāma in the south. Ḥijāz, in fact is included in this part of Arabia. So it is true to say that al-'Āliya includes the Ḥijāz, but Ḥijāz does not include al-'Āliya. Cf. "*Mu'jam al-Buldān* II. 205; III.592).

The serious difference, in fact, is in the localization of the inflected form of the word under consideration. While Abū 'Ubaida confines the use of this form to "Najd", al-Suyūṭī's statement, on the other hand, suggests that it is used by the "rest of the Arabs", excluding, of course, the Ḥijāz. It seems that al-Suyūṭī's statement is in fact more correct if we can judge from the frequent use by the Quran of the inflected form, as previously stated. If this is true, then it can be said that in some words, Ḥijāz does not have inflected forms whereas other parts of Arabia, not only Najd and Tamīm, do. This is applicable, as far as our data goes to the words *barā'*, and *halumma*. As these two words indicate, a tendency toward inflection can be detected in certain forms in Eastern dialects and the contrary in the western dialects.

(3) The demonstrative pronoun *'ūlā'ika* is a Qurashite dialect form and it was used in that way in the Quran according to the statement of Abū 'Ubaida.[1] Other tribes, he says, used the form *'ūlāka* or *'ūlālika*.[2] Obviously, the difference here is the occurrence of the *hamza* in the Qurashite dialect, and its non-occurrence in the variant forms *'ūlāka* and *'ūlālika*. The last two forms are not

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[1] *Naqā'iḍ* (S) I. 276.

[2] *Ibid*.

ascribed to a particular dialect by Abū 'Ubaida. According to 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ḥasan *ūlā'ika* is a Ḥijāzī dialect form, while *ūlālika* occurs in the dialect of Rabī'a and the Tamīmī dialects of Najd.[1]

(4) The feminine plural relative pronoun form recorded by Abū 'Ubaida are *al-lawātī* and *al-lātī*.[2] Although he does not state which tribe used the first form and which the second, he, nevertheless, quotes al-Akhṭal in whose verse the first form occurs and another verse by an unknown rājiz in which both forms occur.[3]

Presumably *al-lātī* is the form current particularly in the Ḥijāzī dialect. The Quran, however, which is generally supposed to have been revealed mainly in the Qurashite dialect uses the form *al-lātī'*.[4] In his *Alfiyya*, Ibn Mālik refers to the form *al-lāti*, اللاتِ and *al-lā'i*, اللاءِ as the usual forms, although, he states that it is permissable to attach a *yā'* to the end of these two forms.[5]

(5) The word *zakariyyā*, Abū 'Ubaida records, has three permitted variants, *zahariyyā'*, *zakariyyā*, and *zakariyyun*.[6]

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[1] *al-Qawā'id al-Naḥwiyya* (Cairo 1946) p.145. Unfortunately the author does not mention his source.
[2] *Majāz* I. 119.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras* 36.
[5] p. 39.
[6] *Majāz* II.2.

Ibn Sīda adds a fourth pattern *zakariyy*, and remarks that the last pattern was rejected by Sībawaihi.[1] Al-Zajjāj and al-Jawharī agree with Ibn Sīda and with Sībawaihi.[2]

In fact, the differences in the pattern of this word result from the differences in the reading of the Quran. We are told that Ibn Kathīr, Nāfi', Abū 'Amr and Ya'qūb, as also Abū Bakr and 'Āṣim, read *zakariyyā'*, while Ḥamza and al-Kisā'ī read *zakariyyā*.[3] This word occurs in the Quran seven times with the final vowel *maqṣūr*.[4] We may postulate, since the philologists and grammarians do not give an ascription for this word, that the Quranic pattern is a Ḥijāzī one, basing our assumption on the generally-held view that *hamza* does not occur in the Ḥijāzī dialect, *zakarīyyā'* would then, accordingly, be a Tamīmite variant. However, this conclusion cannot be other than tentative, being based on negative evidence. With *zakariyy* and *zakariyyun* there is no hint to help us to ascribe them.

In regard to syntax, a few observations were made by Abū 'Ubaida. He observes that in the matter of concord certain words are feminine in the dialect of some tribes, masculine in others. Abū 'Ubaida considers this dialect

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1. *Lisān* (*zakara*) IV. 326.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras* 331.

feature as a majāz in his book,

al-Majāz:[1]

(1) On the word qaum, he states that "some of the Arabs considered qaum feminine, and others masculine.[2] Ibn Manẓūr's statement on the same word suggests that the word must be masculine,[3] although it occurs in the Quran as a feminine noun in the verse "Kadhdhabat qaumu Nūḥin" and again "kadhdhabat qaum Luṭin" (XXVI. 105, 160). Ibn Manẓūr justifies the treating of this word as feminine in the Quran twice by saying that the "feminine ending t attached to the verb kadhdhabat, belongs to the word jamā'a which is elided. Thus, the verse is in fact "kadhdhabat jamā'atu qaumi Nūḥin".[4] The word nakhl, Abū 'Ubaida also observes, is considered feminine with some tribes, masculine with others.[5] Ibn al-Sikkīt identifies the feminine form with Ḥijāz and points out that the word is masculine everywhere.[6]

(2) It is generally known that the predicate of the particle mā must be in the accusative in Ḥijāz, while in

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1. I. 15.
2. Majāz II. 178.
3. Lisān (qaum) XII. 505.
4. Ibid. It is perhaps better considered however as an agreement ad sensum.
5. Majāz II. 88, 241, 267.
6. Al-Aḍdād 75 quoted by Rabin Ancient West-Arabian 167.

Tamīmī it is in the nominative. Sībawaihi says that the particle mā in Tamīmī does not exercise any rection, because it is not regarded as a verb.[1]

In a statement which Abū 'Ubaida makes concerning one verse of Imru'ul-Qais, and in which mā exercised rection, we say "mā in this context is Ḥijāzite".[2] No other reference is made by him indicating a Qurashite usage, although, it is implied in this statement that the Qurashite mā exercises rection.

C. Rabin observes that "We have not much evidence for the mā, with the nominative, called by grammarians mā al-Tamīmiyya"[3] in spite of al-Aṣma'ī's statement which he quotes "that he [i.e. al-Aṣma'ī] never heard mā used with the accusative in Bedouin poetry."[4]

(3) Lāt occurs in the Quran exercising full rection.[5] This particle with the Ḥijāzis, Sībawaihi points out, is like laisa, particularly when it is associated with ḥīn.[6] Ibn Hishām also says in his Commentary on al-Alfiyya, that the rection of lāt is similar to that of laisa" and this is

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[1] Al-Kitāb 29.

[2] Sharḥ Dīwān Imri'il-Qais (Bombay 1313 A.H.) 192.

[3] Ancient West Arabian. 175.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Majāz II. 176.

[6] al-Kitāb 29.

the opinion of the majority of grammarians."[1]

This particle occurs in a number of variants amongst Arabic tribes. As Abū 'Ubaida records lāt is originally derived from lā, and some of the Arabs, whom Abū 'Ubaida does not name, say lāh, viz. lā with the hā' al-waqf, this hā', in context, becoming tā'."[2] The Arab grammarians both of the Baṣra and Kūfa schools are at one on this point as Ibn Manẓūr states.[3]

Conclusion:

It is quite clear from what has already been said that Abū 'Ubaida's interest in dialect was a by-product of his main activities. Lacking his book on al-Lughāt which seems to deal systematically with dialect, the data were collected from books of his and other writers, which do not deal specifically with dialects.

His concern with dialects is doubtless part of his concern with language as a whole. In his treatment of the dialect, Abū 'Ubaida was a mere recorder or transmitter of linguistic peculiarities, and judging from the data we have, he never explained why such and such a phenomenon exists among certain tribes, and not amongst others. Thus, it was necessary to examine and analyse these data, and to do so we have recourse to other information recorded by other philologists. The result of the previous pages are not of course final, and the aim of this chapter has not been to finalize the questions which have been raised, but it is only through an analysis that the gaps in the information passed down by Abū 'Ubaida can be bridged.

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[1] p. 83 sqq.

[2] Majāz II. 176.

[3] Lisān (lāt) XV. 468. Ibn Hishām in his "al-Mughnī al-Labīb" (I. 254) refers to Abū 'Ubaida's opinion in regard to the tā' being otiose."

Abū 'Ubaida, obviously, does not record all the dialectical peculiarities, but what he does record will help to a better understanding of what is already known about Arabic dialect, if his information has been properly examined.

# PART FOUR

## CHAPTER VIII

## Majāz al-Qur'ān

In the present chapter Abū 'Ubaida's book Majāz al-Qur'ān is examined from two aspects, firstly as a book which systematically explores one subject, namely majāz and secondly as a study of Abū 'Ubaida's investigation of the modes of expression in the Quran, in comparison with Arabic style in general, and poetry in particular, which arises out of his initial studies.

The second part of this examination can be considered as complementary to Abū 'Ubaida's studies on vocabulary discussed in Chapters VI and VII.

Some introduction to Quranic studies before Abū 'Ubaida is necessary at this point.

The Quran was considered to be a miracle of style and the belief in this miracle consequentially required a full understanding of the sacred text.

The first stage of Quran exposition was the period in which the Prophet himself expounded the Holy Book,[1] and this was followed by a second stage in which ten 'Companions' were recognised as pre-eminent in this field. Among these were:

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[1] Evidences are legion to prove that Muḥammad explained to his followers many chapters in the Quran. Cf. al-Suyūṭī al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1941) II. 325 sqq.

Abū Bakr, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Uthmān, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Zaid b. Abī Thābit, Abū Mūsa al-Ash'arī and 'Abdullāh b. al-Zubair.[1] Of these Ibn 'Abbās, it is said, used to talk on the whole Quran.[2] Ibn 'Abbās' commentary was based on a knowledge of pre-Islamic poetry on the one hand, and on what was known by the "People of the Scripture" on the other hand.[3] A third stage was reached in the period of the Tābi'ūn (viz. those who came immediately after the Companions). These became very strict in matters of tafsīr, an attitude which clearly expresses decreasing certainty on the part of the expositors.

These stages in the development of the Quranic studies are characterised by a number of important features. Firstly, exposition was based by and large on the sayings of the Prophet. This type of exposition was called tafsīr bil-manqūl (or ma'thūr) (Commentary based on Tradition), in contrast to tafsīr bil-ma'qūl (Commentary based on Reason).[4] Secondly, commentary on the Quran was limited to a few of the Prophet's companions, and thirdly, the Quran was probably not explained in full.

Then there followed in the second century of Islam a period in which the Quran became the subject of intensive studies in all its aspects. These studies mark a shift in aim. In early Islamic times, commentary on the Quran aimed at making clear only the meaning of the Quran to the adherents of the new religion. The question of the "inimitability" (*I'jāz*) of the Quran was never disputed amongst Muslims. It was only unbelievers who denied the miraculous nature of the Quran, or that the word of God was beyond imitation, or who claimed that the Quran was the poetry and rhymed prose of the magicians all over again.[1]

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[1] Ibid. II. 318.
[2] Ibn Taimiyya Tafsīr Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ (Damascus 1933) 128.
[3] Al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1954) III. 47.
[4] This type of commentary began to manifest itself at the end of the second century, Abū 'Ubaida being its first representative. Cf. also al-Dhahabī al-Tafsīr wal-Mufassirūn (Cairo 1961) II. 152-255.

Early works[2] written on the Quran, one may safely conclude, were purely on *tafsīr* and not on *i'jāz*.

It was at the end of the second century of Islam and after, that the question of *i'jāz* was first debated -- not as V. Grunebaum would have it in the 10th c. A.D. /4 c. A.H.[3] The term *i'jāz* was used in the lifetime of al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 250/864),[4] and he himself discusses the question in his book "*Ḥujaj al-Nubuwwah*".[5]

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1. *Qur'ān* VIII, 31. XXXIV, 43.
2. It is reported that Ibn 'Abbās wrote a book on *tafsīr* which was transmitted on the authority of Mujāhid b. 'Ikrima. Cf. *Fihrist* 50,51. Carra de Vaux *EI*$^{(1)}$ (*tafsīr*) vol.IV. part II. 604.
3. *A Tenth-Century Document of Arabic Criticism* (Chicago 1950) Introduction XVII.
4. Here again von Grunebaum is wrong when he says that the term *i'jāz* "does not seem to have been used in his [i.e. al-Jāḥiẓ] time". Cf. *ibid*. introduction XVI.
5. *Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ* (Cairo 1933) 117-154.

Two later authors who wrote on this subject expressly state that before their time, people were discussing and debating the question of al-i'jāz. One of these, Abū Sulaimān Ḥamad b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388/998) says in the introduction to his book Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'ān that: "In past and present times people have spoken at length on this question and they differ widely amongst themselves."[1] Similarly al-Baqillānī (d. 403/1012), referring to the books written on i'jāz, reprimands their writers because they did not do their job well. "It would have been more proper for philologists who had written useful books on the meaning of the Quran, or for the dogmatists, to have explained in detail the reasons why it [i.e. the Quran] was beyond imitation, and to have assigned to it its fitting place."[2] He goes on to say "What has been written on the subject is incomplete in itself and unconvincing in argument, confused in its treatment and faulty in its arrangement."[3]

One may therefore conclude that books were written on the Quran at the end of the second century aimed at proving the inimitability of the Holy Book, through a thorough examination and analysis of it and of the modes of expression and rhetorical figures employed in the Quran. These studies, followed the early attempts to explain the Quran, namely tafsīr books, but differ considerably in method and aim.

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[1] 'Alī b. 'Īsa al-Rummānī "Thalāth Rasā 'il fī I'jāz al-Qur'ān" (Cairo 1959) 19.

[2] I'jāz al-Qur'ān 6-7.

[3] Ibid. 7. It is believed that the first to write a book with the word i'jāz in its title was Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Wāsiṭī (d. 306/918). His book entitled I'jāz al-Qur'ān fī Naẓmihi wa Ta'līfihi but this book is lost. Ibid. introduction 10.

## Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards the Quran:

Surprisingly enough, despite the fact that Abū 'Ubaida lived in a period witnessing the birth of Quranic studies on i'jāz, he did not touch upon this question at all; indeed he seems deliberately to ignore it.

Concerning Abū 'Ubaida's opinion on i'jāz, I have formed the following hypothesis, unorthodox in part and open to ammendment, but consonant with what we know about him, and accounting for the general line of his thinking.

As will be seen, Abū 'Ubaida's aim was to analyse the modes of expression and structural patterns which are found in the Quran, by establishing a correlation between these modes and patterns as they occur in the Quran and in Arabic poetry.

Thus, the author's aim, it seems, was to prove indirectly and implicitly, that the style of the Quran, excellent though it may be, does not place it beyond imitation. Abū 'Ubaida may therefore have entertained the theory of al-Ṣarfa (the 'deterrence' theory) which is discussed below.

It is difficult to substantiate this assumption in a positive way, since, Abū 'Ubaida never expressed an opinion on i'jāz.

However, the argument can be summed up as follows:-

In the discussion of Abū 'Ubaida's socio-religious views, it was seen that one of the accusations brought against him was that he was a Mu'tazilite. This brief allusion seemed to us then important, particularly when it is connected with his attitude towards the Quran.

The conclusion which we reached concerning Abū 'Ubaida's broad-mindedness, especially the way he treated the Quran, basing himself on "opinion" rather than on"tradition", is in full accord with his leanings towards the Mu'tazilites more than towards the Khārijites or Shu'ūbites.

Moreover, Abū 'Ubaida's study of the Quran was marked by some features to which the Mu'tazilites strictly adhered. Firstly, the assumption that language consists to a large extent of majāz is essentially Mu'tazilite.[1] Secondly, commentary based on reason is also a Mu'tazilite principle.[2] Needless to say both these elements appear in the Majāz al-Qur'ān of Abū 'Ubaida. Al-Majāz is therefore the earliest book of its kind, a study which blazed the trail for later commentators, particularly those such as al-Zamakhsharī, who based their commentaries on "reason".

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[1] Aḥmad al-Ṣāwi al-Jawīnī, "Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān" 295. It is worthy of note that al-Zamakhsharī's treatment of the artistic imagery of the Quran was based on the same (Mu'tazilite) principle viz. that language consists to a large extent of majāz. Ibid. 295.

[2] Cf. Goldziher Al-Madhāhib al-Islāmiyya fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, 99.

From this point we move to another, namely, the doctrine of Ṣarfa. This doctrine was first associated with Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām (d. 220-230/835/845), a remarkable theologian and an extremely perspicacious and subtle dialectician. Al-Naẓẓām asserts that there is nothing extraordinary in the style of the Quran,[1] and that its inimitability lies in the fact that God deters (ṣarafa) people from imitating it or writing something better.[2] It was not only al-Naẓẓām who adhered to this doctrine. Some contemporary and later theologians and authors declared their approval of this theory.[3]

Abū 'Ubaida may have accepted al-Naẓẓām's theory. It is perhaps profitable to remember here that Abū 'Ubaida was one of those who admired al-Naẓẓām as has already been noted.[4] This admiration, taken along with other points already made, gives some reason to believe that the ṣarfa doctrine would be likely to appeal to him.

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1. Al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān II, 117-118.
2. Ibid. II. 200.
3. Such as 'Īsa b. Ṣabīḥ (d. 226/840), al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/868), al-Rummānī (d. 384/994), al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436/1044). Cf. Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān. 205.
4. Cf. p. 63

Majāz al-Qur'ān, its title and transmission:-

Abū 'Ubaida was quite specific concerning the aim of this book and its title. He related how he was invited by al-Faḍl b. al-Rabī' and was brought into the presence of the vizier. He goes on "A well-looking man in the dress of a kātib, then came in, al-Faḍl made him sit down beside me and asked him if he knew me. On his reply that he did not, he said to him, "This is Abū ʿU Obaida, the most learned man in Basra; we sent for him so that we might derive some benefit from his learning." "May God bless you! exclaimed the man. "You did well". Turning then towards me, he said, "I have been longing to see you, as I have been asked a question which I wish to submit to you." I replied, "Let us hear it." "The Koran which is the word of God", said he, "contains this passage: 'The buds of which are like heads of demons! Now, we are all aware that, in promises and threats, the comparisons which are made should refer to things already known yet no one knows what a demon's head is like! To this I replied "God spoke these to the Arabs in their own style; have you not heard the verse of Imru Amro'l-Kais:

> Will he kill me? me whose bed-fellows are the sword
> and [arrows] pointed with azure [steel] like unto
> the fangs of ogres.

Now, the Arabs never saw an ogre, but as they stood in awe of such beings, they were often threatened with them."

al-Faḍl and the man who questioned me approved the answer, and on that very day, I took the resolution of composing a treatise on the Koran, in explanation of this and similar difficulties, with every necessary elucidation. On my return, to Basra I drew up the work and entitled it "*al-Majāz*".[1]

Yet, in spite of this clear reference to the title of the book, ancient Arab writers were at variance about its real title, presumably because Abū 'Ubaida wrote more than one book on the Quran.[2] Al-Zubaidī, for instance, speaks about "*Gharīb al-Qur'ān*" which is called "*al-Majāz*".[3] The different MSS. on which the editor of the published edition based his edition refer to more than one title of the book. In one of these MSS.[4] the title is "*Kitāb Majāz al-Qur'ān*", while in the colophon we read "the last half of the Kitāb *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*". The title in another MS.[5] is "*Kitāb al-Majāz li-Tafsīr Gharīb al-Qur'ān*" and this title is also given in the Tunisian MS.[6]

Modern scholars have attempted to solve this problem. Dr. Sizgīn puts forward the view in his edition that Abū 'Ubaida wrote only one book on the Quran, and that the titles

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1. *Wafayāt* III. 389-390. Also "*Anbāh al-Ruwāt*" III.277-278.
2. They are: *Majāz al-Qur'ān*, *Gharīb al-Qur'ān*, *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* and *I'rāb al-Qur'ān.* Cf. Chapter III.
3. *Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn* 125.
4. The editor calls it "The Ismā'īl Ṣā'ib Copy". Cf. *Majāz* introduction, 22.
5. The editor calls it "Murād Munlā Copy". *Ibid.* introduction, 21.
6. *Ibid.* introduction, 18.

referred to above are different names for al-Majāz. The ancient Arab writers, he presumes, looked at this book from different angles, each one naming the book according to the aspect of it which he considered most important.[1]

Zaghlūl Sallām, in partial agreement, states that Gharīb al-Qur'ān and Majāz al-Qur'ān are two titles of the same book,[2] while M. 'Abd al-Ghanī Ḥasan argues that the Majāz al-Qur'ān is one and the same as the Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān.[3]

None of these assumptions are valid, and there is no reason to doubt that Majāz al-Qur'ān, Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān, and Gharīb al-Qur'ān are separate books. Abū 'Ubaida unequivocally states, as we have seen before, that he called his book al-Majāz.

The book was transmitted by many ruwāt. The editor refers to (a) the recension of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Athram, (b) the recension of Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī,[4] (c) the recension of Rāfi' b. Salama, (d) the recension of 'Abdullāh b. Muḥammad al-Tawwazī and (e) the recension of Abū Ja'far al-Maṣādirī.[5] None of these recensions is extant save that of al-Athram, but their plurality in older times may account for some part of the confusion over titles.

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[1] Ibid. introduction. 18.

[2] Athar al-Qur'ān fī Taṭawwur al-Naqd al-'Arabī (Cairo 1955) 38.

[3] Talkhīṣ al-Bayān fī Majāzāt al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1955) introduction, 9.

[4] One cannot help wondering how Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī did transmit this book since he opposed Abū 'Ubaida for his commentary, and, as was reported, said that he would prefer to be whipped than to read it. Cf. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn. 194.

[5] Majāz, introduction, I. 19-20.

## The reaction of the ancients to Abū 'Ubaida's Majāz al-Qur'ān:

This book called forth a storm of indignation, perplexity and admiration both from contemporaries and from succeeding generations.[2] The storm which rose amongst Abū 'Ubaida's contemporaries and immediately after focussed on one particular point. Among modern scholars, however, dispute centred on another point, quite different from that which preoccupied the earlier generations.

The point at issue amongst Abū 'Ubaida's contemporaries was that the author had produced his commentary on the Quran according to his own personal judgment.[2] This was the charge which al-Aṣma'ī made against Abū 'Ubaida according to the following account: 'Abū 'Ubaida, having been informed that al-Aṣma'ī blamed him for composing the Kitāb al-Majāz and that he [al-Aṣma'ī] had said "He speaks of God's book after his own private judgment", enquired when and where he gave lessons and on the day mentioned he mounted his ass, rode up to the circle of scholars, dismounted, and, after saluting al-Asmâi,. sat down and conversed with him. On

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1. Abū 'Ubaida seemed to have had foreknowledge that his book might raise a storm of indignation. Cf. Ibid. II.121.
2. In fact, Abū 'Ubaida, occasionally, relates the comments of other early commentators such as Ibn 'Abbās. Cf. Majāz II. 21, 68, 89.

finishing he said, "Tell me, Abū Sa'īd, what sort of a thing is bread?" The other answered, "It is that which you bake and eat." "There", said Abū Obaida, "You have explained the book of God after your own private judgment, for God, may his name be exalted, has said, "I was bearing on my head [a loaf of] bread." (XII. 36). Al-Asmâi replied, "I said what appeared to me and did not [mean to] explain the Korān after my private judgment". On which Abū Obaida replied, "And all that I said and which you blamed me for appeared to me true and I did not mean to explain the Korān after my private judgment." He, then, rose from his place, mounted his ass and went off.'[1]

In another story related by al-Jarmī, al-Aṣma'ī told the former, having seen Kitāb al-Majāz with him, "'Abū 'Ubaida said that lā raiba fīhi means lā shakka fīhi in the verse dhālika al-kitābu lā raiba fīhi (II.2). How did he know that al-raib is al-shakk?" al-Jarmī said, "But you said the same in regard to this word in the verse

فقالوا تركنا القوم قد حصروا به فلا ريب ان قد كان ثم لحيم

Al-Aṣma'ī, then, kept silent and returned the book to al-Jarmī."[2] The same attitude towards al-Majāz was adopted by Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī, one of Abū 'Ubaida's pupils. We are informed that al-Sijistānī said, "It would be easier for me to be whipped than to read this book."[1]

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[1] Wafayāt III. 390. The same story, with slight difference, is related by al-Qifṭī in Anbāh al-Ruwāt III. 278.

[2] Akhbār al-Naḥwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn, 62.

Al-Ṭabarī's attitude towards Kitāb al-Majāz was not altogether inimical. Although he never mentions Abū 'Ubaida by name, one can see from the many quotations that al-Ṭabarī's has drawn from Abū 'Ubaida's Majāz.

The main criticism of al-Ṭabarī is focussed on Abū 'Ubaida's methods of treating the Quranic text. Like all Abū 'Ubaida's contemporaries, Ṭabarī accuses him of having based his commentary on "reason" and not "tradition",[2] and he further accuses him of being incapable of understanding the Quranic verses.[3] Expressions like the following occur often: "One Baṣran who was considered well-versed in Arab speech asserted..."[4], or "One, whose knowledge of his predecessors' commentary was mediocre, asserted..."[5]

When despite his objections Ṭabarī does quote in many places in his commentary, Abū 'Ubaida's comments and explanations, such quotations are introduced by expressions like the following: "Some Baṣrans who are well-versed in Arabic language..."[6] or "Some Baṣrans who have a good knowledge of the Arabic language..."[7] or "As for those who are learned in Arabic, they say..."[8]

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1. Ṭabaqāt al-Naḥwiyyīn, 194.
2-8. Jāmi' al-Bayān I. 43-44, 43, 44. X. 53. XV. 21, 40. X. 70 respectively.

Thus, despite the criticisms al-Majāz was an important source for many Quranic commentators and rhetoricians Beside Ṭabarī's one may refer also to Ibn Qutaiba who relates on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida in more than one place,[1] to Al-'Asqalānī in his Fatḥ al-Bārī, and al-Qurṭubī in his al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān, such quotations from al-Majāz are too numerous to be detailed here.[2]

The attitude of Modern Writers towards al-Majāz:

Modern scholars look at the book from a different angle, and the issue which raised so much controversy among the early Arab authors now passes unnoticed. Modern writers are much less concerned with Abū 'Ubaida's attitude towards the Quran or his methods than with the nature of the book itself.

Of the many and divergent opinions put forward on this point most agree that al-Majāz was concerned with tafsīr. Thus Amīn al-Khūlī, for instance, maintains that Abū 'Ubaida does not use the term majāz in contrast to ḥaqīqa, and that, the term here must accordingly be taken as synonymous with tafsīr.[3] Sayyid Nawfal in his study al-Balāgha al-'Arabiyya voices almost the same opinion.[1]

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[1] Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān (Cairo 1954) 153, 279, 372, 406.

[2] A glance at al-Majāz itself, and the footnotes in particular, demonstrates the extent of other authors' dependence on Abū 'Ubaida. Cf. for example, Majāz I. 77, 189, 190-191, 194. II. 242-244, 269, etc.

[3] Sayyid Naufal al-Balāgha al-'Arabiyya fī Dawr Nash'atihā (Cairo 1948) 81.

One or two writers such as Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ghanī Ḥasan suggest that *al-Majāz* is a book devoted to explaining the rare words (*gharīb*) occurring in the Quran.[2] Ṭāhā Ḥusain, also holds this opinion, but goes on to explain that *al-Majāz* "is a book on language, in which Abū 'Ubaida tried to put together those words which are not used in their real [*ḥaqīqī*] meaning". He adds, "There is no indication that Abū 'Ubaida knew *'ilm al-bayān* ... the term *majāz* to Abū 'Ubaida was a vague and undefined word."[3]

Finally, the editor of *al-Majāz* makes the sensible remark that "Abū 'Ubaida bases his commentary on his knowledge of the Arabic language, its style, modes of expressions and usages."[4]

All of these writers, then, lay stress on one aspect of the truth, but they have not apparently observed other and more important aspects.

It was not unreasonable that Abū 'Ubaida should deal in his book with language, grammar, and rhetoric as well as with commentary. The Quran abounds in excellent and, indeed,

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1. Ibid. 81.
2. *Talkhīṣ al-Bayān fī Majāzāt al-Qur'ān*. Introduction, 5,10.
3. *Tajdīd Dhikrā Abū al-'Alā'* (Cairo 1937) 97. Both Muḥammad Zaghlūl Sallām and Muṣṭafa al-Ṣāwī al-Jawīnī held that the book represented the linguistic trend in *tafsīr*. Cf. *Athar al-Qur'ān fī Taṭawwur al-Naqd al-'Arabī* 37 and *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Cairo 1959) respectively.
4. *Majāz*, introduction I. 16.

typical examples of all these 'Ulūm. Yet, this is not the essential characteristic of the book.

To reach a fair estimate, let us put aside, for a while, the opinions already referred to and try to asnwer two questions: (1) Is al-Majāz a book on Tafsīr or not? (2) Is it a book on language?

Before we answer the first question we must have some knowledge of books on tafsīr, and the qualifications of the mufassir (commentator). In this respect, al-Suyūṭī's book al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān is the best source.

"Tafsīr" al-Suyūṭī says on the authority of al-Zarkashī, "is the science, whereby the Book of God, which was revealed to his apostle Muḥammad, can be comprehended, by which the meaning of the Book can be elucidated, and its principles and wisdom can be deduced. This can only be approached through a good knowledge of language, grammar, bayān, jurisprudence, and variant readings. Acquaintance with the reasons for revelations and of the abrogating and the abrogated verses are also needed."[1]

This passage clearly puts forward the qualifications which the commentator must acquire before he starts to write or comment on the Quran. It is likely, al-Suyūṭī goes on, that a grammarian will confine himself to i'rāb and grammar

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1. II. 395.

when he comments on the Quran, as al-Zajjāj and al-Wāḥidī did, a story-teller, like al-Tha'ālibī to stories of the ancients and to determining whether they are true or false, and a jurist like al-Qurṭubī to questions of jurisprudence.[1]

In the light of what al-Suyūṭī says however, al-Majāz is not a book of tafsīr, since Abū 'Ubaida was not mainly concerned with the questions with which a commentator has to deal, such as the reasons for revelations, the rules of the Quran in regard to the social and human relationships, the abrogating and the abrogated verses and the legal consequences thereof, and so on.

On the contrary, Abū 'Ubaida makes it clear that his sole aim was to investigate the modes of expression which were employed in the Quran in comparison with those of Arabic poetry, and to establish a reasoned correlation between the Quran and poetry in this regard. He does indeed profoundly analyse the Quranic text, but only those verses which have an idiosyncratic or unusual structure. He therefore leaves many passages without comments.[2]

It is true that the author carries out his task systematically, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse, but he does not explain every verse or every word in order to elucidate the full meaning of the text. It is, accordingly,

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1. Ibid. II. 324.
2. For instance Cf. Majāz I. 278, 313, 355. II. 24, 91, 189, 281 etc.

not without significance that Ibn al-Nadīm does not mention this book among the books of tafsīr.[1]

Al-Majāz, then, is not strictly speaking a book of tafsīr. Equally it is not a book on language, as Ṭāhā Ḥusain maintains, nor a manual of words not used in their real (ḥaqīqī) meanings. Ṭāhā Ḥusain seems to have failed to grasp the aim of Abū 'Ubaida, and fails accordingly to substantiate his argument.

Undeniably, Abū 'Ubaida in his book deals with linguistic phenomena in so far as they are necessary to sustain his main purpose. This is true not only in regard to language, but also for grammar and rhetorical figures. As much it is mistaken to hold that this is a book on grammar, or rhetoric, because of some necessary discourse on these two subjects, so also is it mistaken to say that it is a book on language.

It is perhaps worth pointing out here the obvious - that although the commentary of al-Ṭabarī and the Kashshāf of al-Zamakhsharī abound with points of language, rhetoric and grammar, it would not be assumed of them that these two works are on rhetoric or grammar.

The story already quoted[2] relating the reason which brought Abū 'Ubaida to write al-Majāz suggests that it was

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1. Fihrist 33.
2. Cf. p. 316

the artistic imagery of the Quran which first attracted his attention. This in fact is an important interest of Abū 'Ubaida in his *Majāz*. The Quran abounds in imagery not as something separate from the whole, but rather the ground on which the expressions of the sacred text was based, and it is the favourite means of communicating emotional, psychological and mental motives.[1]

However, before Abū 'Ubaida can examine the imagery of the Quran, he had first to make a full analysis of the modes of expressing or depicting these images. And it is with this first step that Abū 'Ubaida mainly occupies himself. To the best of my knowledge, he did not go on from this first stage to the next, namely the examination of the imagery of the Quran.

Thus, the comparison made by the Quran in the verse "The buds of which are like heads of demons" is intended to make an aesthetic and psychological impact. The object of comparison, the "heads of demons", plays an important role in this regard, and Abū 'Ubaida was right to comment that "God spoke these to the Arabs in their own style", and to instance Imru' ul-Qais' verse in which the poet compares his sword and arrow with the fangs of ogres, because, as Abū 'Ubaida notes "as they [i.e. the Arabs] stood in awe of such beings, they were often threatened with them."[2]

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[1] Sayyid Quṭub "*al-Taṣwīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān*" (Cairo 1959) 9-10, 35, 195.

[2] *Wafayāt* III. 390.

Of such modes of expression Ritter rightly states that "The description of details which escapes the ordinary eye is called "*tafṣīl*" (particularization). Comparison with strange things is called "*gharīb*". *Tafṣīl* and *Gharīb* are two elements on which the aesthetic value of a great many figurative expressions is based."[1]

Abū 'Ubaida, however, was not interested only, or even mainly, in anatomizing the imagery and expounding its effect. His book was rather centred on the concept of *majāz* with which, it is reported, Abū 'Ubaida was the first to deal.[2] It is essential therefore that we attempt to define this term.

## The Definition of the term Majāz:

Linguistically, this term derives from *jāza*, *yajūzu* which means "to go, to pass through, over, or along."[3] The word *majāz* was transferred to rhetoric to signify a definite concept which, it seems, was not precisely and accurately defined and established until the fifth century of Islam. In rhetoric the term signifies the use of words which have a generally accepted meaning with the implication of a meaning other than but not alien to the original one, creating a new relation between the first meaning and the second.

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[1] 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī "*Asrār al-Balāgha*" (Istanbul 1954) introduction 18.

[2] Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Wasā'il ilā Musāmarat al-Awā'il* (Baghdad 1950) 127.

[3] *Lisān* (jauz) V. 327, *Tājal-'Arūs* IV. 29. *Lane* II. 484.

Majāz (trope)[1] is always contrasted with ḥaqīqa (reality, actuality), and language as such was looked at as consisting of "tropical" and "real". Arab authors, however, were at variance as to whether the trope could properly be said to exist in Arabic; and if it did, to what extent; and if not, why it did not.

Those who rejected the existence of the trope in Arabic, such as al-Asfarāyinī,[2] rest their argument on two bases: firstly, that the trope has no factual existence, and that therefore it is a lie, and secondly, that it is only the incompetent in language who employ the trope, because such people cannot express themselves in plain speech (ḥaqīqa).[3]

This argument can hardly stand, and those who entertained this opinion must have had a very naive idea of the trope and of the Arabic language itself.

The supporters of the trope as an important tool of expression on the other hand are many. One of them, Ibn Qutaiba, defends this idea in his book "Ta'wīl Mushkil

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1. For the purposes of this thesis, "trope" is to be considered by definition as having the same semantic content as majāz; according to New English Dictionary (Oxford 1926) X, 397, the word "trope" in rhetoric means "a figure of speech which consists in the use of a word or phrase in a sense other than that which is proper to it; also, in a casual use, a figure of speech; figurative language."
2. Talkhīṣ al-Bayān fī Majāzāt al-Qur'ān. Introduction 55.
3. Muzhir I. 355, 361. Cf. also "al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān" (Cairo 1957) II. 255.

al-Qur'ān", saying "If a trope were a collection of lies then all our speech would be absurd."[1] He then substantiated his argument with examples from everyday speech.[2]

The fact that the trope is part and parcel of language is indeed unassailable, and, among Arab rhetoricians and philologists, this thesis seems to have been definitively established despite the opinions of dissenters like al-Asfarāyinī.

There is no doubt that for Abū 'Ubaida the trope (majāz) is an important element in language. The very title of his book supports this assumption. The question therefore is not whether Abū 'Ubaida accepts that the trope is part and parcel of language, but rather what forms the trope assumes in his view and what is his conception of the term majāz.

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1. p.99.
2. It is, perhaps, profitable to refer to Ibn al-Athīr's argument on this question. Ibn al-Athīr, having rejected the two extreme theses, the one that language consists of ḥaqīqa only, and the other that entirely denies the ḥaqīqa in language puts forward his own view on this point.
   A) There are real and tropical conceptions in every language, but the real is antecedent to the trope. (al-Suyūṭī also advocates this view. Muzhir I. 355, 361, 365).
   B) Every trope has a real correlate, because we do not call a word a trope unless it is transferred from its original meaning which is real (ḥaqīqa).
   C) It is necessary that every trope has a real correlate but not vice-versa.
   D) Tropical usage is preferable in language on account of its effect on the imagination. Hence, tropes are more elegant in discourse.
   E) There is some advantage in trope, otherwise people would not have shifted in their speech from real to tropical meanings. Cf. Al-Mathal al-Sā'ir fī Adab al-Kātib wal-Shā'ir (Cairo 1339 A.H.) I. 59-64.

Abū 'Ubaida does not put forward a clear definition of the term majāz, on which he bases his study of the Quran. Yet, from the many verses he analyses with considerable sophistication, one can form a fairly clear idea of what his concept of majāz was, and how far he establishes a definition of this important term by his usage.

The various kinds of majāz according to Abū 'Ubaida:

In his discussion of tropes Abū 'Ubaida first deals with three categories of ellipsis:

(1) An ellipsis in a verse in which the word elided can be understood from the context. Thus (XXXVIII. 6) "and the noble ones amongst them went forth: 'Go and hold firmly to your Gods'..." Here Abū 'Ubaida notes that a word such as tanādaw or tawāṣaw must be understood as introducing the direct speech.[1]

This trope, namely the omission of a verb such as qālū to introduce direct speech, is very common in the Quran.[2]

(2) An ellipsis comparable with metonomy. Thus (XII.82) "and ask the town in which we have been, and the caravan in which we have come", viz. "and ask the people of the town..."[3]

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[1] Majāz I. 8.

[2] Cf. W.B. Stevenson "A neglected literary usage" in T.G.O.S. (1929-33) VI. 14, where the writer discusses unintroduced direct speech in Arabic and English ballad style. This is also a common feature of Norse literature (Cf. Sweet Anglo-Saxon Reader Oxford 1891, 189 ), and indeed of the modern English novel.

[3] Majāz I. 8.

(3) An ellipsis covering part of the action, which must be understood from the context. Thus (XXXIX, 73-4) "... until they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and the keepers of it shall say to them, "Peace be upon you, you shall be happy, therefore, enter it to abide."

"They will say: 'Praise be to God'."

Although it is not specified by Abū 'Ubaida what is predicated is a phrase covering the action which took place between arrival and their words of praise, viz. (So they will enter it and) they will say ... etc.'[1]

(4) The trope in which a singular is used in place of a plural. Thus (XXII. 15) "We bring you forth as an infant". "Infant" here Abū 'Ubaida says "means infants".[2] To substantiate his argument, Abū 'Ubaida quotes the following verse of 'Abbas b. Mirdās

fa-qulnā aslimū innā akhūkum
faqad bari'at min al-iḥanī al-ṣudūr[3]

In this verse the word akhūkum indicates the plural ikhwatukum. He also refers to two other verses which he considers similar cases to the trope in question. These verses are (XLIX. 10) "the believers are but brothers (ikhwa), therefore, make peace between your two brothers (akhawaikum), and

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1. Ibid. I. 9.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. II. 44-45.

(XLIX. 9) "and if two parties of the believers (*ṭā'ifatān*) quarrel (*iqtatalū*) ..."[1] Needless to say, the last two verses are not the same as the first one. In these two verses, it was the dual (*akhawaikum*) which is signifying the plural (*ikhwa*), and the plural (*iqtatalū*) which is signifying the dual (*ṭā'ifatān*) respectively.

(5) The trope which can be seen in a verse whose subject is plural and whose predicate is singular. Thus (LXVI. 4) "and the angels after that are their aider (*ẓahīr*)." As Abū 'Ubaida puts it, here *ẓahīr* stands for *ẓuharā'*.[2]

(6) The contrary also occurs as a trope where the plural is used to denote the singular. Thus in the verse (III.173) "those to whom the people (*al-nās*) said, surely men have gathered against you." Abū 'Ubaida says "the word *al-nās* is plural and the one who said in the verse "surely men have..." was one [person], so *al-nās* is used to denote one person.[3] Similarly in verse (LIV. 49) "We (*innā*) have created every thing according to a measure" *innā* must be taken as a singular since in the words of Abū 'Ubaida "The Creator is God alone. He has no partner."[4] Here, however, it would seem that Abū 'Ubaida is splitting hairs since plural personal pronouns are commonly used in all styles, and for that matter most languages, to indicate respect and to elevate status.

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1. Ibid. I. 9.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*

(7) The trope where the plural is used to denote the dual. Thus in the verse (IV. 11) "but if he has brothers (ikhwa)", where "brothers" denotes "two brothers".[1]

(8) The trope where a word denotes both the singular and the plural, as for example (X. 22) "... until when you are in the ships (fulk)", and (XXI. 82) "and of the devils, there were those who (man) dived for him." Abū 'Ubaida says of the first example that al-fulk is both singular and plural, and that man in the second verse is singular and plural.[2]

(9) The trope where there are two subjects, one of which is plural and the other is singular, while the predicate is in the dual, which would normally refer to two singular nouns. Thus (XXI. 30) "that the heavens (first subject, plural) and the earth (second subject, singular) were (kānatā) closed up but we have opened them (fa-fataqnāhumā)." In this the plural subject is treated as a singular for purposes of grammatical concord.[3] Another example occurs in the verse, (V. 17) "And Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens (samāwāt) and the earth (arḍ) and what is between them (bainahumā)." In this example Abū 'Ubaida notes that "When the Arabs put together a plural and a singular, they treat

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[1] Ibid. I. 9.
[2] Ibid. I. 10. In fact both these two words fulk and man, the first is a noun and the second a relative pronoun, are used to denote the singular, dual and the plural, both masculine and feminine.
[3] Ibid.

the plural word as a singular."[1]

(10) The trope in which two singular nouns are referred to by a plural. Thus (XLI. 11) "Then He directed himself to the heaven and it is a vapour, so He said to it (the first singular noun) and to the earth, (the second singular noun) come both willingly (_'i'itiyā ṭau'an_) or unwillingly, they both said: 'We come willingly (_'atainā ṭā'i'īn_).[2]

(11) The trope in which a suffixed personal pronoun (or other referent) has the gender of only one of the two or three nouns to which it refers, usually the nearest noun. Thus (IX. 34) "As for those who hoard up gold (masculine) and silver (feminine) and do not spend it (_yunfiqūnahā_) in the way of God..."[3]

Arabic poetry employs the same stylistic device, Abū 'Ubaida notes, and instances the following verse:

فمن يكُ امسى بالمدينة رحله    فاني وقيار بها لغريبُ

The poet here does not say _la-gharībān_ referring to the two persons concerned, but the singular referent (_la-gharību_) refers by implication to both, although it is in grammatical concord only with one of them.[4] Abū 'Ubaida gives no examples in which there are three nouns, although he implies that there are such examples.

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1. _Ibid._ I. 159-160.
2. _Ibid._ I. 10.
3. _Ibid._
4. _Ibid._ I. 257.

(12) The trope is one in which the referent refers only to the first of two, or more, nouns. Thus (LXII. 11) "And whenever they see merchandise (the first noun) and sport (the second noun) they disperse to it (ilayhā)."[1]

(13) The trope in which a following clause refers only to the last of two or more accusatives, as in the verse (IV.112) "And whoever commits a fault (the first accusative) or a sin (the second accusative), then accuses of it (yarmī bihi) one innocent ..."[2] Here the pronoun in bihi refers to the second accusative only.

Abū 'Ubaida's exposition of tropes 11, 12 and 13 is confused. He presents the first trope (No.11) as one in which the referent agrees with only one of the two nouns mentioned. In his examples two of the three referents refer to the nearest noun and one to the furthest. It follows therefore that tropes 12 and 13 are part of trope 11. Clearly, if it is desirable to distinguish more than one trope here (which is doubtful), they would be better distinguished as follows:

(a) A trope in which a referent agrees in gender with only the nearest of the (two) nouns to which it refers.

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[1] Ibid. I. 10. It is worthy of note that Abū 'Ubaida, elsewhere in his book al-Majāz (II. 258) refers to the same verse as an example of the kind of trope he calls taqdīm wa ta'khīr.

[2] Ibid. 10.

(b) A trope in which a referent agrees in gender only with the furthest of the (two) nouns to which it refers.

(14) The trope in which irrational or inanimate beings are treated as rational beings.[1] Thus (XLI, ii) "Surely I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon, I saw them making obeisance to me", and (XXVII, 18) "An ant said 'O ants, enter your homes [that] Solomon and his soldiers may not crush you while you do not know.'"[2] In these verses, the (inanimate) stars, sun, moon and the (irrational) ants are treated as rational beings.

(15) The trope where the speech is directed to a third person (a person not present) although the second person (a person present) is intended. Thus (I.2) "Alif, Lām, Mīm. That is the Book in which there is no doubt." By "that ... Book" is meant "this ... Book".[3] Abū 'Ubaida's example, however, does not fit his definition as closely as might be desired. This verse illustrates rather a figure in which a present object is referred to as an absent object, both being in the third person.

(16) The trope where speech is directed to one person or one group of people in the second person and then continued in the third person. Thus (X. 22) "Until when you are in the

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1. This trope corresponds to the figure usually called "personification" in English.
2. Majāz I. 10.
3. Ibid. I. 11.

ships, and they sail on with them",[1] where the sentence means "Until when you are in the ships and they sail on with you."[2]

(17) The trope in which speech is directed to one individual or group in the third person, and then continued in the second person. Thus (LXXV, 33-4) "Then he went to his family, walking away in haughtiness. Nearer to you [is destruction] and nearer."[3]

(18) The trope in which the occurrence of otiose particles render the expression tropical. Thus in the verse (II.26) "Surely God is not ashamed to set forth any parable (mathalan mā), from a gnat or anything higher."[4] The particle mā in this verse is employed for emphasis, Abū 'Ubaida says,[5] but it is in fact otiose. Al-Nābigha says: "qālat á lā laita mā hādhā al-ḥamāma lanā", in which mā is also an otiose particle.[6]

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1. Ibid. I. 11.
2. A good example of this trope is the first sentences of Cicero's Cataline Orations where Cicero addresses the absent Cataline in the second person as if he were present, before going on to speak of him in the third person.

3. This example and the previous one are often called iltifāt (apostrophe) by Arab rhetoricians. For an account of this figure of speech cf. Ibn al-Athīr "al-Mathal al-Sā'ir" (II. 4-19), where the author discusses the importance of this figure and the different types it assumes with illustrative Quranic verses and poetry. Cf. also Ibn al-Mu'tazz al-Badī' (London 1935) 58-59.

   In On the Sublime, Longinus refers to this stylistic device saying "sometimes, again, a writer in the midst of a narrative in the third person suddenly steps aside and makes a transition to the first. It is a kind of figure which strikes like a sudden outburst of passion." Cf. "Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric" (Everyman's Library No.901, London 1955) 310.
4. Majāz I. 11.
5. Ibid. I. 35.
6. Ibid.

Again in the Quranic verse (LXIV, 47), "And not one of you (wa mā minkum min aḥadin) could have withheld us from him", min is an otiose particle.[1]

(19) The trope where there is a pronoun elided. In the verse (XXVII. 30) "In the name of God", the demonstrative pronoun hādha is implied at the beginning of the verse.[2]

(20) The trope where there is a repetition which gives emphasis to the meaning. In the verse (II. 196) "And he who cannot find [any offering] should fast three days during the pilgrimage and seven days when you return. There are ten [days] complete",[3] the summing up "these are ten complete" gives emphasis to the injunction.

Compare also the verse (CXI. 1) "The hands of Abū Lahab have perished, and he will perish."[4]

(21) The trope in which the contrary phenomenon occurs, namely where the statement is of such concision that repetition is (deliberately) avoided.[5] Abū 'Ubaida does not give an example of this kind of trope.

(22) The trope in which a word occurs in a position before

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1. Ibid. I. 11.
2. Ibid. I. 11-12.
3. Ibid. I. 12.
4. Ibid. By "hands" is meant Abū Lahab himself. God also says in the Quran (II. 195) "and throw not yourselves (aydīkum) into ruin". Cf. Baiḍāwī Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Ta'wīl" (Cairo 1330 A.H.) III. 198-199.
5. Majāz I. 12.

(taqdīm) or after (ta'khīr) its expected position. Thus (XXV. 5) "And when we send down rain, it stirs and swells", where the expected order would be "it swells and stirs". Compare also verse (XXIV. 40): "He is almost unable to see her" (lam yakad yarāha). Abū 'Ubaida here gives the expected word order as "He did not see her and was almost unable to".[1]

(23) The trope where the predicate agrees in gender and number with a noun (or pronoun) which precedes it,[2] although, grammatically speaking, it should not agree with it. An example of such agreement ad sensum is the verse (XXVI. 4) "So that their necks (a'nāquhum) should stoop (khāḍi'īn) to it". Here the predicative khāḍi'īn agrees with the hum attached to the noun a'nāq where it should logically agree with a'nāq itself.

(24) The trope where the verb of the subject (fi'l al-fā'il) (illogically) is referred from the object to a word other than the object. Thus (XXVIII. 76) "We had given him so much treasure, that its keys would have been weighed down by a band of men", viz. "Its keys would have weighed down a band of men."[3] Abū 'Ubaida gives as an example of this stylistic device from Arabic poetry the verse of 'Urwa b. al-Ward "I have ransomed by him myself and my wealth"

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[1] Majāz I. 12.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid. I. 12. Abū 'Ubaida gives no examples of this trope in which a word other than the object is affected.

(fadaitu bi-nafsihi nafsī wa mālī), by which is meant "I have ransomed him by myself and my wealth."[1]

(25) The trope where a word is used to refer to another word in a context rather than its original one. Thus compare (II. 70) "And the parable of those who disbelieve is as the parable of one who calls out (yan'iq) to that which hears nothing but a call or cry." Here the trope consists of the use of the word yan'iq out of its usual context.[2]

(26) The trope in which a verbal noun (maṣdar) is used to signify a noun or an adjective, as (II. 177) "But the righteous one is he who believes in Allah". Here the word translated as 'righteous' (bārr) is in fact the maṣdar, birr (righteousness).[3]

Abū 'Ubaida thus considers as a trope the use of morphological pattern in a meaning other than its original one, viz. the use of any pattern in place of another pattern, as e.g. the use of a past participle to denote the present participle.[4]

(27) The trope where the permitted variants of the celebrated readers of the Quran of some words are involved, as, (XV. 54) fa-bimā tubashshirūni as the people of Madina read it, or fa-bimā tubashshirūna as Abū 'Amr reads it.[5]

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[1] Ibid. II. 110.
[2] Ibid. I. 12.
[3] Ibid. I. 12-13.
[4] Ibid. II. 266, 267, 271, 275, 276, 289 etc.
[5] Ibid. I. 13. 352.

(28) The trope in which a word has more than one meaning, and on which different authoritative commentators have different opinions. Thus, (LXVIII. 25) *'alā ḥaradin* was variously explained as meaning *'alā man'in*, *'ala qaṣdin*, and *'ala ghaḍabin wa ḥiqdin*.[1]

(29) The trope in which variant readings are involved. Thus in verse XLIX, 6 the word *fa-tabayyanū* was read *fa-tathabbatū*. In verse XXXII. 10, *ḍalalnā* was read *ṣalalnā*, and in verse LXXXV. 22 the word *lawḥin* was read *lūḥin*.[2]

(30) The trope in which certain particles are given a meaning other than the original one.[3] In Arabic this is called *taḍmīn*. Compare for example II, 26 in which *fauq* has the meaning of *dūn*. Similarly the particle *ba'd* in verse LXXIX, 30 has the meaning of *ma'a dhālika*, *fī* in XX.71 has the meaning of *'alā*, *'alā* in verse LXXXII. 2 has the meaning of *min*, and the particle *am* in verse XLIII. 51-52 has the meaning of *bal*.[4]

(31) The trope in which a verb occurs twice, once with and once without a dependent preposition. Thus in LXXXIII, 3 the root *kayl* is employed once with the preposition *'alā* (*iktāla 'ala*) and once without (*kālūhum*).[5] In other words, an

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[1] *Ibid*. I. 13.
[2] *Ibid*. I. 13-14.
[3] *Ibid*. I. 14.
[4] *Ibid*. I. 14.
[5] *Ibid*. I. 14.

intransitive verb made transitive by means of a preposition (muta'addin bi-ḥarf), followed by the use of the same root in a transitive form is considered by Abū 'Ubaida as the essential feature of this trope.

(32) The trope in which a verb occurs which may be used in different ways. Thus the word ihdinā in (I.5) occurs without employing a preposition (ihdinā al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm) although, Abū 'Ubaida notes, it is possible to say ihdinā ilā al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm or ihdinā lil-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm.[1]

(33) The trope which consists of the use of a verb in different contexts, once with a preposition, and once without. Thus, the verb qara'a occurs in one verse (XVI. 98) without a preposition wa idhā qara'ta al-Qur'ān, and in another verse (XCVI. 1) with a preposition iqra' bi-smi rabbika.[2]

(34) The trope in which a noun may be either masculine or feminine in gender. Thus (XVI. 66) the word an'ām was considered as either masculine or feminine, this verse was read both as "And most surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle: We give you to drink of what is in their bellies (buṭūnihi, and buṭūnihā). The same holds for the word qaum in verse XXVI, 105.[3]

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1. Ibid. I.14.
2. Ibid. I. 15.
3. Ibid.

(35) The trope in which a feminine noun is used in place of a masculine, and the predicate agrees in gender with the latter. Thus (LXXIII, 18) "the heaven (fem.) shall be split asunder (mas. predicate) thereby ..." The word *samā'* (heaven), Abū 'Ubaida says, is substituted for the masculine noun *saqf*, and the predicate agrees with *saqf* and not with *samā'*.[1]

(36) The trope in which a verbal clause is used in place of a noun. An example of this is XX.69 "*innamā ṣana'ū kaidu sāḥir*" (what they have done is a magician's trick). Here *mā* along with the verb is considered by Abū 'Ubaida to be equivalent to a noun, viz. the verse quoted is to be understood as *inna ṣanī'ahum kaidu sāḥir*.[2]

(37) The trope in which a statement is predicated of two similar things of different categories (in the example given below a sea of salt and a sea of fresh water) which can be true only of one category. The example given (LV. 19, 22) is "He has let loose the two seas. There come forth from them both pearls, large and small."[3] Clearly, Abū 'Ubaida notes, pearls are not brought up from both seas, but only from one, the sea of salt water.[4] This is like saying "I have eaten

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[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] Some translators of the Quran mistook the active verb *yakhruj* in the verse for passive verb, thus Sale translated the verse "from them are taken forth..." Cf. *The Korān* (London 1921). Also J.M. Rodwell, *The Korān* (London 1876) 61.
[4] *Majāz* I. 14.

bread and milk" in which the verb "eat" is true of only one of these two foods, namely the bread.[1]

(38) The trope where a noun accepts either of two cases, nominative or accusative, such as al-sāriqu or al-sāriqa in verse V. 38 or al-zāniyatu or al-zāniyata, in verse XXIV.2.[2]

(39) The trope in which a substantive (or demonstrative pronoun) has a case other than the one required by the rules of grammar. Thus, in the verse (XX.63) inna hādhāni la-sāḥrān, the demonstrative pronoun is in the nominative, although it should have been in the accusative.[3]

The above-mentioned kinds of tropes are put forward by Abū 'Ubaida in the introduction to his Kitāb al-Majāz along with evidential verses from the Quran and poetry. In the main study Abū 'Ubaida examines and analyses in more detail these tropes as they occur in different places in the Quran, and also refers to the following two new tropes of which he says nothing in his first enumeration of the tropes as summarized above.

1) An interrogative expression by which a strong affirmative is meant, viz. a rhetorical question. An example occurs in

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[1] Ibid. II. 243-244.

[2] Ibid. I. 16.

[3] Ibid. Abū 'Ubaida reports the statements of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', 'Īsa b. 'Umar and Yūnus b. Ḥabīb concerning this verse, namely that the demonstrative pronoun must be written in the nominative but is read as an accusative.

verse I. 30 namely "Will you place in it [the earth] one who will act corruptly therein and shed blood?"[1] This mode of expression is employed by Jarīr when he says:

"Are you not the best who ever rode horses
And the most generous of all people?"

meaning "You are the best who ever rode a horse etc." Similarly, the Arabs used to say when they hit a boy for some mischief he had done, "Have you not done so and so?", meaning "You have done so and so."[2] The Quran employs this trope in many places.[3]

2) Another kind of trope Abū 'Ubaida notes is the case of a negative expression by which is meant any affirmative. The following verse (I. 75) is an illustration of this: "I do not swear by the day of resurrection, nor do I swear by the self-accusing soul." Abū 'Ubaida says that the meaning is "Verily, I swear by the day of resurrection..."[4]

## Abū 'Ubaida's concept of Majāz:

It is quite clear from what has already been said that Abū 'Ubaida tried to establish a definition of the term majāz, and that to him the term primarily signifies modes of expression, which are part of the essential character of the Arabic language.

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[1] Ibid. I. 35.
[2] Ibid. I. 36.
[3] Ibid. II. 133, 149, 150, 158, 159.
[4] Ibid. II. 377.

The study of majāz in its different kinds, as explained by Abū 'Ubaida in his conspectus, turns out to be nothing other than the study of the constructions of the Arabic language - the extent to which it is allowed for a writer to elide a word (No. 1-3); to use an otiose word (No.18); to reverse the order of words (No.22); to establish a new relationship between a predicate and a pronoun (No.23)or between a verb, belonging originally to the subject, and an object (No.24); or to make an intransitive verb transitive, and vice-versa, and the prepositions employed for this purpose (Nos.31-33). Abū 'Ubaida also considers as tropes other linguistic phenomena relating to vocabulary, for instance, the different readings (No.27), and dialects,(No.34).

The term majāz is also used to signify certain meanings of words. Thus, the majāz of the word tadhūdān (XXVIII. 23), Abū 'Ubaida says, is tamna'ān and taruddān,[1] and of the word shan'ān (V.2) baghḍā'.[2]

The term is even employed to denote the derivation of words. Thus, in verse XXVIII. 27, Abū 'Ubaida explains how the verb ta'jurūni is derived from al-ijārah.[3]

Yet despite the loose application of the term to disparate linguistic phenomena unconnected with figures of

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1. Majāz II. 101.
2. Ibid. I. 147. Other examples I. 19, 145, 190, 191, 253, 255 etc.
3. Ibid. II. 102.

speech, one can argue that the common denominator in almost all these kinds of tropes is the syntactical pattern of the Arabic sentence. Such patterns to a modern writer, M.Z.Sallam, are "deviations" from the normal construction of the Arabic sentence. "In al-Majāz" he says, "Abū 'Ubaida's aim was to make clear to the Aarbicised classes [al-musta'ribūn], who studied the language from books and not from the mouths of the Bedouins, the "deviations" from the norms and from the rules of syntax that Arabic sentences assume."[1] This, however, is incorrect. Abū 'Ubaida never expresses or implies the idea that the modes of expression employed in the Quran are non-normative. On the contrary, time and again, he points out that the different modes of expression he discusses in his book are, in effect, widely used and known in the speech of the Arabs. Thus, Abū 'Ubaida, having enumerated the different stylistic devices, stresses the fact that "[The use of] all these [figures] is permissible, [as] they [i.e. the Arabs] employ them in their speech."[2]

Abū 'Ubaida's task, it would seem, was "the examination of the way languages carry contrast in meaning through their internal structure",[3] and his "linguistic description of the meaningful internal patterns of [the] language."[1]

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[1] Al-Qur'ān wa Atharuhu fī taṭawwur al-Naqd al-'Arabī.

[2] Majāz I. 19.

[3] Nils E. Enkvist "Linguistics and style" (London 1964) 71.

Abū 'Ubaida does not see linguistic facts or vocabulary as things in themselves, but in terms of relationships between words arranged so as to communicate ideas or express emotions. The study of language is the study of style, and the study of style essentially is the investigation of modes of expression, which, in turn, implies the study of the manner of choosing and ordering words.

I. Muṣṭafā argues that the study of grammar should be a study that concerns itself only with the "rules of the Arabic sentence".[2] Thus the word nahw should not be restricted to the mere detecting of deviations from rigid grammatical rules. Grammar is not the science which points out solecisms or mistakes, rather it is the investigation of style: this was certainly the method adopted by Abū 'Ubaida in his book al-Majāz in which he explains and investigates taqdīm, ta'khīr, ḥadhf and other figures in Arabic sentences, calling his inquiry al-Majāz, that is to say ṭarīq al-ta'bīr"[3](the mode of [self-] expression).

I. Muṣṭafā goes on to say "This research in grammar was a new door that deserved to be opened, and a new step that should have followed the first step of the discovery of

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1. Ibid.
2. Iḥyā' al-Naḥw (Cairo 1937) 12.
3. Ibid. 11.

the causes of i'rāb ... grammarians were so busy with Sībawaihi and his [Concept of] grammar, and so extremely infatuated with it ... that this was the reason why scarcely any attention was paid to what Abū 'Ubaida had discovered in his book; and thus the book was absolutely neglected and forgotten."[1]

"Many years later came 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, and in his book Dalā'il al-I'jāz struck out a new path in grammatical research. He went behind the endings of words and the causes of i'rāb, showing that in every discourse there is a naẓm, and that in following the rules of this naẓm and satisfying its requisites, we find the only way of conveying meaning and understanding."[2]

"'Abd al-Qāhir's theory of naẓm was undervalued for two reasons: firstly, because of the general state of knowledge in the fifth century (of Islam), the age of 'Abd al-Qāhir, in which thought became less ardent and minds fell into the captivity of imitation preventing them from accepting novelty of any kind. The second reason is connected with the nature of 'Abd al-Qāhir's theory which was based on taste and a sense of language capable of appreciating different styles and discerning their characteristics."[3]

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1. Ibid. 12-16.
2. Ibid. 16. Needless to say Muṣṭafā attempts to link Abū 'Ubaida's work with that of al-Jurjānī. It may be worthy of note here that I had reached much the same conclusion before having the opportunity to consult Iḥyā' al-Naḥw, and these quotations therefore embody the conclusion arrived at independently.
3. Ibid. 19-20.

It may be appropriate here to examine, in brief, 'Abd al-Qāhir's theory of naẓm so that we can link his work to the work which Abū 'Ubaida initiated and can see how 'Abd al-Qāhir developed this work and elaborated a consistent theory of his own.

In the following citation from Dalā 'il al-I'jāz, 'Abd al-Qāhir puts forward the key to his theory and the foundation on which it was based. He says "Individual words which are the given material of language are not able in themselves to express meaning adequately, but are able to give the sense and provide the desired meaning when a group of them is linked together in a certain relationship. This is an honourable science and great fundamental principle. If we allege that individual words are the given material of language which we have invented to express meaning in themselves, this would lead to an undoubted absurdity; it would mean that we would be able to recognize objects just by mentioning the names which we have invented for them."[1] In another passage, 'Abd al-Qāhir identifies the science of grammar with the way words are placed in interrelationship, and he calls this naẓm.[2]

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1. Dalā'il al-I'jāz (Cairo 1913) 415-416.
2. Ibid. 65. This theory, Dr. M. Mandūr comments, is the same as that of the Swiss scholar Ferdinand De Saussure which considers language in terms of relationships and not of vocabulary. Cf. al-Naqd al-Manhajī 'ind al-'Arab (Cairo 1948) 283, 287.

Many modern writers agree by and large with 'Abd al-Qāhir in the statement already cited. Thus D. Wilson says "Indeed it now seems that it is misleading to talk of words standing for things, or having meanings. They have only uses, and these are largely determined by the rules of the language."[1] Yet, rules of language, as Abū 'Ubaida believes, are those which are known to the Arabs and used in their speech.

## Abū 'Ubaida and al-Jurjānī:

In considering the contribution of Abū 'Ubaida along with that of al-Jurjānī, one can detect two differences.

Firstly, Abū 'Ubaida in his study of the Quran does not put forward a theory as al-Jurjānī does, when he elaborates the theory of naẓm, and according to which he analyses Quranic verses. As we have seen, Abū 'Ubaida conceived of almost the same thing, and his approach was consequently not greatly different from that of al-Jurjānī. However, if I am not mistaken, the idea that language consists of words arranged in certain relationships is, in fact, implied in Abū 'Ubaida's study in the way he analyses Quranic verses in comparison with early Arabic poetry.

Secondly, al-Jurjānī's concern was not restricted to the mere exposition of the text, but is also concerned to show its aesthetic value.[1] Abū 'Ubaida, on the other hand, attempts to refer to all modes of expression the Quran employs, but he does not pay the slightest attention to the aesthetic effect behind the stylistic devices. Thus, in the Quran we read (LXXXI. 15-18), "I swear not by [the stars] that lag, that run, and that fade away, by the night when it lingers, by the morning when it breathes."

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[1] "Language and the pursuit of truth" (London 1960) 17.

Here we have a picture of the stars, indicated by the word kunnas (literally means 'antelopes'), hiding themselves, and of the departing of the night and the rising of the morning. This is a vivid picture, dynamically depicted. The use of the word tanaffas ('to breathe') gives the picture both movement and force, and contributes to create an image of the whole scene. Abū 'Ubaida, however, overlooks the aesthetic value of these verses and concerns himself with a brief explanation of a few words.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida's method in Kitāb al-Majāz:

Having discussed in detail Kitāb al-Majāz, we should like to round off this chapter by investigating Abū 'Ubaida's method of dealing with his subject.

It was made clear by Abū 'Ubaida that the Quran followed Arabic speech in regard to the different types of syntactical construction, uncommon terms and concepts.[1] In consequence of this he relies on pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry to define the meaning of words and sentence structure on the assumption that poetry was a perfect model for the study of linguistic phenomena in general and of the Quran in particular. This probably explains why Abū 'Ubaida does not relate on the authority of the 'Companions', the 'Followers', and other authorities on Quranic studies, as al-Ṭabarī maintains in his censure of him. His method was a linguistic one. This method focuses attention on the ways and means the Quran employs in the course of expressing its spiritual purpose. In this connection, undoubtedly, Abū 'Ubaida displays a remarkable competence in language, and in Arabic modes of expression. Not only this, he also shows an acute and sharp sense with regard to the differences between one mode of expression and another, and between one construction and another. This sense is clearly utilised in the most effective way in his method of interrelating the Quran and poetry as sources of linguistic and stylistic material of approximately equal date.

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[1] Al-Taswīr al-Fannī fī al-Qur'ān, 29-31.

[2] Majāz II. 287-288.

In his study of the tropical usages in the Quran, Abū Ubaida does his utmost to prove that the Quran is an Arabic book, revealed to an Arab Prophet, and to the Arab nation.[2] The Quran says, (XIV. 4) "And we did not send any apostle but with the language of his people, so that he might explain to them clearly."[1] Since, then, the Quran is an Arabic Book, it clearly seemed reasonable to Abū 'Ubaida to elucidate its secret by a comparative study of the Quran and Arabic poetry.

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[1] Ibid. I. 8.

[2] Majāz I. 8.

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[1] Abū 'Ubaida bases his notion that the Quran is an Arabic Book on two foundations - one of these is the identity of Arabic speech in the Quran and poetry: the second is the absence of foreign words in the Quran.

The claim that the Quran is devoid of foreign words reflects a false outlook on language not accepted by the early commentators, who admitted the existence of foreign words in the Quran (Itqān I. 120). Abū 'Ubaida, however, categorically rejects the claim that there is any foreign vocabulary in these words "Whoever claims that there is in the Quran anything other than the Arabic tongue has made a serious charge against God." (Majāz I.17). He adds "A word might be akin to other, and their meanings might be one, yet one is Arabic and the other is Persian" (Ibid. I.17). According to Jeffery, "his motive apparently was a feeling that the existence of foreign words in the Book would be a reflection on the sufficiency of Arabic as a medium for the divine revelation." (The Foreign Vocabulary in the Qur'ān, London, 1938, 7).

Abū 'Ubaida's opinion, however, seems to have influenced later commentators such as al-Ṭabarī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, and Ibn Fāris. Al-Ṭabarī, for instance, claims that there are no foreign words in the Quran. (Jāmi' al-Bayān I.21). Words which are thought not to be Arabic are in fact Arabic: it is only "coincidence" that the words concerned resemble others in, say, Persian (Ibid. I.15). The arguments of others, as related by al-Suyūṭī, do not differ essentially from that of al-Ṭabarī. (Muzhir, I. 267).

The real question that is to be examined, however, is not the occurrence or non-occurrence of foreign words in the Quran specifically, but in the Arabic language generally. Arab philologists, including Abū 'Ubaida, admitted the existence of foreign words in Arabic.

(al-Mu'jam al-'Arabī I.85), and Abū 'Ubaida himself traced back the existence of foreign words in Arabic to pre-Islamic poetry. He found Persian words in the poetry of al-A'sha and Ṭarafa, (Lisān. (jīd) III, 139, al-Mu'arrab 84. 10).

For Abū 'Ubaida, however, it was important that nothing should interfere with the contention that the Quran was revealed in plain Arabic, the medium of expression and communication of all Arabs, and this explains his irrationality over this issue. Since foreign words occurred in all Arabic, they clearly cannot be excluded from the Quran, which, in this respect, is completely typical of the language as a whole. R. Bell, discussing this question, observes that the majority of these [words] however can be shown to have been in use in Arabia in pre-Islamic times, and many of them became regular Arabic words. (Introduction to the Quran. Edinburgh 1953, 80).

Abū 'Ubaida seems to have contradicted himself at least once on this issue, when he unequivocally states in his Majāz (I. 97) in regard to the word rabbāniyyīn occurred in the Quran (III. 79) that "they [the Arabs] did not know its meaning" and that "only the doctors and the learned men knew it. He adds "I think this word is not Arabic. It is either Hebrew or Syriac." (Cf. also Itqān I. 235). Plainly enough, Abū 'Ubaida is defending a lost case, and perhaps one that he knows to be unsatisfactory when he accepts the existence of foreign words in Arabic, but maintains that such words are absent from the Quran.

A more reasonable view, that foreign words once subjected to Arabic patterns are Arabic, is put forward by Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām (d. 223/837) when he says of words of foreign origin, "Having been rendered into Arabic and used by Arabs, they have become Arabic. When the Quran was revealed, then words had already been Arabised. So, he who says that they are foreign is right, and he who says that they are Arabic is right." (Muzhir I. 269).

It is worthy of note, finally, that the opinion of Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām referred to, and which was quoted by al-Suyūṭī, is mistakenly attributed by al-Zabīdī in Taj al-'Arus (I.9) to Abū 'Ubaida and not to Abū 'Ubaid.

Al-Jawīnī points out that Kitāb al-Majāz was probably the first book to study the style of the Quran in relation to Arabic style in general.[1] This demanded great ability since, as Ibn Qutaiba says, "No man is able to understand the excellency (faḍl) of the Quran but one whose knowledge and understanding of Arab modes [of expression] are wide and deep."[2]

Arabic modes of expression are embodied in their poetry. Thus, it would not seem erroneous to identify the expression "Arab style" with poetry, because poetry was the only prevailing literary form in Arabia apart from the Quran.

The more detailed exposition below discusses at length how Abū 'Ubaida compared these two important literary forms:

(a) Kitāb al-Majāz offers many examples which illustrates Abū 'Ubaida's method of comparing the Quran structurally with Arabic poetry. In our discussion of the concept of trope which Abū 'Ubaida held and the kinds of tropes by which he illustrates his concept, there are many examples attesting this.[3]

The following examples, however, illustrate clearly Abū 'Ubaida's basic assumption that the Quran follows a

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1. Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, 202.
2. Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān, 10.
3. Chapter 8, No. 11, 12 (Majāz I.257, II. 258), 23 (Majāz II. 83), 24 (Majāz II.110).

typical Arab style as represented in poetry.

On the verse (VII.13) "... and whoever acts adversely to Allah and His apostle, then surely Allah is severe in requiting [evil]". Abū 'Ubaida observes that while the protasis includes two nouns, the apodosis refers to only one. Abū 'Ubaida goes on to say that Arabs do not say "He who fight al-Ṣalt and Zaid, then al-Ṣalt and Zaid are two brave [men]", implying that the apodosis should refer to only one of the two nouns (either al-Ṣalt or Zaid). This stylistic device is employed in poetry, and Abū 'Ubaida instances Shaddād b. Mu'āwiyā's verse:

فمن يكُ سائلاً عني فاني
وجروة لا ترود ولا تعار

in which the poet refers to Jarwa (the name of his horse), thus he says lā tarūdu wa lā tu'āru, and not lā narūdu wa la nu'āru (referring to his horse and himself).[1] It should be noticed, however, that the verse does not fit the Quranic verse as exactly as might be desired. In the latter the two nouns (God and His Apostle) are mentioned in the protasis, in the former it is only one noun (the poet) which is mentioned in the protasis. Still, one can argue, the similarity between the Quranic verse and the verse of Shaddād lies in the fact that the reference in the apodosis is made to one noun and not to two.

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[1] Majāz I. 243-244.

" فمن يك ...
ادعها تجيء وتذهب تعار . ترك الخبر عن نفسه وجعل الخبر لفرسه،
والعرب ايضاً اذا خبّروا عن اثنين اظهروا الخبر عن احدهما وكفّوا عن
خبر الآخر ، ولم يقولوا : ومن يحارب الصلت وزيداً فان الصلت وزيداً
شجاعان ... [ البيت ] .. ولم يقل لا نرود ولا نعار فيدخل نفسه
معها في الخبر ... "

Another example illustrating Abū 'Ubaida's method of establishing a correlation between Quranic structures and early Arabic poetry is given below.

"In the nominal sentences "Abū 'Ubaida claims", the Arabs make the verb agree with the noun (in number and gender), and this is the normal practice. The verb however can be in the singular and the noun in the plural only when the normal word-order is reversed (muqaddam wa mu'akhkhar)."[1] Thus, in the verse Wa a'yunuhum tafīḍu (IX.92) where, despite the fact that the sentence is nominal, the verb does not agree with the noun in number and gender, that is to say, the verse should have been fiḍna and not tafīḍu.[2] This stylistic device is employed in Arabic poetry as Abū 'Ubaida notes. Al-A'shā says

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[1] Ibid. I.267. Abū 'Ubaida's claim however can be debated on two grounds. Firstly he does not distinguish in nominal sentences between nouns of personal and non-personal reference, and secondly, the sequence verb + subject is the normal one in Arabic and not vice-versa.

[2] Obviously, Abū 'Ubaida here implies that there is taqdīm and ta'khīr, and this accounts for the fact that the verb, in the Quranic verse, does not agree in number and gender with the noun.

فان تعهديني ولى لمة    فان الحوادث اودى بها

and according to the normal practice, the poet here would say awdaina bihā.[1]

(b) Recourse to poetry to substantiate the meanings of words is another method which is constantly used by Abū 'Ubaida. In this respect he does nothing that other Arab authors do not do. As we have said before, Ibn 'Abbās used to consult pre-Islamic poetry to determine the meanings of words. Thus when he was asked about the word wa-mā wasaq (LXXXIV.17), Ibn 'Abbās answered that the word means wa mā jama'. He then was asked "Do Arabs recognize that [meaning]?" to which he replied "Have you not heard the verse of the rājiz ..."[2]

Abū 'Ubaida was also asked about the meaning of al-tafath. Having explained it, he added that no poetry had been passed down which could be instanced as evidence of that meaning he had given.[3]

This technique of explanation by quotation is widely applied in al-Majāz. Thus the great importance that Abū 'Ubaida attaches to poetry to elucidate meanings led him to disagree with other commentators concerning the word ṭalḥ (LVI. 29). Abū 'Ubaida says "The commentators have claimed that the word means 'banana-tree', but according to the Arabs the word means "a big thorn tree'. A poet has said..."[1]

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[1] Ibid. I. 268. " والعرب اذا بدأت بالاسماء قبل الفعل جعلت افعالها على العدد فهذا المستعمل، وقد يجوز ان يكون الفعل على لفظ الواحد كأنه مقدم ومؤخر كقولك " وتفيض اعينهم " كما قال الاعشى [ البيت ]. ووجه الكلام ان يقول اودين بها ... "

[2] Kāmil I. 566.

[3] Muzhir I. 301. Ibn Manẓūr relates the same story. Lisān (tafath) II. 120.

Similarly on verse (XXXIV. 24) "And most surely we or (aw) you are on a right way or in manifest error", he says that the conjunction aw denotes wāw, and has not here its more usual meaning. Abū 'Ubaida instances a verse by Jarīr in evidence of his opinion.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida gives the meaning of a word not as a thing in itself but as an element in a particular context. Thus some words may be given a number of different meanings. The word rafath is given the meaning "Conjugal intercourse" in verse II.187, and the meaning "foul speech" in II.192, and a poem of al-'Ajjāj is quoted to substantiate the second meaning.[3]

Abū 'Ubaida sometimes explicitly states that he is giving a meaning which fits the context. Thus he says, "In this context (the word fusūq) means transgression."[4] And occasionally he refers to the various meanings a word assumes in different contexts, supporting his explanations with evidential verses of poetry.[1]

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[1] Majāz II. 250.
[2] Ibid. II.148. Other examples, Ibid. I. 2. 212, 215, 390. II. 144, 178, 179, 249, 299 etc.
[3] Ibid. I. 67, 70.
[4] Ibid. I. 84.

His explanations, however, are based on the outward meaning of a word and he seldom goes into deep or abstruse interpretations; nor does he seek symbolic significance beyond the words and verses as did the Ṣūfīs.[2]

The poetry he utilized was both of the Jāhilī and early Islamic periods and there seems little doubt that his basic assumption is the best and soundest he could have made in the circumstances, namely that such poetry was the only literature sufficiently acceptable in quality, quantity and style to justify comparison with the Quran. We say in the circumstances of his time, in the knowledge that his criteria would not be accepted by scholars of our time without considerable modification.

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[1] Ibid. I. 92.
[2] Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān, 284.

# PART V

## Chapter IX

## The Historical Writings

### Introductory Note:

The previous chapters were intended to investigate certain aspects of Abū 'Ubaida's cultural activities. It remains to discuss another, no less important, aspect of his contribution to Islamic culture, namely his historical writings.

Any appraisal of Abū 'Ubaida's historical writings, of course, necessitates a full acquaintance with his works in this field. Most of these are lost however, and the survival of reports, extracts and anecdotes offer but little help in this respect.

Abū 'Ubaida's historical[1] writings are part of a large literary genre which became important in his lifetime. The term *akhbār* given to those writings was rather vague and loose, being used to denote a wide range of anecdotes, whether true ot fictitious, concerning the life of individuals, poets, chieftains, jurists, scholars, etc.,[2] or the

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1. The word "history" seems to be rather inadequate as a description of Abū 'Ubaida's writings. However, until we find, in the process of this discussion, a more suitable word, we will retain the term "history" as a convenient word for the present. Cf. p.413
2. Abū 'Ubaida, for example, writes a book called "*Khabar Abī Baghīd*".

life of communities and tribes.[1] Thus, this term may be said to have been used as a synonym for history, or to be more precise, to historical material. Rosenthal says, "*Ahbār* corresponds to history in the sense of story, anecdote; it does not imply any fixation of time."[2] "The character of the *ḫabar*" he goes on, "as a self-contained unit is stressed by the chain of transmitters which precedes each *ḫabar* and which is omitted only in order to achieve brevity or to remove the appearance of scholarly austerity."[3]

"Three features are characteristics of *ḫabar* from historical writings."

(1) "By its very nature it does not admit the establishment of a causal nexus between two or more events. Each habar is complete in itself and tolerate no reference to any kind of supplementary material."[4]

(2) "From its ancient predecessor, the battle-day narratives, the *ḫabar* form retained the character of a vividly told short story. The action is often presented in the form of a dialogue between the principle participants of an event, relieve the historian of what should be his task, that is, presenting a clearly interpreted analysis of the

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[1] Such as "*Akbār 'Abd Qais*" of Abū 'Ubaida.
[2] *The History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden 1952) 10.
[3] *Ibid.* 59.
[4] *Ibid.*

situation, and leave such analysis to the reader."[1]

(3) "As a continuation of the battle-day narratives and the artistic form of expression, the ḥabar history required the presence of poetical insertion."[2]

Khabar, then, is the first form which historical writing assumes, and in this sense, as the khabar narratives existed before Islam, historical narrative can be traced back to pre-Islamic times.

al-Ālūsī infers that the Arabs before Islam were aware of history - that is to say, of the existence of other nations and their conditions, from the so many allusions the Jāhilī poets made in their poetry.[3]

Needless to say the reference to other nations does not mean the existence of historical writings, let alone history as a branch of human knowledge.

In contrast to this opinion, Margoliouth puts forward another view. In his lectures on Arabic historians he attempted to establish the idea that no Arabian chronicles existed in the pre-Islamic times. Although he admits that poetry being the dīwān of the Arabs was an important vehicle for historical records.[4]

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[1] Ibid. 60.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Bulūgh al-Arab Fī Aḥwāl al-'Arab. (Baghdad 1314) III.209.
[4] Lectures on Arabic Historians (Calcutta 1930) 22-23.

Finally, Gibb thinks that the origin of Arabic historiography offers an insoluble problem. He sees between the legendary and popular traditions of pre-Islamic Arabia and the relatively scientific and exact chronicles which appeared in the second century of the hijra a wide gulf.[1]

The southern Arabs preserved some form of historical tradition in the Minean, Sabaean and other inscriptions, while among the northern Arabs each tribe preserved its own tradition in the form of a series of stories and anecdotes dealing largely with intertribal conflicts, widely known as Ayyām al-'Arab, and in the form of tribal genealogies.[2]

The Ayyām narratives played an important part in establishing a historical science and in promoting the idea of history.

Many reasons contributed to create a need for the study of history, and historiography. First and foremost was Islam. If we accept the assumption that history implies the existence of the idea of nation, then Islam, as a religion, appeals to all the Arabs, irrespective of their tribal obligations and relations.

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[1] EI(1) (Ta'rīkh) Supp. 233. This article was reproduced in his book "Studies in the Civilization of Islam."

[2] Ibid.234. Brockelmann thinks that the historical consciousness amongst the northern Arabs was stronger than that amongst the southern. Cf. "Tarīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī" III. 7.

In pre-Islamic Arabia, the poet used to glorify the deeds of his own tribe, rather than the "Arab" as a race. Aḥmad Amīn notices, that even when the Arabs were fighting a foreign race, the Persians, in the Day of "Dhū Qār", the Arab poets praised and took pride in their own tribe's actions, and there was not a general Arab consciousness.[1]

However, as the Arabs responded to the Islamic appeal, they discovered, to their surprise, that they constituted a distinct nation, wider than the small communities to which they were related. Islam therefore created the idea of the "nation" and consolidated the elements of this nation, the tribes, when he put them face to face with other nations in an attempt to propagate Islam.

Then again, the collision with other foreign races further confirmed to the Arabs that they were a people different from others, and helped to create a new self-consciousness, and self-realization.

The resultant historical writings followed two directions. The first dealt with the biography of the prophet. The first authors on this subject were 'Urwa b. Zuhair (d. 94/712), Abbān b. 'Uthmān (d. 104/722), Wahb b. Munabbih (d. 110/728) and Shuraḥbīl b. Sa'd (d.123/740). The writings on the prophet were at first part of the ḥadīth, as Dr. Dūrī points out,[1] and the first in this field were also traditionists.[2]

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[1] Ḍuḥā al-Islām I. 18-20.

The second direction was the *akhbār*, including *Ayyām*. As Ibn al-Nadīm indicates, the Umayyad caliphs, notably Mu'āwīya, encouraged writings on these subjects. Ibn al-Nadīm also relates that 'Abīd b. Shariya al-Jarhamī was asked by Mu'āwīya to write about the history of the ancients, and about the kings of the Arabs and Persians.[3]

al-Mas'ūdī also relates that Mu'āwīya used to spend the first third of the night listening to the history of the ancients, their wars, and the *Ayyām*. In the second third he would sleep and then get up in the last third, prepare his books on history and ask for pages to be read to him.[4]

"In the second century of the Hidjra, the fields of tribal tradition, hitherto the preserves of the *rāwī* and the *nassāb*, were invaded by the philologists, who, in trying to recover and to elucidate all that survived of the ancient poetry, performed a valuable service to history by collecting and sorting out this mass of material. The typical figure of this activity is Abū 'Ubaida ... (His contributions to history) compass the whole range of North-Arabian tradition, arranged under convenient heads such as the traditions of individual tribes, and families and those relating to the "Days" and extend also to the post-Islamic traditions relating to the conquest of single provinces, to important events and battles, and such groups as the ḳāḍīs of al-Baṣra, the *Khawāridj*, and the *mawālī*."[1]

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[1] *Baḥth fī Nasha'at al-Tārīkh'ind al-'Arab* 20.
[2] For a full account on the subject, the study of Dr. Josef Horvitz "The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors" may be consulted. This study was published in "*IC*" 1927, pp.535-559. 1928, pp.22-50, 164-182 and 495-526.
[3] *Fihrist* 89. C. Pellat thinks that this is an indication of the "birth of Arabic history". Cf. *al-jāḥiẓ* 196.
[4] *Murūj al-Dhahab* (Paris 1869) V. 77-78.

### Abū 'Ubaida's books on History:

To give a clear picture of Abū 'Ubaida's historical writings, we may quote Pellat who says that in the process of collecting the ancient poetry, Abū 'Ubaida collected with it a mass of tribal *akhbār* which enabled him to write a number of books on history, which can be arranged under the following headings:-

1) On countries and provinces: *Kitāb Khurāsān*, *Kitāb Makka Wal-Ḥaram*, *Kitāb Qiṣṣat al-Ka'ba*.
2) On tribes: *Kitāb Gharīb Buṭūn al-'Arab*, *al-Ḥums Min Quraish*, *Kitab Akhbār 'Abd al-Qais*, *Kitāb Manāqib Bāhila*, *Kitāb Mathālib Bāhila*, *Kitāb Ayādī al-Azd*, *Kitāb Ma'āthir Ghaṭalān*, *Kitāb Tasmiyat Man qatalat Banū Asad*, *Kitāb al-Aus wal-Khazraj*, *Kitāb Banū Māzin*, *Kitāb Ma'āthir al-'Arab*, (*Kitāb al-Qabā'il*, *Kitāb al-Mathālib*, *Kitāb* Buyūtāt al-'Arab).[2]

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[1] Gibb. *EI*(1) (*ta'rīkh*) Supp. 234.
[2] Books between two brackets have been added by the writer.

3) On historical figures: *Kitāb Akhbār al-Ḥajjāj*, *Kitāb Muslim b. Qutaiba*, *Kitāb Khabar Abī Baghīd*, *Kitāb Muḥammad wa-Ibrāhīm*, *Kitāb al-A'yān*. (*Kitāb Khabar al-Barrād*, *Kitāb Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī*).

4) On historical events: *Kitāb Maqtal 'Uthmān*, *Kitāb Mas'ūd b. 'Amr wa Maqtaluhu*.

5) On battles: *Kitāb Ghārāt Qais wal-Yaman*, *Kitāb Ayyām Banī Yashkur*, *Kitāb Marj Rāhiṭ*, *Kitāb al-Jamal wa Siffīn*. (*Kitāb al-Ayyām al-Kabīr*, *Kitāb al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr*, *Kitāb Maqātil al-Fursān*, *Kitāb Maqātil al-Ashrāf*.)

6) *On Conquests*: *Kitāb Futūḥ Armīniya*, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Ahwāz*, *Kitāb al-Sawād wa Futūḥuhu*.

7) On parties and national elements: *Kitāb Khawārij al-Baḥrain wal-Y~~e~~amāma*, *Kitāb al-Mawālī*, *Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Furs*.

8) On professions: *Kitāb Quḍāt al-Baṣra*.[1]

This list illustrates the wide range of Abū 'Ubaids's historical contribution, though its scientific value is questioned by some writers.[2] This point will be taken up later when we discuss Abū 'Ubaida's accounts of *al-Ayyām*,[3] the only authentic text that reached us in more or less

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1. *al-Jāḥiẓ* 199-200.
2. *Ibid.* 201, Shukrī Faiṣal "*Harakat al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī Fī al-Qarn al-Awwal*. (Cairo 1952) 163.
3. Cf. p.394

complete form, as an example of his historical writings in general.

The substance of these writings passed into later works as Gibb points out.[1] We shall however only refer to three of the later historians who drew on 'Abū 'Ubaida, namely al-Ṭabarī, al-Balādhurī and al-Mas'ūdī.

In his great book "Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-Mulūk", al-Ṭabarī relied among other sources,[2] on works of Abū 'Ubaida. It is on his authority that al-Ṭabarī relates the account of Yaūm Dhī Qār,[3] and of the uprisings of the Kharijites and other Islamic events.[4] al-Ṭabarī, it should be noted, does not depend entirely on Abū 'Ubaida's versions of the events he is writing about. Conversely, he gives other versions to the same events which may or may not differ from each other.

al-Balādhurī, on the other hand, in his book "Futūḥ al-Buldān", which is considered one of the "most valuable

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1. EI(1) (Ta'rīkh) Supp. 234.
2. In a paper written by Dr. J. 'Alī in M.M.A.A.(I 1950, pp.143-231, II 1952 pp.135-190) entitled "Mawarid Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī" the writer attempts to show the sources from which al-Ṭabarī drew his information. He finds that in regard to the history of the prophet, al-Ṭabarī depended mainly on the sīras and tafsīr literature; in regard to Jāhilī history, on Hishām al-Kalbī; in regard to al-Ridda movement, on Saif b. 'Umar. The writer also refers to Abū 'Ubaida as one of al-Ṭabarī's important sources.
3. I. 1016, 1029.
4. 1102 II. 1348-1349, 1375.

sources for the history of the Arab conquests",[1] relied also on many informants such as al-Ḥusain b. al-Aswad al-Kūfī, al-Qāsim b. Sallām, 'Alī b. Muḥammad, al-Madā'inī, al-'Abbās b. Hishām al-Kalbī, Abū 'Ubaida, Abū Mikhnaf, etc.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida was the main source for al-Balādhurī's accounts of the conquests of al-Baḥrain, al-Madā'in, Jurjān, Ṭabaristān, al-Ahwāz, Fārs, Kirmān and Khurāsān.[3]

This author also uses Abū 'Ubaida's accounts of the foundation of both Kūfa and Baṣra.[4] In so far as Baṣra is concerned Abū 'Ubaida, indeed, was the main source.

al-Mas'ūdī uses Abū 'Ubaida's accounts solely in regard to the pre-Islamic customs and traditions, Umayyad history and Persian history.[5] It seems, however, that al-Mas'ūdī was acquainted with some of Abū 'Ubaida's works, such as Kitāb Akhbār al-Furs, which deals with the history of Fārs, its kings, genealogy, etc.,[6] since al-Mas'ūdī points out, that he (Abū 'Ubaida) drew all his reports and information on the history of Fārs from a man called 'Umar Kisrā, so nicknamed because he was so versed in the history of Fārs.[7]

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[1] Becker EI (al-Balādhurī) I. 972.

[2] Futūḥ al-Buldān edited by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Cairo, 1956), 18. Introduction.

[3] Ibid. 104, 323, 412, 469, 479, 499-506, 519-529.

[4] Ibid. 338, 425-428, 438, 358.

[5] Murūnj al-Dhahab III. 227, 341; V. 22; II. 112, 238.

[6] Ibid. II 136.

[7] Ibid. II. 112.

Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī:

Apart from scattered information in the form of akhbār and the Ayyām al-'Arab we have no other complete historical works except the monograph called "Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī" which is still unpublished.[1]

Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī can be regarded as a good example of Abū 'Ubaida's historical writings. In spite of the smallness of this work, it reveals a characteristic which is to be found in his other books, particularly al-Khail, namely systematization. He starts with a brief sketch of his subject and then proceeds to give short accounts of the Prophet's wives in chronological order.

It can clearly be perceived that the author is concerned to give the most authentic details he could. Whether he succeeded in his attempt or not is questionable matter, but he is eager to substantiate his argument whenever it is possible for him to do so.

As an example of the sort of reasoning Abū 'Ubaida employs, we may refer to his account of Khadīja, the first wife of the prophet. Abū 'Ubaida states that the prophet married Khadīja before Islam, and that his four daughters, Zainab, Ruqīyya, Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭima, were born before Islam. To prove this Abū 'Ubaida points out that the prophet married his daughter, Zainab, to Abū al-'Ās b. al-Rabī', and that when Islam came into existence, Zainab accepted Islam, although her husband refused. The prophet then ordered his daughter not to see her husband. Later on, Abū al-'Āṣ declared himself a Muslim. The prophet then left them to resume their marriage.[1] Abū 'Ubaida draws the logical conclusions saying, "Had Zainab been born after the Revelation, the prophet, may God bless his name, would not have married her to an unbeliever... And if the prophet, may God bless his name, had married Khadīja after the time referred to at the beginning of this book [he refers to his statement that the prophet married Khadīja when he was twenty-five years old, fifteen years before the revelation was made to him], her daughter Zainab would not have been a mature woman, and would have been too young to get married before Islam."[2]

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[1] An edited version of this monograph is to be found at the end of this thesis, appendix I.

The same argument was used in regard to the other daughters of the prophet.

Another feature which strikes the reader as soon as he sets out to read this treatise is its assured tone which indicates the independent character of the author and the sense that he was writing "historical facts" and not otherwise. He was both concerned with the veracity of what had happened, and thereafter sure that what he was reporting was the factual truth.

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1. Cf. p. 450
2. Cf. p. 450

This way of treating the material differs considerably from his method in the Ayyām al-'Arab, in that in the Tasmiyat Azwāj al-Nabī, Abū 'Ubaida is more an historian than a rāwī, in that he gives much thought to the correct Establishment of the historical fact.

Ayyām al-'Arab:

Al-Ayyām (the days) has several meanings. Besides its temporal meaning, it means also states, or favours of God, as in the verse "... and remind them of the days of God." (XIV. 5), and finally it means 'battles'.[1] In the formula Ayyām al-'Arab, the word may have only the last meaning. The term has often been translated as the "days of the Arabs",[2] which does not give a precise impression however, and the term Ayyām (al-'Arab) is therefore retained throughout our study.

Ḥājji Khalīfa defines the term saying, "The science of Ayyām al-'Arab deals with the great battles and the most distressing and dreadful events that took place between the Arab tribes. The word "ayyām" is used to denote the "events" through the reference to the 'place' (viz. in which they took place).[3]

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1. Tāj al-'Arūs IX 115; Lisān (yaum) XII. 649-651.
2. Mittwoch EI$^{(2)}$ (Ayyām al-'Arab) I. 793.
3. Kashf al-Ẓunūn (Istanbul 1941) I. 204.

In fact, not all Ayyām deals with great battles. Ibn al-Athīr clearly states, "We are mentioning the famous Ayyām and memorable battles, which constitute a great number of people and fierce fights. I have not referred to the small forays ... because they are innumerable..."[1] Ibn al-Athīr's allusion finds an echo in both Mittwoch's article on this subject in The Encyclopaedia of Islam and in Hittī's account of the Ayyām in his History of the Arabs. The former says, "Many of them [al-Ayyām] however are not commemorative of proper battles like the "Day of Dhū Ḳār" but only of insignificant skirmishes or frays, in which instead of the whole tribes, only a few families or individuals opposed one another."[2] The latter says, "The history of the Bedouins is in the main a record of guerilla wars called Ayyām al-'Arab, in which there was a great deal of raiding and plundering but little bloodshed."[3]

However, though al-Ayyām narratives are devoted to martial events, they also contain descriptions of episodes which characterize the social, economic and political status prevalent at that time. One aspect of the social life,

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1. al-Kāmil Fī al-Tārīkh (Leyden 1867) I. 367.
2. $EI^2$ (ayyām al-'Arab) I. 793.
3. History of the Arabs (London 1961) 87. Abū 'Ubaida referred to three Ayyām only being the greatest Ayyām, they are yaum Kulāb Rabī'a, yaum Jabala and yaum Dhī Qār. Aghānī (D) XI, 131.

namely, women in pre-Islamic Arabia, was the subject of study made by Lichtenstädter entitled "*Women in the Aiyām al-'Arab*."[1]

To early Arab authors the interest in the *Ayyām* narratives was less because they give a panorama of Arabian life than that they tell the story of their ancestors' glory, courageous raids and heroic deeds in bygone days. al-Nuwairī states that the *Ayyām* narratives are "one of the most magnificent traditions [of the Arabs] and he who reflects upon them will find [in them] the virtuous moral of their character and the honour of their extraction."[2]

When the interest in collecting the pre-Islamic poetry began, the need to explain them necessitated reference to the events which the poets were describing. Goldziher for example points out that "ancient Arabic poetry truly reflects the tribal life of the Arab with all their passions and its traditional ideology. Its subjects include petty intertribal feuds and the cause of them, the vendetta, the predatory geurilla warfare; the adventures ... thus the poets had excellent opportunity to refer to the famous intertribal days of battle (*Ayyām al-'Arab*), the details of whose history are preserved in the prosaic narratives (*Akhbār*

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1. Published in London in 1935.
2. *Nihāyat al-Arab Fī Funtūn al-Adab*. (Cairo 1949) XV. 338.

*al-'Arab*)."[1] Besides, the hatred which the non-Arab elements showed towards the Arabs may have compelled the latter to reconsider and revive their heritage, of which the *Ayyām* was part.[2]

Abū 'Ubaida was considered to have been the scholar most versed amongst his contemporaries in *Ayyām*. Ibn Qutaiba says, "The unusual expressions [of the Arabic language], the history of the [ancient] Arabs and their conflicts were his predominant preoccupation."[3]

Abū 'Ubaida himself boasted of his knowledge of the old Arab traditions, particularly of intertribal conflicts, saying, "neither in heathen nor Muhammadan times, have two horses met in battle but that I possess information about them and their riders."[4] And Nicholson says of him "Our knowledge of Arabian antiquity is drawn to a large extent from the tradition collected by him which are preserved in the Kitābu'l-Aghānī and elsewhere."[5]

It must be noted, however, that Abū 'Ubaida was not the only *rāwī* to write on the *Ayyām*, although his writings on the subject have overshadowed the others.

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[1] *Short History of Arabic Literature* 2.
[2] Brockelmann, *Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī* II. 33-34.
[3] *Wafayāt* III. 388-389. *Muzhir* II. 402. *Lisān* XV. 58. *Bughyat al-Wu'āt* 395.
[4] *Muzhir* II. 402.
[5] *A Literary History of the Arabs* 345.

Ibn al-Nadīm refers to al-Qarqabī (d. 155/771) and Jannād as experts in the *Ayyām*.[1] He also refers to Hsihām b. Muhammad al-Kalbī (d. 206/821) as having written many books on the *Ayyām*.[2] Ḥājji Khalīfa however mentions only Abū 'Ubaida as being the author of works on the *Ayyām*, and alludes to his two books on the subject *al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr* in which he gives accounts of 75 battles, and *al-Ayyām al-Kabīr* in which he gives an account of 1,200 battles.[3] Ḥājji Khalīfa also refers to Abū-al-Faraj as having added to Abū 'Ubaida's reports and raised the number of battles to 1,700.[4] Other biographers of Abū 'Ubaida mention his two books on the *Ayyām* as well as a work on the *Ayyām* of the Banū Māzin.[5] Ibn al-Nadīm on the other hand mentions only a book called

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[1] *Fihrist* 91, 92.

[2] *Ibid*. 97.

[3] *Kashf al-Ẓunūn* I. 204.

[4] *Ibid*. I. 204. M.A. Khalaf Allah assumes that Abū al-Faraj's accounts of the Day of "Raḥraḥām" and "Shi'b Jabala" in "*al-Aghānī*" were extracted from other books of Abū al-Faraj and added to "*al-Aghānī*". Cf. "*Ṣāḥib al-Aghānī, Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī al-Rāwīya*" (Cairo 1953) 279-280.

[5] *Wafayāt* III. 393. *Irshād* VII. 169.

"*Ayyām Banī Yashkur Wa Akhbāruhum*".[1]

## *The Transmission of al-Ayyām*:

The main part of the *Ayyām* narratives as has been maintained above goes back to Abū 'Ubaida, whose transmission represents the school of Baṣra, though there was also a

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[1] *Fihrist* 54. The actual number of the *Ayyām* was, is, and always will be uncertain. Besides the loss of Abū 'Ubaida's works on the subject, the survival of which would have cleared up the difficulty other factors have created confusion. Thus the names of certain *Ayyām* vary from one source to another. In the *'Iqd* (III. 90) for instance, *yaum Balqā'* al-Ḥusn was given the name of *Naqa al-Ḥasan* in "al-Nihaya" of al-Nuwairī (XV. 391) and in the "*Naqā'iḍ*" (S) (I.177). Also "yaum al-Natā'a" in al-Nuwairī's book (XV 364) was referred to as "Nabāt" in the "*Kāmil*" (I.484). On the other hand, some days were given more than one name. Examples on the point are legion. Yaum al-Sarā'īn is called also "al-Jurf" (*'Umda* II, 210), 'Yaum al-Ghabīṭ" was called "al-'Aẓālī" once and "al-Ayād" again (*Ibid* II. 211) "Yaum A'shāsh" was given the name of "Malīḥa" (*Ibid* II.211). Yaum Milzaq" was given the name of "al-Subān" (Ibid. II.212). "Yaum al-Waqiẓ" was also called "al-Ḥinū" (Ibid. II. 215), etc.

This confusion in numbers and names seems not to be a new one. Ibn Rashīq himself declared that he has done his best to shorten his accounts in "*al-'Umda*" and he observed the discrepancies we have just referred to, adding that the responsibility of this confusion is not his but the *rāwīs*. (*Ibid*. II. 220).

Kūfite transmission which goes back to al-Mufaḍḍal. The following table shows through whom the two transmissions were handed down.[1]

| The school of Baṣra | | The school of Kūfa |
|---|---|---|
| Abū 'Ubaida | | al-Mufaḍḍal |
| Muḥammad Ibn Ḥabīb | Sa'dān | Ibn al-'Arābī |
| | | Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb |
| Abū Sa'īd al-Sukkarī | Ibn Sa'dān | Abū Sa'īd al-Sukkarī |
| al-Akhfash, Muḥammad b. al-'Abbās al-Yazīdī | | 'Alī b. Sulaimān al-Akhfash |

The Kūfite transmission, however, never reached us and there is only one isolated allusion to a Kūfite transmission in al-Aghānī.[2] Caskel assumes that there were important differences between the Baṣran and Kūfite transmissions,[3] but there seem to be no grounds for such an assumption. The previously-mentioned table shows that two reciters, Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb and Abū Sa'īd al-Sukkarī derived material from both transmissions. This indicates that a sort of amalgamation, was probably made, and that the result was a uniformity and similarity in essentials, if not in details.

Indeed differences in details occurred even within the Baṣran transmission as for example the difference between

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1. Caskel "Aijām al-'Arab" Islamica (1930) III. 86. "Aghānī" (D) XI 124.
2. "Aghānī" (D) XI 72.
3. "Islamica" (Aijām al-'Arab) 86.

al-Aṣma'ī's and Abū 'Ubaida's reports of the murder of Zuhair b. Jadhīma al-'Abasī.[1]

The reason why it was Abū 'Ubaida's transmission which found its way into later works, and not the Kūfite transmission is a matter of conjecture. It may be however that among the rāwīs of the Kūfite transmission there was no one who put anything in writing. Abū 'Ubaida was not the only rāwī of the Baṣran school to do this, but the importance of his reports would undoubtedly be enhanced by his reputation as an expert on the pre-Islamic history. These two reasons may well have created greater interest in his work and ensured the survival of his transmission.

Any attempt to reconstruct his Ayyām material will be inadequate unless a comparison is made between his transmission and the Ayyām as transmitted by later authors.

Among the authors who related Ayyām on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, and whose accounts are to be considered along with Abū 'Ubaida's accounts in the Naqā'iḍ, are Ibn al-Athīr in his "al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh", Ibn 'Abd Rabbih in his "al-'Iqd al-Farīd" and al-Nuwairī in his "Nihāyat al-Arab

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[1] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 82, 91.

*fī Funūm al-Adab*".[1]

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[1] Other authors related *Ayyām* on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida, such as Ibn Rashīq in his "*al-'Umda*". He says, "And I have given accounts in this chapter of what I have access to concerning the *Ayyām al-'Arab* and their conflicts from *al-Naqā'iḍ* and other works (II 198). The other works which Ibn Rashīq referred to are not expressedly named. Yet if we take the reference to Ibn Qutaiba's disagreement with Abū 'Ubaida in regard to Yaum al-Fijār seriously (*Ibid* II. 218-219) then we may infer that one of the authors from whom Ibn Rashīq derived his information was Ibn Qutaiba. Ibn Rashīq does not otherwise refer to his sources and says only "someone other than Abū 'Ubaida said" (*Ibid* II. 203).

Another author who related *Ayyām* was al-Maidānī in his "*Majma' al-Amthāl*" (Cairo, 1310) II. 324-337. But his accounts are short and incomplete and not of particular importance, although Mittwoch holds that al-Maidānī's reports are "very useful for quick orientation" (Cf. *EI*$^2$ (*Ayyām al-'Arab*) 794). A third author is Abū al-Faraj whose transmissions of *Ayyām* are of special importance for reasons which will be discussed later. It must be noted, however, that Abū al-Faraj's transmissions are not included with the above-mentioned authors for the reason that his accounts of *Ayyām* are rather a by-product than an end in themselves. "They are inserted by way of explanation of events, alluded to in the ancient verses", as Mittwoch says (*EI*$^2$ (*Ayyām al-'Arab*) 794). Thus he is unlike Ibn al-Athīr, al-Nuwairī and Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi who devote special chapters to the *Ayyām* narratives.

The accounts of those authors are different in that each author presents the material in the way which suits his purpose. Thus Ibn-al-Athīr, as a historian was more interested in the events than in poetry inserted in them. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi on the other hand was an author whose writings bear witness that he was more rāwī than historian, and that his book was meant not to be a history but rather a literary work covering many subjects appealing to different readers of dissimilar tastes. He therefore cuts short dry historical events and inserts more poetry.[1] Al-Nuwairī's accounts of the Ayyām do not differ radically from those of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, as one can see from the accounts of both these authors on Yaum Khaww, Yaum al-Fijār the first, second and third, and many others.

## The Ayyām al-'Arab in al-Naqā'iḍ:

Abū 'Ubaida's accounts of the Ayyām in al-Naqā'iḍ offer some problems, but they are not insoluble.

The authorship of al-Naqā'iḍ has been subject to dispute among some scholars. These suspicions, however, are directed more at the commentary on the poetry rather than the poetry itself.

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[1] For example compare Ibn al-Athīr's account of yaum al-Nisār (Kāmil I. 462-463) with that of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi (al-'Iqd III. 77) and al-Nuwairī (Nihāyat XV 421). Also the account of yaum Khazār in al-Kāmil I. 382 and in al-'Iqd III. 76 and in Nihāyat XV. 420-421.

Aḥmad al-Shāyib for example observes that there are additions in the commentary attributable to al-Yarbū'ī, al-Aṣma'ī, al-Sukkarī, Sa'dān b. al-Mubārak and Ibn Ḥabīb.[1] Dr. al-Ghannāwī goes as far as stating that the book is a collection of commentaries and explanations put together after the time of Abū 'Ubaida,[2] and Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī expresses similar doubts.[3]

All these objections can be to some extent justified, but none seriously affects the proposition that Abū 'Ubaida was the sole author of the original text. This obviously suffered from alterations and additions as time went on, but those additions can always be recognized by the reference to the *rāwī* to whom the addition or alteration is attributed.[4]

However, if the linguistic and other historical remarks are to be taken seriously, the *Ayyām* narratives in the book are, unquestionably, Abū 'Ubaida's. The fact that Abū 'Ubaida is referred to as the transmitter cannot be overlooked and only on one occasion, the narrative of the battle of Dāḥis is the name of another transmitter, viz.

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[1] *Tārīkh al-Naqā'iḍ fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī* (Cairo 1946) 270-271.

[2] *Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wal-Farazdaq* 122-123.

[3] *Al-Kātib al-Miṣrī* (Abū 'Ubaida) 463.

[4] *Naqā'iḍ* (S) I. 55, 125, 130, 264; II. 12, 29, 85, 112, 169, 213 etc.

al-Kalbī, mentioned as a transmitter.[1]

The aim of Abū 'Ubaida, when writing his book, was to explain and comment on the poetry, these Ayyām narratives being an important element in the understanding of the Naqā'iḍ. So many references were made to the Ayyām that it was inevitable that the commentator on the Naqā'iḍ should explain them.

The Ayyām material in the Naqā'iḍ is not exhaustive and two reasons contribute to limit their number. Firstly, Abū 'Ubaida felt himself obliged to deal with the Ayyām which the two poets refer to. A careful study of those narratives shows that al-Farazdaq, for instance, used to take pride in the Ayyām of the Tamīm, Dārim and Taghlib particularly. Jarīr referred to and boasted of the Tamīm in general, and Yarbū' and Qais 'Ailān in particular. Generally speaking the Ayyām were limited to narratives concerned with the 'Adnānites and Qaḥṭānites'. Thus a great number of other Ayyām were not included therein.[2] Secondly, Abū 'Ubaida

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1. Ibid.
2. Aḥmad al-Shāyib points out that pre-Islamic Ayyām appear in the Naqā'iḍ of Jarir and al-Farazdaq rather than Islamic ones. (Tārīkh al-Naqā'iḍ fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī 228). In fact, Abū 'Ubaida refers only to five Islamic Ayyām only, namely Yaum Harāmīṭ, al-Shaiṭain, al-Waqīṭ, al-Lahhāba and Barajum. Al-Shāyib also observes that in the Naqā'iḍ of Jarīr and al-Akhṭal, the case is just the opposite, and the two poets refer mainly to Islamic Ayyām. (Ibid.)

narrates the Ayyām in his book only to the extent that they help to elucidate the text. The narration of a Yaum may not be complete, or it may be cut off and then returned to again. For example, in one of his poems, al-Farazdaq refers to the battle of al-Nisār and Abū 'Ubaida gives a detailed account of this battle in seven pages, only to return to it when Jarīr alludes to the same Yaum in a later poem.[1]

In view of the intentions of the author, it will be clear that the Ayyām in the Naqā'iḍ could not be arranged chronologically. It is believed however that Abū 'Ubaida adopted a chronological arrangement of Ayyām in his two books al-Ayyām al-Kabīr and al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr.[2]

The contents of these two books are totally unknown. It is possible, nevertheless, to form some idea of their contents if we make a comparison between the Ayyām as transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida in his Naqā'iḍ and the Ayyām as transmitted by Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Ibn al-Athīr and al-Nuwairī in their previously mentioned books. Before this however, it will be useful to refer to E. Mittwoch's opinion on this point, viz. "The information concerning the Ayyām which later writers have preserved, is partly given in scattered bits and partly in entire chapters in proper sequence. Instances of the former are found in al-Tibrizī's Ḥamāsa commentary,

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1. Naqā'iḍ (S) I. 224-231, 244-245.
2. al-'Umda II. 199.

in the Kitāb a(al-Bakri, Yakut). Examples of the latter are conta

explanations o ~~the~~ al 'Ikd al-Farīd of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, in al-Nuway

the collections of proverbs, and in the works of geography (al-Bakrī, Yākūt). Examples of the latter are contained in ~~the~~ al 'Ikd al-Farīd of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, in al-Nuwayrī's encyclopaedia, Nihāyat al-Arab Fī Funūn al-Adab, and Ibn al-Athīr's historical work al-Kāmil Fī'l-Tārīkh. The account in the 'Ikd' was probably based on the minor work of Abū 'Ubaida. It is very concise, often to such an extent as to obscure the meaning. al-Nuwayrī copied the whole chapter on the Ayyām from the 'Ikd. Ibn al-Athīr has tried to arrange the separate days in chronological order, in accordance with the character of his history. His account goes into greater detail than that of the 'Ikd. A great deal must doubtless be traced back either directly or indirectly to the larger version of Abū'Ubayada's work, much also to other sources, all of which cannot be retraced."[1]

This quotation contains two assumptions. Firstly, that almost all the extant accounts of Ayyām in the previously mentioned works go back to Abū 'Ubaida, and secondly, that these accounts were drawn from Abū 'Ubaida's two books on the Ayyām, al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr, which Mittwoch calls the minor work and al-Ayyām al-Kabīr or the larger version.

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(Ayyām al-Arab)

[1] EI$^{2}$ (Ayyām al-Arab) I 794.

The first assumption is correct and does not need to be laboured. The second one is open to question, and Mittwoch gives no supporting evidence for it.

Here, a comparison between al-Naqā'iḍ's accounts of the Ayyām and other accounts preserved in Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, Ibn al-Athīr and al-Nuwairī's works is useful and answers the question whether those authors drew from al-Naqā'iḍ or from Abū 'Ubaida's other works on the subject.

The table below compares the Ayyām material as transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida and later authors.

| No. | Naqā'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Yaum Qushāwa | Ḥarb Zuhair and Ghaṭafān | Yaum Man'ij | Waq'at Ṭasm wa Jadīs |
| 2. | " Ṭayy' | Yaum al-Baradān | " Nafrāwāt | Yaum Man'ij |
| 3. | " Najrān | " Khazār | " Baṭn 'Āqil | " al-Nafrāwāt |
| 4. | " Dhāt Kahf | " 'Umaiza | " Raḥraḥān | " Baṭn 'Āqil |
| 5. | " Ṭikhfa | " Wāridāt | " Shi'b Jabala | " Raḥraḥān |
| 6. | " al-Marrūt | " al-Ḥinwī | " Maqtal al-Ḥārith | " Shi'b Jabala |
| 7. | " Arm al-Kalba | " Quṣaibāt | " al-Murayyqīb | " al-Khurayba |
| 8. | " al-Ṣamad | " Qaḍḍa or al-Taḥāluq | " Dhū Ḥusā | " al-Murayyqib |
| 9. | " Malīḥa | " al-Naqiya | " al-Ya'muriyya | " Dhū Ḥasan |
| 10. | " A'shāsh | " al-Fasīl | " Habā'a | " al-Ya'muriyya |
| 11. | " Ṣaḥrā' Falj | al-Ḥarb baina al-Ḥārith wa Banī Taghlib | " al-Farūq | " Habā'a |
| 12. | " 'Ubaidullāh b. Ziyād | Yaum 'Ain Ubāgh | " Qaṭan | " al-Farūq |
| 13. | " Jadūd | " Marj Ḥalīma | " Ghadīr Qilbād | " Qaṭan |

| No. | Naqā'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | Yaum Kulāb | Yaum Qatl Muẓarriṭ al-Ḥijāra | Yaum al-Raqm | Yaum Ghadīr Qilbād |
| 15. | " Nuqā al-Ḥasan | " Uwāra I | " Nutā'a | " al-Raqm |
| 16. | " A'yār or al-Naqī'a | " 'Uwāra II | " al-Shuwāḥiṭ | " al-Nutā'a |
| 17. | "Ibn Muzayqā' al-Ghassānī | " Raḥraḥān | " Ḥauza I | " Shuwāḥiṭ |
| 18. | " Ibn Suwāj | Ayyām Dāḥis wal-Ghabrā' | " Ḥauza II | " Ḥauza I |
| 19. | " al-Lahhāba | Yaum Shi'b Jabala | " Dhāt al-Athl | " " II |
| 20. | " al-Barājum | " Dhāt Nakīf | " Milḥān | " Dhāt al-Athl |
| 21. | " al-Shaqīqa | " al-Fijār | " al-Liwā | " al-Liwā |
| 22. | " al-Nisār | " " | " Ṣal'ā' | " Ẓa'īna |
| 23. | " Dhū Najab | " Dhū Najab | " al-Kadīd | " al-Ṣal'ā' |
| 24. | " al-Waqīṭ | " Na'f Qushāwa | " Barza | " al-Kadīd |
| 25. | " al-Ṣarā'im | " al-Ghabīṭ | " al-Qaiqā'(3) | " Farza |
| 26. | " Dafīna | " li Shaibān 'alā Tamīm | " al-Sirabīn or al-Siryān | " Faifā' |
| 27. | " al-Quwaira | " Mubā'iḍ | " Aqran | " al-Su'bān |
| 28. | " Jabala | " al-Zuwairrain | " al-Marrūt | " Aqran |

| No. | Naqā'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29. | Yaum al-Junain (al-Righām) | Yaum Asr Ḥātim Ṭayy' | Yaum Dārat Ma'sal | Yaum al-Marrūt |
| 30. | " al-Furrūqain | " Musḥulān | " al-Waqīṭ | " Dārat Ma'ṣal |
| 31. | " Kulāb | Ḥarb li Salīm wa Shaibān | " al-Nibāḥ wa Thaiṭal | " al-Waqīt |
| 32. | " Faif al-Rīḥ | Yaum Jadūd | " Zarūd | " al-Nibāḥ wa Thaiṭal |
| 33. | " Arāb | " Ayād or al-'Uẓālā | " Dhū Ṭulūḥ | " Zarūd |
| 34. | " Ayād | " al-Shaqīqa | " Aud | " Dhū Ṭulūḥ |
| 35. | " Dhū Najab | " al-Nisār | " Ḥā'ir or al-Mulham | " al-Ḥā'ir or al-Mulham |
| 36. | " Dhū Qār | " al-Jifār | " al-Qaḥqāḥ | " al-Qaḥqāḥ |
| 37. | " 'Uwāra | " al-Ṣafqa | " Ra's al-'Ain | " Ra's al-'Ain |
| 38. | " Aqran | " Ẓahr al-Dahna | " al-Aẓālā | " Aẓālā(4) |
| 39. | " Zubāla | " al-Waqīṭ | " al-Ghabīṭ | " al-Ghabīṭ(5) |
| 40. | " Dhū Ṭulūḥ | " al-Marrūt | " Muthaṭṭaṭ | " Mukhaṭṭaṭ |
| 41. | " al-Jifār | " al-Faif al-Rīḥ | " Jadūd | " Jadūd |
| 42. | " al-Harāmīt | " al-Yaḥāmīn | " Safwān | " Safwān |
| 43. | " al-Shayyiṭain | " Dhū Ṭulūḥ | " al-Salī | " Naqā al-Ḥasān(6) |

| No. | Naqa'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 44. | Yaum al-Nibāḥ | Yaum Aqran | Yaum Balqā' al-Ḥusn (7) | Yaum al-Zuwairain |
| 45. | " Thaital | " al-Sultān | " al-Zuwairain | " al-Shayyiṭain |
| 46. | " Tiyās | " Dhū 'Alaq | " al-Shayyiṭain | " Sa'fūq |
| 47. | -- | " al-Raqam | " Ṣa'fūq | " Mubā'iḍ |
| 48. | -- | " Sāḥūq | " Mubā'iḍ | " Faiḥān |
| 49. | -- | " A'yār | " Faiḥān | " Dhū Qār |
| 50. | -- | " al-Naqī'a | " Dhū Qār | " al-Ḥājiz |
| 51. | -- | " al-Nabāt(8) | " al-Ḥājiz | " al-Shaqīq |
| 52. | -- | " al-Furāt | " al-Shiqīq | " al-Nihā |
| 53. | -- | " Ṭikhfa | " al-Dhamā'ib | " al-Dhamā'ib |
| 54. | -- | " al-Nibāḥ wa Thaital | " Wāridāt | " Wāridāt |
| 55. | -- | " Falj | " 'Umaiza | " 'Umaiza |
| 56. | -- | " al-Shayyiṭain | " Qiḍḍa | " Qiḍḍa |
| 57. | -- | " Ḥarb Sumair | " al-Kulāb I | " al-Kulāb I |
| 58 | -- | Ḥarb Ka'b b. 'Amr al-Māzini | " al-Kulāb II | " al-Kulāb II(9) |
| 59. | -- | Yaum al-Sarāra | " Ṭikhfa | " Ṭikhfa |

| No. | Naqa'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 60. | -- | Ḥarb al-Ḥusain b. al-Aslat | Yaum Faif al-Rīḥ | Yaum Faif al-Rīḥ |
| 61. | -- | Ḥarb Rabī' al-Ẓafarī | " Tiyās | " Zarūd I |
| 62. | -- | Yaum Fāri' | " Zarūd I | " Ghaul I |
| 63. | -- | " Ḥaṭib | " Ghaul II(10) | " al-Jubāyāt |
| 64. | -- | " al-Rabī' | " al-Jubāyāt | " al-Shi'b |
| 65. | -- | " al-Baqī' | " Arāb | " Ghaul II |
| 66. | -- | " al-Fijār I | " al-Shi'b | " al-Khandama |
| 67. | -- | " Mu'abbas wa Muḍarras | " Ghaul I | " al-Luhaimā' |
| 68. | -- | " al-Fijār II | " al-Khandama | " Khazār |
| 69. | -- | " Bu'āth | " al-Luhaimā' | " al-Nisār |
| 70. | -- | -- | " Khazār | " Dhāt al-Shuqūq |
| 71. | -- | -- | " Ma'ā | " Kaww |
| 72. | -- | -- | " al-Nisār | " al-Fijār I |
| 73. | -- | -- | " Dhāt Shuqūq | " al-Fijār II |
| 74. | -- | -- | " Khaww | " al-Fijār III |

| No. | Naqa'iḍ | al-Kāmil | al-'Iqd | Nihāyat al-Arab |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 75. | -- | -- | Yaum al-Fijār I | Yaum al-Fijār al-Akhir |
| 76. | -- | -- | " al-Fijār II | " Shamza(11) |
| 77. | -- | -- | " al-Fijār III | " al-'Ablā' |
| 78. | -- | -- | " al-Fijār al-Akhir | " al-Sharib |
| 79. | -- | -- | " Shamza | " Ḥuraira |
| 80. | -- | -- | " al-'Ablā' | " 'Ain Ubāgh |
| 81. | -- | -- | " -al-Sharib | " Dhū Qār |
| 82. | -- | -- | " al-Ḥuraira | -- |
| 83. | -- | -- | " 'Ain Ubāgh | -- |
| 84. | -- | -- | " Dhū Qār | -- |

Notes:

1. The arrangement of these Ayyām as it appears in the sources has not been altered, since it is desirable to show that the later three authors arranged the Ayyām in different ways.
2. It can also be noted that some Ayyam have been given different names and variants.
3. Probably al-Faifā' as in Nihaya (XV, 374).
4. It is also called yaum A'shash, yaum al-Ufāqa, yaum al-Iyād and Mulaiḥa (Nihāyat XV 386 'Iqd. III. 60).
5. It is also called "al-Tha'ālib" (Ibid XV 388, III. 61) respectively.
6. Also called al-Shaqīqa (Nihāya XV. 391) In al-'Iqd (III.63) the second name is al-Saqīfa.
7. Probably Naqā al-Ḥasan as in "Naqā'iḍ" (S) I. 177.
8. Probably al-Nutā'a. Cf. Nihāya (XV 364).
9. It is called also "al-ṣafqa" (Ibid. XV 407, al-'Iqd II. 70).
10. It is also called "Kinhil" (al-'Iqd, III. 74). In the Niḥaya (XV.416) it is the first day of Ghawl which is also called Kinhil.
11. Also called "Nakhla" (Nihaya XV 427).

The table, undoubtedly, reveals some important facts. The first is that the accounts of al-Naqā'iḍ are considerably less in number than the others. As has been mentioned before, Abū 'Ubaida's aim in this book was not to write a book on al-Ayyām, and his accounts in the Naqā'iḍ were, in fact, background material.

Since the accounts of the other three writers contain narratives of Ayyām not documented by Abū 'Ubaida in al-Naqa'iḍ such as Yaum al-Dafīna, al-Quwaira, Zubāla, Harāmīt and al-Farūqain, it is reasonable to suppose that their accounts do not draw on al-Naqā'iḍ but from Abū 'Ubaida's other books on the subject.

An examination of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi's Ayyām and those of al-Nuwairī reveals a striking similarity. This fact entitles us to assume that the source of those two authors was one, and in all likelihood al-Ayyām al-Kabīr. On the other hand, the accounts of Ibn al-Athīr which are less in volume, one can assume were based on Abū 'Ubaida's al-Ayyām al-Ṣaghīr.

Thus Mittoch's assumption that the material of Ibn al-Athīr was based on al-Ayyām al-Kabīr and that of Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi on al-Ayyām al-Saghīr is not justified. Had Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi drawn from the latter, the number of Ayyām in his account could not have exceeded 75, for Abū 'Ubaida gave an account of only 75 Ayyām in his minor work on al-Ayyām.[1]

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[1] Kashf al-Ẓunūn I. 204.

## The Historical importance of the Ayyām:

Having discussed the Ayyām transmissions we turn now to examine their historical value and how far they illustrate Abū 'Ubaida's historical sense which as we have seen has been called into question.

Ḥājji Khalīfa unequivocally states that this science (al-Ayyām) should be considered a branch of history.[1] Certainly to Ibn al-Athīr and al-Mas'ūdī these narratives were part of their historical writings. This is a fairly sensible outlook. Both these historians - indeed most Arab historians - understood history as a branch of knowledge which concerned recording accounts of bygone events, and questioning the authenticity of the events and making a judgment on their historical value seems to them out of place.

Ibn Khaldūn (d 808/1406) seems to be the first Arab thinker to treat such narratives critically, not only in regard to the Ayyām, but with all historical writings.

Furthermore he attempts to put history on a logical and scientific basis and by comparison with these concepts he shows up the defects of Arab historians. Two faults are stressed. Firstly, that Arab historians missed the factor of "change" in their historical writings, change affecting people, communities, life and race. Secondly, and more immediately relevant he maintains that they are not accurate, meticulous investigators when relating historical happenings.[1]

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[1] Kashf al-Ẓunūn I. 204.

The modern scholars have taken up this point and they are more or less in agreement that the historical value of the Ayyām accounts is small and that they lack any true historical sense. Rosenthal, for example, states, "At any rate we can be sure that battle-day narratives existed in pre-Islamic time, and the question arises whether their existence is an indication or expression of historical consciousness. The reply must be negative. Those narratives were not originally intended to be historical material. According to W. Caskel the elaborate battle-day narratives were fully accepted in historical literature no earlier than the thirteenth century.[2] The historians thus showed themselves hesitant to adopt material which they recognised as belonging to the domain of philologists or littêrateurs. And in fact, in their origin the battle day narratives belonged rather to literature in the narrow sense than to history."[3]

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1. Ibid. I. 56. Concerning Ibn Khaldūn's historical theories, it is profitable to consult the remarkable study made by Muhsin Mahdī, "Ibn Khaldūn's philosophy of History" (London 1957) particularly chapter III, 133-171.
2. This is, of course, not correct. Ibn al-Athīr and al-Mas'ūdī considered those narratives as part of their historical source material long before the thirteenth century.
3. "History of Muslim Historiography" 18.

Gibb on the other hand considers that there is a core of truth in the Ayyām narratives. Thus though they are "one sided, vague in chronology and often romantically exaggerated, [they] nevertheless, reflected a reality and sometimes preserved a substantial core of truth."[1]

Lichtenstädter reluctantly agrees with Caskel that "their (al-Ayyām) historical value and the amount of historical data which can be derived from them is but small."[2]

Dr. al-Dūrī has an opinion of them similar to that of Rosenthal and Gibb. He sees no historical sense in the Ayyām literature, yet he admits that they contain some historical facts.[3]

These views are not in substance incorrect. Yet one cannot help wondering whether their hypotheses are sufficiently proved. In the writer's view they are historical accounts reflecting a reality which once existed. Besides the Ayyām, we have no texts which reflect that reality and with which the Ayyām can be compared and examined, and a reasoned judgment then passed on whether they are historically authentic.

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1. EI(1) (Ta'rīkh) Supp.234. Dr. F. Ḥittī echoed Gibb's opinion regarding the exaggeration in the Ayyām. "History of the Arabs" (London 1960) 89.
2. "Women in the Aiyām al-'Arab" (London 1935) 2. Strangely enough to notice that although Lichtenstädter found small historical data in the Ayyām, she nevertheless based her study on the women status in pre-Islamic Arabia on the Ayyām themselves!
3. Baḥth fī Nasha'at 'ilm al-Tārīkh 'ind al-'Arab, 17.

In other words it must be stressed that the Ayyām are not imaginative literature, and the correlation of these narratives with what we know of reality and history is close so far as can be judged. They represent the traditional history of the Arabs and as such merit treatment as historical texts, which, on careful scrutiny, could yield valuable historical data concerning tribes, characters, and circumstances. Accepting this the ancient Arab authors were justified in considering these events history.[1]

Doubtless, it is no small part of the force of the Ayyām that they have much of reality behind them. The element of history in them, and their close relation to the lives of those from whom they were made, have given them a substance and solidity which no early imaginative literature could offer.

Generally speaking, the Ayyām al-'Arab are the material of an epic, not a romance. Ker says "whatever epic may mean, it implies some weight and solidity. Romance means nothing, if it does not convey some notion of mystery and fantasy."[2]

Thus unlike the 'Antara romance which was constantly added to, modified and altered, the narratives of the Ayyām al-'Arab were kept intact and thus the reality behind them stayed unimpaired.

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[1] Cf. p. 314

[2] W.P. Ker "Epic and Romance" (London 1926) 4.

### Abū 'Ubaida's Method in transmitting al-Ayyām:

Obviously any examination of Abū 'Ubaida's historical method requires a thorough survey of the method of transmission and contents of the *Ayyām*. Thus we will see for ourselves whether Abū 'Ubaida was more an historian whose paramount concern was to transmit and relate authentic events to time and place, or a *rāwī* whose sole task lay in the mere collection of the events he transmits irrespective of their value or significance.

It is generally agreed that Msulim historiography shared with *Ḥadīth* its methods in so far as the latter is concerned with criticism of the chain of transmitters. Dr. M. Mahdī states, "tradition and history both ... use authority criticism as a methodological tool."[1] After that, however, they part company. Where *Ḥadith* method goes on to examine the text (*matn*) after analysing the *isnād*, historical mathod does not really go far enough in criticising the material collected and collated.

Abū 'Ubaida's transmissions, poetical, historical and otherwise, were based, in the main, on oral transmission and only to a small extent on written sources. The validity of such sources, however, is open to question, and Abū

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[1] "*Ibn Khaldūn's Philosophy of History*" 134.

'Ubaida's attitude was most critical and analytical.

In the second part of this thesis we have seen that Abū 'Ubaida was not only a transmitter of the data he passed on, but that he subjected them to criticism and scrutiny before either accepting or rejecting them. His method in transmitting the Ayyām material is therefore likely to have the same features, and to be equally critical.

However, before we embark on a detailed discussion of this point, there are certain other points to be clarified. We have already more than one version of the Ayyām of Abū 'Ubaida, each one differing from the others and it is essential to determine which of them best reflect his methods. For the reasons stated before[1] the accounts of Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi and al-Nuwairī will be discarded. What remains are al-Naqā'iḍ and al-Aghānī. Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī prefers the latter to the Ayyām narratives of al-Naqā'iḍ because, according to his argument, Abū 'Ubaida's authorship of this book is doubtful.[2] Abū al-Faraj's accounts, according to him, are more authentic because Abū al-Faraj is a meticulous and accurate transmitter.[1]

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[1] Cf. p.381

[2] al-Kātib al-Miṣrī (Abū 'Ubaida) 463.

Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī's reasoning lacks cogency however. As has been shown before[2] the Ayyām narratives in the Naqā'iḍ are Abū 'Ubaida's, because the reference to him as the transmitter is beyond doubt. Moreover, a comparison between the accounts of Abū al-Faraj, which Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī trusts, and that of al-Naqā'iḍ shows that there are no essential differences between the two. It can therefore be stated that Abū al-Faraj has to all intents and purposes copied verbatim from al-Naqā'iḍ. The great similarity between al-Naqā'iḍ and al-Aghānī on Yaum Shi'b Jabala and Raḥraḥān is striking.[3]

The conclusion to be drawn accordingly is that the accounts of al-Aghānī's and al-Naqā'iḍ are equally authentic and both reflects equally well the method of transmission which Abū 'Ubaida employed.

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[1] Abū al-Faraj certainly states clearly whether he is transmitting on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida or collating other versions. In the story of Aus b. Ḥajar, Abū al-Faraj says, "Abū Muḥammad al-Bāhilī related [this] to me on the authority of al-Aṣma'ī. This anecdote was also reported by al-Tawwazī on the authority of Abū 'Ubaida. I have collated the two versions..." (Aghānī (D) XI 72).

Again in regard to the story of the murder of Zuhair b. Jadhīma, Abū al-Faraj says, having related the story, "This is the transmission of Abū 'Ubaida." He then proceeds to give the transmission of al-Aṣma'ī on the same subject as transmitted by al-Athram.(Ibid. XI. 91).

[2] Cf. p.

[3] Naqā'iḍ II. 654. Aghānī (D) XI. 131, 124.

It now remains to examine how Abū 'Ubaida individually applied the general technique of criticism of isnād and matn.

Isnād in the Ayyām:

Isnād was first established with the collecting of the traditions. The importance which the traditionists attached to the tradition as a source of legislation compelled them to discredit the tradition unless they are sure of its authenticity through a reliable chain of authorities. Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ said that "al-Isnād is part of the religion."[1]

For the same reason as the muḥaddithūn the rāwīs employed the isnād in an attempt to lend the text they were transmitting the authenticity it required. But this attempt was doomed to failure for two reasons. Firstly unlike ḥadiths the akhbār and Ayyām narratives, almost all go back to the pre-Islamic times. Thus the span of time was rather longer than with ḥadiths and it was difficult to keep intact a chain of authority. Secondly in fields other than ḥadith such as poetry, history, etc., equal importance was not attached to the isnād, and it was not regarded as an absolutely essential feature.

Abū 'Ubaida however in his historical reports,

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1. Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (Aleppo 1931) 215.

including al-Ayyām, did consider that the isnād was a salient feature. Of the many examples a few are detailed below:

1) Abū 'Uthām said, it was told us by Abū 'Ubaida who said, it was told us by Abū al-Mukhtār Farās b. Khandaq al-Qaisī, and other Arab scholars, whose names Farās b. Khandaq has mentioned ...
2) In the account of yaum Dhū Qār, which was transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida we come across the following: "Salīṭ b. Sa'dān b. Mi'dān said: 'We were told by our prisoners who were there that time: they said, when the warriors met each other in the battlefields...'."[2]
3) "Abu 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by more than one informant who was told by Ibn al-Jārūd b. Abī Sabra from Hudhail... saying...'."[3]
4) "Abū 'Ubaida said, I have heard Ghīlān b. Muḥammad talking to 'Uthmān al-Battī saying: 'I was told by 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Jawshan who said'..."[4]
5) "Abu 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Yazīd b. Summair al-Jarmī who was told by Sawwār b. Sa'īd al-Jarmī'..."[5]
6) "Abū 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Maslama b. Muḥārib b. Salm b. Yazīd and others from Ziyād on the authority of

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1. Naqā'iḍ 638-639.
2. Ibid. 644.
3. Ibid. 723-724.
4. Ibid. 722.
5. Ibid. 726.

those who witnessed that, [i.e. the events he narrates concerning Mas'ūd Murder] and by their clients, who are more knowledgeable in these [events] than others that' ...".[1]

7) "Abu 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Zuhair b. Hunaid who was told by 'Amr b. 'Īsa.'..."[2]

8) "Abū 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Hubaira b. Ḥudair who was told by Isḥāq b. Suwaid'...".[3]

9) "Abu 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Zuhair b. Hunaid, who was told by al-Waḍḍāḥ b. Khaithama one of Banū 'Abdullah b. Dārim who was told by Mālik b. Dīnār'...".[4]

10) "Abu 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Dirwās, one of Banū Ma'bad b. Zurāra'..."[5]

11) "Ḥātim said: 'I was told by Abū 'Ubaida, who said I was told by more than one well-versed informant from Hawāzin tribe, some of whose fathers were lived in the Jāhiliya' ..."[6]

12) "Abū 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. 'Āṣim b. 'Abdullāh b. Rāfi' b. Mālik b. 'Abd b. Julhuma b. Ḥaddāq b. Yarbū' b. Sa'd b. Taghlib b. Sa'd b. 'Aūf b. Jillān b. Ghanm b. A'ṣur, who said I was told

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1. Ibid. 726.
2. Ibid. 727.
3. Ibid. 730.
4. Ibid. 731.
5. Ibid. 753.
6. al-'Iqd I. 150. (1316 ed.)

by my father 'Abd al-Waḥid and my uncle Ṣafwān who were told by their father 'Āṣim b. 'Abdullāh who were told by those [informants] who have seen Sha's b. Zuhair'..."[1]

13) "Abū 'Ubaida said: 'I was told by Ibn Shifā' al-Manāfī of the Banū 'Abd Manāf b. Dārim '..."[2]

More examples could be given, but those we have mentioned are sufficient to illustrate the importance of the *isnād* in Abū 'Ubaida's scholarly discipline. It can well be seen that Abū 'Ubaida was eager to refer to all the informants in the *isnād*, and thus to match the carefulness of the traditionalists in this respect, perhaps because he was a *muḥaddith*[3] as well as a *rāwī* and philologist. To all appearances Abū 'Ubaida, in the field of *Akhbār* in general and *Ayyām* in particular, was employing the traditionists' method. Yet it may be necessary to make a reservation in this respect. The chain of authority in the *Ayyām* narratives of Abū 'Ubaida was not as strictly regulated as for authentic *ḥadīth*. That is to say, the *isnād* is not necessarily *marfū'*, in which no link in the chain of authority might be absent, and in fact, to demand such criteria for pre-Islamic events is not reasonable, for the mere fact that the distance in time separating the occurrence of the events and the first or the

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1. *Aghānī* (D) XI.75.
2. *Naqā'iḍ* (S) I. 226.
3. Cf. p. 7 above where his career as a teacher of *ḥadīth* in Baghdad is mentioned. Moreover he transmits about 24 *ḥadīths* at the beginning of *al-Khail* (10-15).

second class of *rāwīs* was too long. The *isnād* of Abū 'Ubaida in his *Ayyām* is nearer to what is called *isnād maqṭū'* or *isnād mursal*, in the sense that either one or more of the authorities is not mentioned.[1]

Dr. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Asad indeed states categorically that these two kinds of *isnād* (viz. *maqṭū'* and *mursal*) were employed in literary transmissions almost exclusively, while *al-marfū'*, which is so important in *ḥadith* was almost entirely absent.[2]

While it is true that Abū 'Ubaida essays to trace back his chain of authorities to pre-Islamic times and to the first authority who witnessed the event concerned as some examples show,[3] he does not do so in all his narratives. Sometimes, his *isnād* contains no more than one name,[4] and occasionally only the expression, "Some of them said..."[5], or "Some scholars from the Banū 'Āmir claim ..."[6] In other cases there is no reference to a transmitter at all but only "Abū 'Ubaida said..."[7]

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[1] For an account of these terms and the differences between them, the best source, perhaps is *'Ulum al-Ḥadīth*, known as "*Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*" by Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān b. 'Abd. al-Raḥman.

[2] *Maṣādir al-Shi'r al-Jāhilī* 258.

[3] Cf. also *al-Jamhara fī al-Lugha* II. 110. *Ḥamāsa* (Cairo 1953) IV. 1879.

[4] *Naqā'iḍ* 305.

[5] *Ibid.* 639.

[6] *Ibid.* 671.

[7] *Aghānī* (D) XI. 121, 131.

In spite of the concern which Abū 'Ubaida displays in regard to the isnād, and there seems no doubt that he gives an isnād whenever possible, there is no indication that he examined them critically. Abū 'Ubaida to all appearances took for granted the events which his transmitters were relating. The way in which these stories were narrated and presented, however, will be examined later.[1] We are concerned here with the criteria which Abū 'Ubaida applied in regard to the veracity of the factual happenings.

To some modern scholars, the Ayyām narratives lack objectivity and are permeated by a strain of exaggeration.[2] If they are accepted as historical texts, however, as it is argued above[3] that they should be, this exaggeration is a secondary consideration. The primary consideration is how to extract from them a kernel of truth of use to the historian firstly and secondly to decide whether Abū 'Ubaida did apply any comparable criteria or an analytical technique to these texts.

## Matn in the Ayyām:

The first thing to be investigated in this connection is to see whether Abū 'Ubaida accepted the reports of his informants without question or objection, or whether he selected, sifted and rejected some events.

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[1] Cf. Chapter 10.
[2] EI$^{(1)}$ (Ta'rīkh) Supp. 234. History of the Arabs 89.
[3] Chapter 10.

A careful reading of the Ayyām narratives suffices to convince one that Abū 'Ubaida faithfully related all the versions he gets of the same event, and seldom prefers one to another.

Examples to prove this assumption are ample. Here are a few.

1) In the account of the murder of Khālid b. Ja'far b. Kilāb, Abū 'Ubaida relates on the authority of Abū Ḥayya al-Nuwairī, "that al-Aswad b. al-Mundhir raided Banū Dhubyān and Banū Asad because they broke the treaty in Shaṭṭ Arīk. Abū 'Ubaida asked his informant Abū Ḥayya which one [it was], because there are two places called Shaṭṭ Arīk, the Black and the White. Abū Ḥayya said that he did not know. Abū 'Ubaida said: "Others related..." He then gives another version.[1]

2) "Abū 'Ubaida said: When al-Ḥārith was killed, Shuraḥbīl went to the Banū Dārim and took refuge with the Banū Ḍamra, as for the Banū 'Abdullah b. Dārim, they say, "No, he took refuge with the Ma'bad b. Zurāra, and they later accepted him and gave him protection, and this led to the Day of Raḥraḥān, and the Day of Raḥraḥān led to the Day of Jabala."[2]

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[1] Aghānī (D) XI. 109.

[2] Ibid. XI. 112.

3) In the account of Khālid b. Ja'far's murder, Abū 'Ubaida speaks about al-Ḥārith b. Ẓālim who was captured by the Banū Hizzān and then escaped. Later he was taken prisoner by a group from the Qais tribe and Hizzān. They beat him so that he would reveal his identity, but he would not. Some people from Qais bought him from the Hizzānites for a wineskin and a goat. It is also related that he was sold to a man from the Sa'd tribe.[1] Abū 'Ubaida after giving this account, then gives another version concerning the escape of al-Ḥārith. According to Firās b. Khandaq, al-Ḥārith escaped from the Banū Qais and went to al-Yamāma.[2]

4) In the account of Yaum Shi'b Jabala, Abū 'Ubaida describes how Shurayḥ killed Laqīṭ and said, "[People] are at variance on this point. They say that it was Jaz'b. Khālid b. Ja'far who killed Laqīṭ, while the Banū 'Uqail claim that it was 'Awf b. al-Muntafiq al-'Uqailī that killed him ... as for the scholars, they have no doubt that it was Shurayḥ who killed Laqīṭ."[3]

5) In the account of Khālid b. Ja'far's murder we read, "Then al-Ḥārith went to al-Shām and asked the protection of one of the Ghassānid kings. It is said that the king was al-Nu'mān. It is also reported that the king was Yazīd b.

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[1] Ibid. XI. 114.
[2] Ibid. XI. 115.
[3] Ibid. XI. 144.

'Āmir al-Ghassānī."[1]

6) In the story concerning the death of Mas'ūd, Abū 'Ubaida reports more than one version from different sources describing the death of Mas'ūd.[2]

7) When Mas'ūd was killed and a rapprochement was to be brought about between the contested parties, "'Umar b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān said to 'Umar b. 'Ubaidullah, 'We will pay the blood money'. 'Umar b. 'Ubaid said, 'Why do we both pay it? Either you do or I do'. Abū 'Ubaida said, 'Muḥammad b. Ḥafṣ claimed that 'Umar b. 'Ubaid paid it, while Banū Makhzūm claimed that both of them paid the blood money'."[3]

8) In the account of Yaum al-Nisār we read, "Abū al-Gharrāf said: The head of the Asad tribe on the Day of al-Nisār was 'Aūf b. 'Abdullah b. 'Āmir. Abū Marḥab said: No, our leader on the Day of al-Nisār was Khālid b. Naḍla."[4] Abū 'Ubaida then refers to other versions on the same point.[5]

The previous citations go to prove that Abū 'Ubaida more often than not retained the isnād and, as far as the matn was concerned, he was uncritical in that he did not in many cases reject a statement for, say, its incredibility or contradictory nature. Rather did he keep each evidence side by side, leaving the problem of sifting and rejecting to the reader or perhaps to a later historian.[1] As an example for this point we may refer to his account of the murder of Zuhair b. Jadhīma al-'Abasī. Abū 'Ubaida, on the authority of Ibn Sarrār al-Ghanawī, reports that Zuhair with his family had left his people and moved to another home near the Banū 'Āmir. Abū 'Ubaida also refers to the statement of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd and Abū Ḥayya who both said that the Banū 'Āmir lived in Damkh while Zuhair lived in al-Nafirāt, between which are two or three nights' journey. Later on, Abū 'Ubaida reports the evidence of Sulaimān b. Muzāḥim al-Māzinī, who was told by his father that the home of the Banū 'Āmir was in al-Jarītha, while Zuhair's was in al-Nafirāt.[2]

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[1] Ibid. XI. 118.
[2] Naqā'id 733-737.
[3] Ibid. 739.
[4] Ibid.(S) I. 226.
[5] Ibid. (S) I.226. Another example Ibid. (S) II. 159, Aghānī (D) XI. 75, 76.

These different versions, of course, cannot all be true. Giving different versions is a first step, but it must be followed by a critical examination of the purported facts. Abū 'Ubaida does not undertake this task, and neither resolves their contradictory nature nor, essays to reconcile them. He thus avoids the duty of the true historian.

Abū 'Ubaida would seem to have introduced the technique of telling a story about the past from the point of view of a disinterested observer, who neither judges the events nor character. We thus find ourselves manoeuvred into judging not only the observer, but also the events themselves.

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[1] Von Grunebaum generalizes this phenomenon to all Arabic historiography. Cf. "Mediaeval Islam" 281.

[2] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 84-85.

It must be noted, however, to do Abū 'Ubaida justice, that he occasionally criticises the evidence, preferring one version or rejecting an account altogether.

Thus in his account of Yaum Dhī Qār, Abū 'Ubaida tells us how al-Nu'mān, being afraid of the Chosroes, deposits his coat of mail, cattle, arms and other possessions in the hands of Hānī' b. Mas'ūd. Abū 'Ubaida then points out the anachronism in this story when he quotes other informants who maintained that this event took place not during the lifetime of Hānī' b. Mas'ūd but during the lifetime of Hānī' Qubaisa, the grandson of Hānī' b. Mas'ūd. To Abū 'Ubaida the latter version is the more likely.[1] Does this mean then that Abū 'Ubaida was more a rāwī than an historian?

The history of Islamic culture makes a distinction, although somewhat vague, between the historian's business and that of the rāwī. The latter is concerned with reporting what he hears irrespective of the authenticity of the reports. The historian, on the other hand, is interested in the truth which can be elicited from the events he investigates. It is not enough for the historian to base his study on facts. He must also link the events in proper sequence of cause and effect, or as E.H. Carr says, his concern is "in marshalling the events of the past in an orderly sequence of cause and effect."[1]

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[1] Naqā'iḍ, 639.

The Ayyām consist of facts, but nothing beyond that. Hardly ever can we find a sense of causation in relating those facts, or even distinguishing the facts proper from historical facts. The Ayyām narratives are accumulations of events, mainly martial, which were put together at random, a series of unconnected episodes which gives no serious attention to the consequence of time. It is true that Abū 'Ubaida, as Ibn Rashīq noted, and as other allusions in the extant narratives show,[2] recorded these narratives chronologically.[3] Yet, this does not mean that he had an historical sense, by which we mean being conscious of the past as a part of the present, which necessarily leads to a notion of continuity in history, or history as progress.[4] Having discussed in some detail Abū 'Ubaida's method and outlook, we are now in a better position to decide whether these writings can in fact be properly defined as historical.

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1. What is History (London 1964) 88.
2. Naqā'iḍ I. 225-226 S. Mu'jam al-Buldān II 432.
3. al-'Umda II. 199.
4. What is History 115. J. Peters EB (History) XIII, 527.

The absence of a historical sense in Abū 'Ubaida's presentation of the Ayyām does not allow of them being considered history in the modern sense, but does not prevent them from being considered chronicles, accounts "reproduced textually from sources which the chronicler is seldom at pains to indicate, and of personal recollections, the veracity of which remains to be determined ... to separate facts from falsehood, and to establish the value of each piece of evidence are ... a difficult undertaking."[1]

Clearly in this sense the Ayyām narratives are chronicles rather than the work of an historian.

Abū 'Ubaida drew these narratives, and even the events of each narrative, from more than one informant,[2] and with a poor sense of their historical nature and value, put them together. The Ayyām narrative therefore as raw material for the historian, needs to be sifted and re-interpreted.

Summary:

In summing up, it can be said that Abū 'Ubaida was essentially a rāwī, a transmitter of material of potential historical value.

Yet, this material, in the hands of an historian of sharp acumen can be a good historical evidence. From this standpoint. the Ayyām, although lacking an historical sense, contains historical facts which could contribute to a better understanding of the pre-Islamic times and after. The connection of the Ayyām narratives with history is real and it is a fitting subject for historical inquiry, though it cannot be maintained that Abū 'Ubaida has seriously undertaken this task.

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[1] Bemont EB (Chronicle) VI. 298.

[2] Such as Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā', Farās b. Khandaq, Abū Ḥayya al-Numairī, Abū Sawwār al-Ghanawī, etc.

## Chapter X

## Style, Form and Diction

In discussing the question of the style of al-Ayyām, we are not going to ask what Abū 'Ubaida ought to have done,[1] but rather what Abū 'Ubaida did and how he did it.

Speaking about the style of a writer usually implies judgment. Here we are face to face with the difficulty of what sort of criterion we should apply. F.L. Lucas maintains that "the highest criterion is not whether the artist shows good technique, but whether he has or has not a high personality",[2] because, according to the same author, "style is a means by which a human being gains contact with others; it is personality clothed in words, a character embodied in speech."[2]

This outlook, however, is mainly applicable to imaginative literature in which the writer clothes his experience in an impressive and stimulating way. In other writings, the impact of the writer's personality is not so important. Thus the technical aspect of style gains priority.

The Ayyām narratives, in fact, immediately raise the important question of how far these narratives reflect Abū

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1. W.K. Wimsatt "The Prose Style of Samuel Johnson" (U.S.A. 1941) 10.
2. "Style" (London 1964) 41.

'Ubaida's style at all.

We should like, before we attempt to answer this question, to refer to Ṭāhā Ḥusain's opinion on this issue. Ṭāhā Ḥusain thinks that in the second century of Islam Arabic prose was influenced by Greek philosophy and Persian literature. But besides that prose there was a purely Arabic prose which was absolutely free from any foreign influence. This prose represents, Ṭāhā Ḥusain adds, the Arabic mentality of that age. The example he gives of such prose are the *Ayyām al-'Arab* in the *Naqā'iḍ*.[1]

This assumption implies that the *Ayyām* style represents second century prose rather than pre-Islamic prose.

Ṭāhā Ḥusain was probably actuated by his theory of *Naḥl*, expounded at length in his book "*Fī al-Adab al-Jāhilī*", and the application of which he extended to prose as well as poetry.[2] In that book he flatly denied the existence of artistic prose in pre-Islamic times, except for the Muḍar tribe, who are known to have had prose writings. These, however, have not survived.[3]

This hypothesis is open to the objection as why the *Ayyām* narratives were not affected by any foreign influences. To us the answer is that those narratives were, in the main,

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1. "*Min Ḥadīth al-Shi'~~a~~ wal-Nathr*" (Cairo 1948) 31-32.
2. *Fī al-Adab al-Jāhilī*" 369 and after.
3. *Ibid*. 371.

pre-Islamic oral prose literature rather than Islamic prose literature. Thus they were immune from Greek or Persian influence. Accepting this assumption rejects the second part of Ḥusain's opinion, namely that the prose of the *Ayyām* was Islamic. It must be admitted however at the same time that the question with which we opened this discussion, i.e. that of Abū 'Ubaida's style, becomes irrelevant if he is merely recording oral literature. How, indeed, can we speak of Abū 'Ubaida's style at all, when we advocate the assumption that the *Ayyām* prose is pre-Islamic? The answer as far as the *Ayyāms* is concerned must be in the negative.

Abū 'Ubaida, as has been mentioned before, was faithful in recording the reports of his informants concerning the *Ayyām* accounts. This fidelity entitled us to assume that a large part of the *Ayyām* prose was preserved intact to the extent that it can be regarded as a genuine and authentic example of pre-Islamic prose.

Yet, the fact that one cannot fairly speak of Abū 'Ubaida's style leads to the question of whether the characters that took part in those events have, then, an appropriate style of their own. We mention this because the *Ayyām* stories consist mostly of dialogue. A cursory glance at the *Ayyām* shows that this is the principle medium of expression with short descriptive passages to link dialogue-scenes with each other. It is through the characters which participate in the dialogue that the events reveal themselves and the reader becomes acquainted with the development of the story.[1]

Various characters may indeed have a style, or language of their own. The speeches of the soothsayers, for instance were in rhymed-prose and the dialectical idiosyncracies of different characters were retained. In the story of Warqā' b. Zuhair, the word *anṭīnī*, instead of *a'ṭīnī* was used by Riyāḥ, one of the protagonists of the story.[2] The word *yuharīq* was used by the narrator Abū Yaḥyā al-Ghanawī in the same story.[3]

This is in fact the utmost accuracy a transmitter can aspire to. In this respect Abū 'Ubaida manages successfully to keep his own character in the background, and to exhibit instead the characters of his protagonists as they really were.

*The poetry of al-Ayyām*:

Prose was not the sole medium through which the character reveals itself in the *Ayyām* narratives. Poetry was also widely employed and these poetical insertions in the

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[1] Cf. Appendix 2 for specimen.

[2] "*Aghānī*" (D) XI. 76. This dialect was attributed to Sa'd b. Bakr, Hudhail, al-Azd and al-Anṣār tribes. Arab philologists called this phenomenon "*al-Istinṭā'*". Cf. "*al-Lahajāt al-'Arabīya*" 103. It is noteworthy that replacing the letter " ع " by " ن " is still used in the 'Irāqī dialect nowadays.

[3] *Ibid*.

Ayyām have been the subject of considerable speculation. It is believed that Abū 'Ubaida's interest in the Ayyām lies in the fact that a great deal of poetry is to be found in them.[1] Other orientalists tried to find a reason for the existence of poetry in the Ayyām. Rosenthal, for instance, observes "Verses are found in them [i.e. al-Ayyām] not only because the philologists who preserved the material cared for those stories which contained poetic material, but mainly because of their character as an indispensable element of the literary form. If no verses were connected with a certain event, or if verses were not at some early date brought into connection with it, the event would not have been handed down to posterity.[2] He concluded that "verses had become a stylistic law which nobody would think of questioning."[3]

Gibb, on the other hand, assumes that "in some instances the verse is a kind of *memoria technica*, in others it appears that the prose narrative is nothing more than an interpretation of the verse. In either case it was the verse which maintained the currency of the tradition, and ancient traditions disappeared as the corresponding verses were forgotten."[4]

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1. *Baḥth fī Nash'at 'ilm al-Tārīkh 'ind al-'Arab* 17
   "*Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī*" I. 30.
2. "*History of Muslim Historiography*" 18.
3. *Ibid.* 60.
4. *EI*(1) (*ta'rīkh*) Supp. 234.

The opinions put forward by both Rosenthal and Gibb are undoubtedly true, but a few remarks may be added to them.

In spite of the relative abundance of poetry in the Ayyām a striking feature concerning the subject-matter of poetry cannot be missed. The poetry deals almost entirely with the conventional themes of the qaṣīda, i.e. descriptions of battles, satires, panegyrics and dirges. Other themes are absent, and this argues that the poetry forms an important and essential part of the prose narratives. The poetry also helps to make clear the events in a variety of ways.

(a) Poetry may fill a gap in the story, thus helping to give as complete as possible a picture of the events of a "Day". In the "Day" of Kulāb for example, one of the characters, Qais b. 'Āṣim attacks his enemies reciting a piece of poetry which describes the state of the enemy and how they fled from the battle. This description is not to be found in the prose narrative of this "Day".[1] Compare also the poem attributed to Mālik b. Ḥaṭṭān, where he gives an account of the battle in which he took part and tells how his tribe suffered on that "Day".[2]

(b) Poetry also helps to give a portrait, however defective of character. The poem recited by Mu'āwīya b. 'Ubāda b. 'Uqail on the "Day" of Shi'b Jabala refers to the fact that he was left-handed.[1]

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[1] "Naqā'iḍ" (S) I. 138.

[2] Ibid. I. 23.

(c) A poem also may describe at length an event which the narrator has only alluded to in a brief senetnce. At the end of the yaum of Shi'b Jabala, Abū 'Ubaida mentions that Mirdās b. Abī 'Āmir looted a hundred she-camels and that Banū Abī Bakr b. Kilāb took the she-camels away from him. In the poem recited by Mirdās before Yazīd b. al-Ṣa'iq, he gives a detailed account of this event.[2]

Poetry, therefore, is part and parcel of the structure of the story; it helps to reconstruct the events, although often freely modified by imagination. It is true that poetry does allow distortion for dramatic effect. Yet, the poet, who is, more often than not, one of the story's characters is obliged to include in his poem factual elements.

However, it is also to be remembered that poetical quotations were a marked feature of Arabic prose writing in general, the quantity and quality of such poetry varying in accordance with the subject.

Al-Ayyām narratives, as part of the Akhbār, which in turn were part of Adab, required poetical insertions, as Rosenthal points out.[3] Abū 'Ubaida's interest is almost equally divided between poetry and prose. The first engages his interest in poetry as a rāwī, and the second his

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1. "Aghānī" (D) XI. 140.
2. Ibid. XI. 155.
3. History of Muslim Historiography 18, 60.

inclination as an akhbārī towards the actual events of the Ayyām.

But poetry in the Ayyām serves another purpose, namely, to prove the veracity of the events. And this method is characteristic of Abū 'Ubaida. As we have seen throughout this thesis, poetry, to Abū 'Ubaida, was of paramount importance in regard to language, style, and meaning. In the Ayyām narratives poetry is used by Abū 'Ubaida as an instrument to prove or disprove the facts.

For example in his account of Yaum al-Nisār Abū 'Ubaida does not believe the allegations of some groups from al-Ribāb, Banū Asad and Ghaṭafan tribes with regard to the date on which the battle of al-Nisār took place and he says "And irrefutable poetry bears witness that it was not so".[1] He quotes Zuhair b. Abū Sulmā in this connection.

However, the question as to whether Abū 'Ubaida was conscious of the limits beyond which poetic insertions became redundant and added nothing to the structure of the story would entail a thorough examination of each story. We may cautiously suggest that he was more or less aware of these limits. "A lot of poetry", says Abū 'Ubaida in his account of the Murder of Mas'ūd, "was written on that occasion, and we have cut it down for the sake of brevity".[2] This is,

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1. "Naqā'iḍ" (S) I. 225; for another example Cf. "Aghānī" (D) XI. 90.
2. Ibid. 737.

indeed, an indicative statement which clearly shows that a sense of balance guided Abū 'Ubaida with regard to poetry insertions in the Ayyām.

## The Structure of al-Ayyām:

The structure of almost all these narratives follows a similar pattern. In viewing them from this standpoint, the uniformity of the narration became quite perceptible. The way in which the account of a particular day begins and ends is virtually the same in almost every episode: the emphasis is laid on the reasons which led to the conflict. These reasons, of course, vary from one episode to another.[1] The opening passage starts always with one or other of the following conventional expressions.

وكان من حديث يوم الكلاب ..
or وكان من حديثه ...
or وكان من قصته ..
or وكان من قصة مقتل عارم ...
or وكان من حديث هذا اليوم etc.[2]

Occasionally the story begins with a description of

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1. The reasons which incite Bedouins to fight are, in fact, limited. They are either political (Yaum Kulāb), or economic driving them to raid and loot (Yaum al-Baradān), or social, concerned with some deep-rooted convention such as blood-revenge, protection of neighbours. (Yaum Sumair, Mun'ij) etc. Cf. "Tārīkh al-Naqa'id fī al-Shi'r al-'Arabī" 55-59.

2. "Naqā'id" (S) I. 136; I. 177, I. 61; II. 172; I.61, I.180 respectively.

the battle-field, as is the case in the account of Yaum al-Nisār and Naqā al-Ḥusn,[1] but the battle itself seldom receives any attention from Abū 'Ubaida, and in fact a description of the battle is often entirely absent, its place being taken by such standard formulae as:

" واقتتلوا شيئاً من قتال .. "
or " فاقتتل القوم اقتتالاً شديداً .. "
or " واقتتلوا اقتتالاً شديداً ... " etc.[2]

In a few episodes a dramatic description is given of a duel between two combatants, as in Yaum Faif al-Rīḥ. The description runs thus, "And when Āmir came to him [his antagonist Mushir[مُسر], he [the latter] thrust at his cheek with his spear. He split his cheeks, and 'Āmir's eyes cracked. Then [Mushir] gouged out his eyes, and put his spear into ['Āmir's] eyes, and lashed on his horse and caught up with his people."[3]

Compare also:

"Then Abū Ḥanash charged Shuraḥbīl and stabbed at him, but he struck the end of the saddle; the horse took fright, so he attacked him [again] and threw him from his horse. Then [Abū Ḥanash] dismounted, cut off the head [of Shuraḥbīl] and sent it to Salama by a cousin of his whose name was Abū Aja' b. Ka'b b. Mālik b. 'Attāb. He brought the head to Salama and threw it before him. Salama said, "You should have thrown it down gently." "What he did to me when he was alive was worse than this" he said.[1]

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[1] Ibid. 238, 190.
[2] Ibid. 929 and (S) II. 173, 258; I. 65.
[3] Ibid. (S) II. 174.

The Characters in al-Ayyām:

In the process of narration Abū 'Ubaida introduces new protagonists to the reader, so that the latter becomes acquainted with the "dramatis personae" of the story.

Thus in the "Murder of Khālid b. Ja'far" we read "Then al-Ḥārith b. Sufyān, one of Banū al-Ṣārīd came; he was al-Ḥārith b. Sufyān b. Murra b. 'Auf b. al-Ḥārith b. Sufyān, brother of Sayyār b. 'Āmr b. Jābir al-Fazārī, a half-brother on his [the latter's] side."[2]

Compare also "And his sister Salmā daughter of Ẓālim was the wife of Sinān b. Ḥāritha al-Murrī."[3]

Sometimes the introduction of the new character is given in vivid and minute description. On the Day of al-Raḥraḥān, Ḥanẓala, one of the characters of the story, was asked by her uncle Zurāra to describe the men who had captured her the day before. She described al-Aḥwaṣ b. Ja'far saying: رأيت رجلاً قد سقط حاجباه على عينيه فهو يرفع حاجبيه 3 and Rabī'a b. Qurṭ saying ورأيت رجلاً صغير العينين عن امره يصدرون

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[1] Ibid. (S) II. 159. Cf. for another example "Aghānī" (D) XI. 147-148.
[2] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 111.
[3] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 126.

اخنس
اسود قصيرا اذا تكلم عَذَمَ القوم عَذْم المخرس " 1

and both Khuwailid and Khālid, the sons of Nufail, saying:
2 " ورأيت رجلين احمرين جسيمين ذوي غدائر لا يفترقان في مشي ولا مجلس فاذا ادبرا اتبعهما القوم بابصارهم واذا اقبلا لم يزالوا ينظرون اليهما حتى يجلسا "

while 'Āmir b. Khuwailid and his two sons were described thus " ورأيت رجلا ادم معه ابنان له حسنا الوجه اصهبان
3 اذا اقبلا نظر القوم اليهما حتى ينتهيا واذا ادبرا نظروا اليهما "

As for 'Abdullah b. Ja'da he was " رأيت رجلا كثير شعر
4 الرأس صخابا لا يدع طائفة من القوم الا اصخبها "

These "literary portraits", Caskel states, "have actually an impressive and dramatic effect, although they have no historical value."[5]

The end of the story is almost always concerned with the losses and gains of the battle, the names of the dead, and the men and women captured. On the Day of al-Nisār, Abū 'Ubaida describes the aftermath of the battle saying: "Then qadd b. Mālik al-Wālibī killed Shuraiḥ b. Mālik al-Qushairī, the head of the Banū 'Āmir. And they [the Tamīmites] killed 'Ubaidullāh b. Mu'awīya b. 'Abdullāh b. Kilāb, and they killed [also] al-Hiṣṣān and 'Āmir b. Ka'b of the tribe of Banū Bakr b. Kilāb, Daudān b. Khālid of the Banū Naufal and

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1. *Ibid*. XI. 126.
2. *Ibid*. XI. 127.
3. *Ibid*. XI. 127.
4. *Ibid*. XI. 127.
5. *Islamica* (*Aijām al-Arab*) 31.

Khālid b. Naḍla al-Asadī were taken prisoners. As for Salmā bint al-Muḥallaq, she was taken by 'Urwah b. Khālid, while al-'Anqā' bint Hammām was taken by Ziyād b. Zubair. And Umm Khāzim was taken by Arṭa'a b. Munqidh, while Ramla bint Ṣabiḥ was taken by Jaz' b. Jaḥwān al-Asadī etc."[1]

In the account of Shi'b Jabala, the aftermath is given as follows, "As for 'Utaiba b. al-Ḥārith b. Shihāb, he was taken prisoner ... when Muḥarram came he escaped without paying the ransom.... As for Mirdās b. Abī 'Āmir, he plundered a lot and got from one man a hundred she-camels, but the Banū Abī Bakr b. Kilāb took them away from him. Mirdās then went to Yazīd b. al-Ṣa'q, who was a friend of his and addressed him in these verses.

لعمرك ما ترجو مَعَدٌّ ربيعها   رجائي يزيد بل رجائي أكثرُ
يزيد بن عمرو خير من شَدَّ ناقةً   بأقتادها اذا الرياح تَصَرْصِرُ
تداعتْ بنو بكر عليّ كأنما   تداعت عليّ بالأحزّة بَرْبَرُ
تداعوا عليّ أن رأوني بخلوةٍ   وانتم بأجدان الفوارس البصرُ

So Yazīd went to the Banū Bakr, got back the she-camels and returned them to him....[2]

The vividness and the impact of the narrative is occasionally interrupted, detracting from the coherence and unity of the story. In the midst of the story, the flow of events and the narration is sometimes hindered by remarks explaining a difficult word,[1] or relating another version[2] or mentioning the full name[3] of the character or referring to a genealogy.[4]

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[1] "Naqā'iḍ" 241-242.

[2] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 155-156.

Undeniably, the first impression of the Ayyām on the reader is one of confusion. The reader's mind and concentration are distracted by the digressions and proliferation of detail, so that it takes time and effort before the complete picture of the episode can be firmly grasped. One needs only to read the account of Yaum Kulāb[5] to see for oneself what this means. Other examples of this faultering in development are Yaum al-Nisār, Yaum Qishāwa, Yaum al-Iyād, and Yaum Shi'b Jabala.[6]

?
Kulab

Owing to the pressure of events in these narratives, and the heavy and cumbersome details, the structure, being more or less without shape, is too frail to support the details of the events which the Ayyām narrative describes.

A judgment of the style of al-Ayyām:

If not the greatest charm of the Ayyām narratives, at any rate the one which is perhaps most generally appreciated by modern readers is their economy in the essential passages, the brevity with which the incidents and speeches are conveyed, and the restriction of all commentary to the bare minimum, single phrases being charged with meaning.

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[1] "Naqā'iḍ" 784. "Aghānī" (D) XI. 134.
[2] Ibid. 781, 784."Aghānī" (D) XI. 138.
[3] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 137.
[4] "Naqā'iḍ" 639, 641.
[5] Ibid. (S) II. 156.
[6] Ibid. (S) I. 225, 20; II. 271. "Aghānī" (D) XI. 131.

Caskel observes that these stories are characterized by their fidelity to reality, and that their language is sober, vivid and stripped of all superfluous matter.[1] On this point von Grunebaum and Caskel are at one. The former points out that the marked feature of these stories is accuracy of description, precise and colourful language and dramatic poignancy.[2]

The short sentences give these parts of the narration a quick tempo and impressive accent. All this fits in with the swiftness and rapidity of events. The following is a typical example.[3] " خرج الحارث من عندهم فجعل يطوّف في البلاد
حتى سقط في ناحية من بلاد ربيعة ووضع سلاحه وهو في فلاة ليس
فيها اثر ونام ، فمر به نفر من قيس ابن ثعلبه ومعهم قوم من بني هزّان
من عنزة وهو نائم فاخذوا فرسه وسلاحه ثم اوثقوه فانتبه
وقد شدّوه فلا يملك من نفسه شيئاً فسألوه .. "

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[1] Islamica (Aijām al-'Arab) 43.
[2] "Medieval Islam" 82, 223, 276.
[3] "Aghānī" (D) XI. 114.

Undoubtedly the shortness of the sentences lends them precision and clothes the description of events with force and grace without damaging the clarity of the text or obscuring the meaning.

The following phrase, although compressed to the utmost, is clear, forceful and elegant.[1]

" وكتب كسرى الى قيس بن مسعود بن خالد... ان يوافوا
اياساً فاذا اجتمعوا فاياس على الناس "

It can also be discerned that the use of conjunctions links tightly the successive events and lends them a quick tempo and uninterrupted continuity. Thus, the passage looks like a series of small pictures, but each one contributes to make a whole. In the following example makes this clear.

" قال فتلبثنا ... ثم ركبنا ثم اخذنا طريقاً مختلفاً حتى وردنا الينسوعة
فوجدنا منزل القوم حين استقوا وسقوا ونثروا التمر وتخففوا
للغارة واستقبلوا اسفل ذي طلوح ... " [2]

Demetrius observes that "the opposite device to disjunction, namely, continuation, produces an impressive effect. The repetition of the same conjunction suggests an unlimited force."[3]

The lack of rhetorical figures in the language of

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1. "Naqā'iḍ" 640.
2. Ibid. 783.
3. Demetrius "On Style" in "Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric" (Everyman's Library No.901). 216-217.

the Ayyām is striking, particularly the almost complete absence of rhymed-prose (saj'). But this is quite natural. Those narratives as we have said before, represent pre-Islamic rather than the second century prose.[1] As is known, the use of rhymed-prose in pre-Islamic time was restricted to the kāhins[2].

Even in the lifetime of Abū 'Ubaida the use of saj' did not prevail to the extent that it might have invaded historical writings, including the Ayyām. It was not until later that rhymed prose became predominant in literary writings.

Rosenthal observes that historical writings "successfully withstood the onslaught of the rhymed prose mania which did so much more harm than good to Muslim literature."[3] The reason which the writer gives is that "Historiography was not wholly belles-lettres, but in many aspects a scientific pursuit and as such able to offer some resistence to literary fashions. Its concern with concrete data and observation from daily life brought with it a factual and concrete form of linguistic expression."[4] This is clearly applicable to the Ayyām narratives. Only here and there does

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1. Cf. p.416 and Min Ḥadīth al-Shi'r wal-Nathr 31-32.
2. Krenkow EI(1) (Sadj') IV. Part I. 43.
3. "History of Muslim Historiography" 154.
4. Ibid.

the reader come across expressions in rhymed prose. In the account of the second Day of al-Kulāb for instance, one of the characters whose name is Mudhḥij asks Ma'mūn al-Ḥārithī who was a kāhin.

" لاتغزوا بني تميم فانهم يسيرون أُعنابا ويَردون مياهاً
جباباً فتكون غنيمتكم تُراباً " [1]

Rhymed phrases also occur in the account of the same Day when Aktham b. Ṣaifī addresses a group of the Sa'd and al-Ribāb tribes thus: " اقلوا الخلاف على امرائكم واعلموا ان كثرة
الصياح من الفشل، والمرء يعجز لا المحالة، تثبتوا فان احزم
الفريقين الركين وربّ عجلة تَهَب ريثاً وابرزوا للحرب وادرعوا
الليل فانه اخفى للويل ولا جماعة لمن اختلف " [2]

On the Day of al-Raḥraḥān a conversation occurs between Ḥanẓala and Zurāra. He asked her about the people she saw the other day and she replies

[3] " اخذني قوم يقبلون بوجوه الظباء ويدبرون باعجاز النساء "

The occurrence of rhymed prose in those narratives is extremely limited however and is not sought after for its own sake. It occurs spontaneously, and this lends beauty to the passages in which sāj' occurs, and frees their language

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1. "Naqā'iḍ" 149.
2. Ibid. 149.
3. "Aghānī" XI. 126.

from the superficiality which has been always associated with this sort of writing. W. Caskel observes this pehenomenon and gives as instances some of the examples mentioned above.[1]

The style of the Ayyām is almost devoid of imagery, although the very nature of the Ayyām provides a natural setting for employing imagery on a large scale. The lack of imagery in the Ayyām, however, can be explained by the fact that these narratives are not purely imaginative literature. The Ayyām, being prose, and having an historical background and tradition do not attain that high "intensity of passion in which imagery originates."[2]

Furthermore, they are not composed by one writer at leisure. Al-Ayyām are rather a presentation of bygone events, and record of the speeches of the characters who took part in those events. Abū 'Ubaida transmitted facts, and he was not preoccupied with embellishing the information he was going to hand down. Given the density of details, figurative language has little place.

Only occasionally in the Ayyām does one come across imagery. For example in the speech of al-Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir we find this sentence which is carefully elaborated, and in

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1. Islamica (Ai~~g~~yam al-Arab) 46.
2. On Longinus / On the Sublime (Everyman's Library No.901) 294.

which the successive images doubtless strike the imagination.

كأن اذنابها شقاق اعلام ، وكأن مناخرها وجار ضباع وكأن
عيونها بقايا نساء رقاق المستطعم تعالك اللجم في اشداقها
تدور على مذاودها كأنما يقضمن حصى ". 1

On the second Day of al-Raḥraḥān, Ḥanẓala describes the thickness of a man's hair, saying "كان راسه حجز غَفْسُوره" and again describes a man's leg-hair, saying:

" كان شعر فخذيه حلق الدروع " 2

The diction of the Ayyām is forceful, outspoken and unpolished. In some of its bearing it runs counter to what Aristotle called "decency" as one of the two virtues of the word, the second being perspicuity.[3] Caskel called this "roughness of expression".[4] Examples of this, however, are few in number, taking into consideration the sheer bulk of the Ayyām. The following are examples of this phenomenon:

" قال : عهدي بها والمني يقطر من فرجها " " فقال الحارث است الحالب
اعلم " " فقال الحارث : است الضارط اعلم فذهب مثلا " 5
" وهذا جرى رطبة من ذنبها "

In the Ayyām also a sharp sense of the beauty resulting from the use of appropriate words in a given context is also perceptible. The word saqaṭa "to fall down"

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1. "Aghānī" (D) XI.95-96.
2. Ibid. XI. 127.
3. "Rhetoric" (In Everyman's Library No.901) 150.
4. Islamica (Aijam al-Arab) 46.
5. "Aghānī" (D) XI. 99, 105, 108, 126 respectively.

is used in the sense of "reach" in the following expression "حتى سقط فى ناحية من بلاد ربيعة"[1]. The story tells us how al-Ḥārith had killed Shuraḥbīl and went wandering about the land. Being exhausted and tired when he reached the homeland of the Rabī'a, he laid down his arms and fell asleep.[2] The use of the word saqaṭa in the sense of "to reach" conveys his state of utter exhaustion and weakness and increases the beauty of the whole expression. A similar case is that of the word yahwī . This word originally means "to fall down" but in the following expression "فلما رأوه يهوي نحوهم"[3] it is given the sense of speed and fear that obsessed al-Ḥārith after having escaped from Banū Qais in the story of "The Murder of Ja'far b. Khālid".

Similarly the word khāḍa "to wade through", is used in the sense of attacking or forcing a way, in the sentence "فاض اليه الرماح" in the account of "Yaum al-Ghabīṭ",[4] to illustrate the danger a combatant faces in taking his rival prisoner.

The examples given above are a kind of metaphor ( isti'āra), and in which a word is used in place of another to indicate a relationship between the two. Some of these

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1. Ibid. XI. 114.
2. Ibid. XI.
3. Ibid. XI. 115.
4. "Naqā'iḍ" (S) II. 23.

examples have become platitudes from excessive use such as *khāḍa* in the sense used in the aforementioned expression; others have remained elegant and evocative.

However, it is not only the artistic use of certain words which contributes to the creation of a forceful style. In some cases this is done by repetition. By repetition we mean the repetition of the same word in two or more successive sentences or the repetition of the meaning expressed in one sentence in the following one. A typical example of the first kind is illustrated by the following passage:

"Then Sinān said, O Malīk, charge upon them and defend us, and [in return] I shall give you [as a wife] Khawla bint Sinān, my daughter. So Mālik *charged upon Mu'āwīya and killed him*. Ḥarmala al-'Uklī then came forward after him [i.e. Mu'āwīya] reciting [verses], so Mālik *charged upon him and killed him*. Then, a man from Kilāb tribe came forward, Mālik *charged upon him and killed him*. Then two men from Qais Kubba [a clan] of Bajīla came forward, Mālik *charged upon them and killed them*. Mālik and his companions then went away."[1]

In the following example, the repetition is not of words but of meaning.

"And they fought each other fiercely and [some] were killed from *the two [contesting] parties*, *from these and those*.[1]

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[1] "*Aghānī*" (D) XI. 157.

A third example is given in the following passage:

"As for Yaum Jadūd, Ḥawfazān, namely al-Ḥārith b. Sharīk al-Shaibānī, *raided the Banū Tamīm*, with Abjar b. Jābir al-'Ajlī. They went forth under various standards with the intention of *raiding the Banū Tamīm*."[2]

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[1] "*Naqā'iḍ*" 929.

[2] *Ibid*. 144.

# CONCLUSION

Having brought to a close the argument developed in the preceding chapters, it is appropriate to attempt a final stocktaking.

In the process of this study two aims have been kept in mind. One was to investigate the already known 'facts' about Abū 'Ubaida, and either put them on solid ground or reject them, if they can be proved unconvincing and contradictory. The first part of the thesis accordingly is devoted to untangling Abū 'Ubaida's life and to discussing his socio-religious views. As a consequence the accusation of Shu'ūbite and Khārijite leanings with which Abū 'Ubaida was labelled were examined and rejected.

The second aim was to examine, in the round of Abū 'Ubaida's literary and philological works, hitherto either unknown or only briefly touched upon. This has been dealt with at length in parts two, three, four and five. The most important conclusions under this heading are summed up below:-

a) In the field of poetry, the importance of Abū 'Ubaida cannot be doubted. The survey of his poetical transmissions is, more or less, indicative of his method and the scope of his ability. The range of his transmissions was wide. It was not limited to pre-Islamic poets, but included also Islamic poets. His transmissions do not deal with the poets' dīwāns, but with anthologies based on subject-matter - such as al-Naqā'iḍ for example. Reference has also been made to the fact that the dīwāns and anthologies discussed are not all the Arabic poetry that Abū 'Ubaida transmitted. The amount of poetry inserted in the Ayyām narratives speaks volumes for the extent of Abū 'Ubaida's poetical transmissions in general.

Abū 'Ubaida's transmissions of poetry went side by side with his attempts to authenticate and evaluate poetry. Poets were looked at according to a criterion known also to be that of Ibn Sallām's, viz. the ṭabāqāt theory. It has been shown that the conception of ṭabāqāt and the first application of it was by Abū 'Ubaida rather than by Ibn Sallām. Abū 'Ubaida's book al-Shi'r wal-Shu'arā' (or Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā') however is not extant, and to the best of my knowledge, no attempt to reconstruct the book has been previously made.

The importance of Abū 'Ubaida's contribution to the ṭabaqāt theory can easily be seen from the fact that this theory played a significant role in Arabic criticism. Arab critics, from the time of Ibn Sallām onward, have utilized it and considered it as a useful means by which poetry and poets may be evaluated, and appreciated. To examine the evolution of this method in detail is, of course, beyond the scope of the present thesis. Yet a short reference to the development of the ṭabaqāt conception is not perhaps out of place. A cursory glance at the "Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'" of Ibn Sallām may suggest that although Ibn Sallām developed this conception, he nevertheless took his models from Abū 'Ubaida. To do Ibn Sallām justice, it has to be noted that his classification of poets was not determined by one factor only, namely that of time, according to which he distinguished between the two main classes, pre-Islamic and Islamic poets. Two other factors were also taken into consideration by him. The "provincial" factor, according to which Ibn Sallām grouped the poets of Mecca, Madīna, Ṭā'if and Baḥrain in distinct classes,[1] the "artistic" factor, according to which he considered the elegiac poets (aṣḥāb al-Marāthī) as one class.[2]

The theory of ṭabaqāt was also adopted and adapted by Ibn al-Mu'tazz in his book "Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'",[3] although his application of this method differs slightly from that of his predecessors in that he deals with the modern poets.

b) Abū 'Ubaida, it seems, was a language-conscious rāwī. The assumption behind his attitude towards language was that language was a social phenomenon. The word is the smallest significant unit of speech, and he, therefore, set out to collect and study words in an attempt to clarify their meanings, and show their proper use. In this, Abū 'Ubaida, probably achieved no more than other philologists of his time. Abundant though his philological works may be, they show little striking originality, although they doubtless furnished material for further studies by later authors.

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[1] Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā' 179-235.
[2] Ibid. 169-179.
[3] Published in Cairo 1956.

As a grammarian, Abū 'Ubaida, although a Baṣran by birth, was not altogether of Baṣra school in his attitude towards grammar. He disagrees with them on many questions, and was occasionally in agreement with the Kūfite school. Mention has been made of the fact that a final judgment of Abū 'Ubaida's stand as a grammarian is not, for the time being, possible. Until his grammatical works come to light, it can only be said that he was rather independent in his outlook on grammar, in the sense that he cannot be grouped with either school.

The material transmitted by Abū 'Ubaida on dialects shows a rather slipshod approach, so that modern scholars who have studied ancient dialects, such as Kofler, Rabin, and Fleisch, have made little attempt to utilize them. This is due perhaps to the fact that these materials are scattered over different sources most of which have no apparent bearing on the subject and it is therefore difficult to find them. The material on dialects is scanty therefore, but if this material does not contribute to a better understanding to the subject, it at least to some extent enhances the value of the studies already published since Abū 'Ubaida's information is earlier and thus more reliable and authentic.

Abū 'Ubaida however in his treatment of dialects should be exonerated from slack method insofar as many of his faults are shared by other early writers on the same subject.

c) As regards Quranic studies, the fact was established that the Kitāb al-Majāz was the first book to have been written on the subject and the first of its kind to survive the vicissitudes of time. The importance of the book has been shown, by studying it in its various aspects and the opinions of both ancient and modern scholars on the book have been reviewed and discussed.

Although Abū 'Ubaida does not put forward a clear definition of the term majāz, yet it is possible to see that, from the first pages onwards, the author uses the term as synonymous with style. Style with Abū 'Ubaida has acquired the significance of a "technique of expression", or the legitimate technique of a given language to express and communicate. In other words, he conceives of style as "a quality inherent in all expression" [1] as critics of the Aristotelian school maintain, and not "a quality that some expression has"[2] as critics of the Platonic school hold. The absence of the individualistic element is obvious, and, perhaps, this is the reason why the aesthetic element in expression was overlooked. The concept of style as something generic, as Abū 'Ubaida sees it, is in contrast with the concept that modern writers such as Murry, for instance, hold, namely that "a style must be individual because it is the expression of an individual mode of feeling."[1] Similarly F.L. Lucas states that "literary style is simply a means by which one personality moves others. The problems of style, therefore, are really problems of personality - of practical psychology."[2]

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[1] J.T. Sharply "Dictionary of World Literature" (New Jersey 1962) 397.

[2] Ibid.

In Abū 'Ubaida's study the separation between what was later called balāgha on the one hand and style on the other is not kept clear, and indeed, it needs not be. The distinction between purely grammatical and structural form, and between form containing an additional superimposed ornament became sharp only after the time of 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, and gradually the "decorative theory" got the upper hand on rhetorical studies.

d) In the analysis of Abū 'Ubaida's treatment of the tribal conflicts (Ayyām) of the Arabs (the subject of the fifth part of the thesis), attention is concentrated upon

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1. The Problem of Style (Oxford 1956) 38.
2. Style (London 1964) 38.

two questions. Firstly, the method of Abū 'Ubaida in transmitting these narratives, and secondly their historical importance. As regards the first point, it will be seen that Abū 'Ubaida adopts the rāwī's method, in the sense that he was engaged in transmitting accounts of events without questioning their veracity. He gives more than one account of the same event, and seldom examines the accounts critically in order to sort out which is the authentic one. As a result, Ayyām cannot be considered historical writings proper, but as historical documents which, when examined thoroughly, can be utilized by historians. Abū 'Ubaida was, therefore, not an historian but a chronicler.

These narratives are put in their true perspective in an attempt to clarify their nature and language. A hypothesis has been formed in connection with the language of the Ayyām, namely that it represents pre-Islamic prose rather than that of Abū 'Ubaida.

In almost all Abū 'Ubaida's writings, it is to be perceived that he was original, and from this stems his importance as a scholar. This point is made by Gibb in the following statement, "His services to the development of the Arabic humanities are beyond calculation; almost half of the information about pre-Islamic Arabia that was transmitted by later authors came from him."[1] Similarly Nichelson observes that "his work as editor, commentator and critic of Arabic poetry forms ... the basis of nearly all that has since been written on the subject."[1]

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[1] Studies on the Civilization of Islam, 68.

This thesis is based on a systematic interpretation of the works of Abū 'Ubaida in which I have tried to elucidate his intentions as expressed in his works. Abū 'Ubaida was not always explicit concerning his purposes and method: he did not formulate principles or rules, but embodied them in the products of his scholarship. Method to him was not simply a technique of fact-finding but rather a guide to interpretation. He was not a theoretical scholar, but texts under examination by him revealed some of their secrets, and the result of this process was a huge mass of observations and comments, apparently dissociated and heterogenous, but inwardly united by an implicit rational and critical approach. This may give the impression of lack of originality, contrary to what has just been said. But in fact it is precisely in his capacity to manipulate almost all the range of the "Arabic Sciences" that the originality of Abū 'Ubaida most clearly manifests itself.

Abū 'Ubaida composed works on various branches of the "Arabic Sciences" as they were in his time. The range of his works (Chapter III) speaks volumes for his versatility.

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[1] A Literary History of the Arabs 345.

In this, he evidently mirrored a stage through which Arab culture was basing, in which specialization was rare. An authoritative reader of the Quran was at the same time a grammarian, a rāwī, and a critic. One reason as why polymaths abounded in his age was presumably, that all these "sciences" could still be encompassed by an individual mind. The "Arabic Sciences" were traditional and they were based by and large on transmission and report. With Abū 'Ubaida a strain of rationalism permeated them. His approach was essentially one of analogy, but in turn sometimes subjected to 'hearing' (samā'). Samā' ensures to a grammatical form or a verse an existence which defies any reasoning or argument even if it runs counter to them. This process is obviously a dogmatic one.

This, however, does not contradict the statement which has often been made in the present work that Abū 'Ubaida was, in contrast with al-Aṣma'ī, a rational scholar. More often than not, the method of examination of a given subject is shaped by the nature of the subject itself, and of necessity now assumes a rational and now a dogmatic stamp. Abū 'Ubaida had to handle materials of different nature, and whenever the nature of the subject under consideration necessitates a rational approach, Abū 'Ubaida applies such a method.

# ADDENDUM

I have argued, in connection with Abū 'Ubaida's parentage (Chapter I), that his father was a Muslim. Mention has also been made of the fact that Abū 'Ubaida was given the nickname subbukhut because his grandfather was a Jew. I happened to find, after the manuscript of the present study was virtually complete, a clear reference in *Khizānat al-Adab* (Bulaq 1299 A.H. II. 519) to the effect that Abū 'Ubaida's grandfather was converted to Islam by one of the Banū Bakr. This confirms my argument that Abū 'Ubaida's father was certainly a Muslim, and that his grandfather was born a Jew but was subsequently converted to Islam.

# تسمية أزواج النبي ( ص )

تأليف

أبي عبيدة معمر بن المثنى

تحقيق

ناصر حلاوى

الجزء فيه تسمية أزواج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم و أولاده تصنيف أبي عبيدة معمر بن المثنى من رواية أبي عبد الله الحسين بن عمر بن العلاف و أبي الحسن علي ابراهيم المالكي جميعا عن محمد بن أحمد اسمعيل بن شمعون المذكور وعنهما الشيخ الامام الحافظ أبي طاهر أحمد بن محمد السلفي الاصفهاني رضى الله عنه /

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وصلواته على سيدنا محمد نبيه الكريم أخبرنا الفقيه الامام العدل شرف الدين أبو بكر محمد بن الحسن بن عبد السلم التميمي قرأه عليه و انّا لنسمع في يوم الاثنين الثاني و العشرين من جمادى الآخرة سنة احدى و خمسين و ستمائة بالاسكندرية المحروسة .

أخبرنا الشيخ الفقيه الثقة الأمين المحدث الفاضل أبو عبد الله بن عبد الجبار بن عبد الله العثماني و نفع به من قرأه عليه و أنا أسمع بمدينة قوص حرسها الله يوم الجمعة السادس و العشرين من المحرم سنة أربع عشرة و ستمائة .

قال أخبرنا الشيخ الفقيه الامام الحافظ شيخ الاسلام ، أوحد الأنام ، فريد العصر ، أبو طاهر أحمد بن محمد بن أحمد بن محمد السلفي الأصبهاني رضي الله عنه (١) ، قرأه عليه و أنا أسمع في يوم السبت ، الثالث و العشرين من شهر رمضان سنة اثنين و سبعين و خمسمائة (٢) ، قال : أخبرنا الشيخ أبو محمد بن محمد بن جعفر بن أحمد بن الحسين بن السراج ، فقد أتى عليه ببغداد من أصل سماعه سنة أربع و تسعين و أربعمائة النجار أبو عبد الله بن الحسين بن عمر بن محمد بن العلاف المصرى و أبو الحسن علي بن ابراهيم بن المالكي فقرأه والدى عليهما سنة ثلث وعشرين و أربعمائة قالا ، أبو الحسين محمد بن أحمد بن عبد الله بن سليمان بن عيسى الوراق ، أبو الحسين أحمد أحمد (٣) محمد بن عبد الله بن صالح بن شيخ بن عميرة الأسدى .

قال قرأ علينا أبو محمد عبيد الله بن الفضل بن شقيق بن / محرف السدوسي قال قال أبو عبيدة معمر بن المثنى: تسمية من تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم في الجاهلية و الاسلام ، الأبكار منهن و الثيبات (٤) ، و نسبهن وعددهن و تحت من كن قبله ، و من ولد له منهن ، و من دخل بها و من لم يدخل بها و من طلّق منهن قبل أن يدخل بها ، و من دخل بها ، و من طلّق منهن ثم راجعها و من مات منهن عنده ، و من قبض صلى الله عليه و سلم و هن عنده ، و من تزوج منهن بمكة ، و من تزوج منهن بالمدينة و بغيرها من البلدان ، و من تزوج منهن

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١) على الحاشية اليمنى " فيما أجازه لي " و لا أرى لها موضعا في النص .

٢) في الأصل " خمسمايه " . ٣) كذا في الأصل ولعله تكرار .

٤) في الأصل " الثايب " ، و التصحيح من " اللسان " مادة ( ثيب ) ١/ ٢٤٨ .

و من خطب و لم يتزوجها ، و من هم بتزوجها (١) و لم يخطبها ، و أوقات تزوجه (٢) اياهن ، و من اتخذ من السرارى من الأماء

فجملة من تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ثماني عشرة امرأة ، منهن سبع من أفخاذ قريش، و واحدة من حلفاء قريش، و تسع من سائر قبائل العرب، و واحدة من بني اسرائيل من بني هوازن بن عمران . فذلك سبع عشرة امرأة من قبائل العرب و واحدة من بني اسرائيل . فجميع ذلك ثماني عشرة امرأة . (٣)

و جملة من اتخذ من الأماء ثلاث . فاتخذ اثنين من العجم فولدت له واحدة منهما و لم تلد الأخرى ، و أعتق واحدة من العرب حين همّ أن يبني بها .

فأول من تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم منهن من قريش خديجة بنت خويلد بن أسد بن عبد العزى بن قصي (٤) . تزوجها و هو ابن (٥) خمس وعشرين سنة و ذلك قبل الوحي اليه بخمس عشرة سنة، لأنه أوحي اليه و هو ابن أربعين سنة صلى الله عليه و سلم . و لم يتزوج في الجاهلية غير خديجة ،/

و كانت قبله عند عتيّق بن عابد بن عبد الله بن عمر بن مخزوم (٦) ، ثم خلف عليها بعد عتيّق هند بن زرارة بن النباش (٧) بن حبيب بن صرد بن سلامة بن غويّ بن جروه بن أسيّد بن عمر بن تميم، و كنيته أبو هاله . فولدت له هند بن هند . قال يونس: فمر هند بالبصرة مجتازا فمات بها ، فلم تقم سوقا و لا (كلاقا) (٨) قالوا خوفا ( من ) (٩) فاطمة .

ثم تزوجها النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم بعد هند بن زراره فولدت له في الجاهلية جميع بناته الأربع ، زينب و هي أكبرهن ، ثم رقيّة ثم أم كلثوم ثم فاطمة و هي أصغرهن .

و الدليل على وقت تزوجه (١٠) خديجة ، و على أنها ولدت له بناته هؤلاء في الجاهلية أنه زوّج زينب أبا العاص بن الربيع بن عبد شمس، فلما أسلمت و لم يسلم منعه النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم منها . ثم هاجرت مع النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم و لم يسلم . ثم أسلم فتركهما على نكاحهما . فلو كانت ولدت بعد الوحي لم يكن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ليزوّجها كافرا . و لو كان النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم تزوّج خديجة بعد هذا الوقت الذى في صدر الكتاب ما بلغت زينب مبلغ (١١) النساء و لا التزوّج (١٢) في الجاهلية . و كذلك أيضا تزويجه رقيّة و أم كلثوم عتبه و عتيبه ابني (١٣) أبي لهب، و هما مشركان . فلو كانتا ولدتا في الاسلام لم يكن ليزوّج بناته ، و هن مسلمات ، المشركين .

و كذلك أيضا ولدت الذكور من/ أولاد النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم في الجاهلية غير القاسم فانه ولد في الاسلام ، و عاش حتى مشى (١٤)، ثم مات . و ولدت في الجاهلية عبد مناف و الطيّب و هو عبد الله ، مات رضيعا ، و الطاهر (١٥).

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١) في الأصل " بتزويجها " . ٢) في الأصل " تزويجه " . ٣) كذلك في " سير الأعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ١٨٠

٤) تتمة النسب " . . . بن قصي بن كلاب بن مرة بن كعب بن لؤى بن غالب بن فهد بن مالك بن النضر بن كنانه " انظر

٥) في الأصل " بن " . [الطبقات الكبرى ٨ / ٧-٨ .

٦) في سيرة ابن هشام ما يلي " و كانت قبله ( أى قبل الرسول ص) عند أبي هاله بن مالك أحد بني أسيّد بن عمر بن تميم، حليف بني عبد الدار ، فولدت له هند بن أبي هالة و زينب بنت أبي هاله" ٢/ ٦٤٣ . و قد ورد اسم " عتيق " في " سير أعلام النبلاء" عتيق بن عائذ " ٢/ ٨٢

٧) في الأصل " ساس " و التصحيح من " طبقات ابن سعد " ٨/ ٨ و تتمة النسب " هند بن النباش بن زرارة بن وقدان بن حبيب بن سلامة بن غدوى . . . الخ "

٨) كذا في الأصل و لم أجد في المصادر ما يمكنني من تصحيح النص ليستقيم المعنى .

٩) زيادة مني . ١٠) في الأصل " تزويجه " . ١١) في الأصل " مابلغ " .

١٢) في الأصل " التزويج " . ١٣) في الأصل " بن " . ١٤) في الأصل " مشا " .

١٥) في " طبقات ابن سعد " أن عبد الله هو الطاهر ٨٠/ ٩ .

فذلك أربع بنات و أربعة[1] بنين . و الدليل على ذلك أن عبد مناف لو كان ولد في الاسلام لم يسمه عبد مناف. و الدليل أيضا على أن مولدهم في الجاهلية أن بناتها هؤلاء الأربع أدركن الاسلام و هن مدركات ، فأسلمن، و أن خديجة قالت لرسول الله :

– أطفالي منك أين هم ؟ قال :

– في الجنة . قالت :

– يا نبي الله بغير عمل ؟ قال :

– قد علم الله ما كانوا عاملين . فقالت :

– يا نبي الله أطفالي من المشركين أين هم ؟ قال :

– في النار . فقالت :

– لغير عمل ؟ قال :

– قد علم الله ما كانوا عاملين . و ان شئت دعوت الله عزّ و جلّ فأراكهم و أراك منازلهم، و أسمعك أصواتهم . أو نحو هذا . فقالت :

– بل أصدق الله و رسوله[2].

فهذا الحديث يدل على أن الذكور غير القاسم ولدوا في الجاهلية . و لو كانوا ماتوا في الاسلام لم تكن لتسأل النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أين هم . و لم تكن لتسأل عن بناتها هؤلاء[3] و هن أحياء . و لم يكن[4] له في شبابه غير خديجة و لم يتزوّج في الجاهلية غيرها . و هي أول من أسلم من النساء . ثم ماتت خديجة بمكة قبل الهجرة بخمس سنين . و الدليل على ذلك قول عائشة " ما غرت على امرأة للنبي صلى الله عليه و سلم / غيرتي على خديجة . و قد ماتت قبل أن يتزوّجني النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم بثلاث سنين ." و كان النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم تزوّج عائشة قبل الهجرة بسنتين . و عائشة بنت تسع سنين . فهذا الحديث يدل على أن خديجة ماتت قبل الهجرة بخمس سنين[5] . فتزوّج علي بن أبي طالب فاطمة فولدت له حسنا بعد وقعة أحد و بين مقدم النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم المدينة سنتان و سبعة أشهر و نصف ، فولده لأربع سنين و سبعة أشهر و نصف من التأريخ . و بين وقعة بدر و وقعة أحد سنة و نصف شهر . ثم ولدت فاطمة حسيناً[6] بعد مولد حسن بسنة و عشرة أشهر ، فولده لست سنين و خمسة أشهر و نصف من التأريخ ، ثم قتل يوم عاشوراء لعشر مضين من المحرم أول سنة احدى و ستين و هو يومئذ ابن أربع و خمسين سنة و نصف سنة و نصف شهر. ثم ولدت أم كلثوم . تزوّجها عمر بن الخطاب في خلافته . فولدت له زيدا فهلكا في ليلة واحدة . فصلى عليهما سعيد بن العاص عامل معاوية على المدينة ، فجعل زيدا بينه و بين أم كلثوم .

و قالوا قال الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب حين مات زيد و أم كلثوم لعبد الله بن عمر " تقدم فصلّ على أمك و أخيك " فتقدم فصلى عليهما . و تزوج أم كلثوم بنت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم عتيبة بن عبد العزى[7] بن عبد المطلب ،/ و به كان يكنّى[8] و بأبي لهب .

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١) في الأصل " أربع " . ٢) وردت نفس القصة بخلاف بسيط في " سير أعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ٨٢

٣) في الأصل " هاولاى " . ٤) في الأصل " و لم يلد " .

٥) في " طبقات ابن سعد " ان خديجة ماتت قبل الهجرة بثلاث سنين و هي يومئذ بنت خمس و ستين سنة " ٨/ ٢
و قد ورد نفس الشيء في " سير أعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ٨٦ .

٦) في الأصل " حسنا " . ٧) في الأصل " عزا " .

٨) في الأصل " يكنا " .

و تزوّج أخوه عتبه بن عبد العزى(١) رقية بنت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم. و أم عتبه و عُتَيبه أم جميل بن حرب بن أمية ، و لم يكن(٢) ابتنى(٣) بها النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم . فسألت رقية النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أن تطلق . فسأل النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أن يطلقها . فقالت امه ، أم جميل ، حمالة الحطب " طلقها يا بني فانها قد صبأت" فأنزل الله عزّ وجلّ "تبت يدا أبي لهب "(١/١١١) وقال لهب لابنيه عتبة وعُتَيبة " وجهي من وجوهكما حرام ان لم تطلق ابنتي(٤) محمد " فطلقاها . ثم جاء(٥) عتبة الى النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم فقال " كفرت بدينك و فارقت أو طلقت ابنتك ، لا تحبني و لا أحبها " و شقّ قميص النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ثم توجّه الى الشام . فقال النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم " أما اني أسأل الله أن يسلط عليه كلبة " فلما نزلوا بالورقاء من بعض بلاد الشام ، أطاف بهم الاسد ليلا ، فقال عتبة " يا ويل أمي ، هو و الله آكلي كما دعا محمد عليّ . أقاتلي ابن أبي كبشة و هو بمكة و أنا بالشام " فعدا عليه الاسد فضغم(٦) رأسه ، فقدعه من بين من ( في )(٧) القوم .

و ذكر عن هشام بن عروة عن أبيه عروة بن الزبير ، أنه لما أطاف بهم الأسد انصرف عنهم فأقاموا عتبة في وسطهم و ناموا حوله ، فتخطاهم الاسد حتى أخذ برأسه(٨) فضغمه ضغمة قدعه .

ثم تزوّج عثمان بن عفان بن أبي العاص ابن أمية برقية فماتت فدفنت يوم جاء(٩) البشير بفتح بدر الى المدينة . فقام على قبرها يدفنها(١٠) و تفسير حديث موتها في موضع بعد هذا(١١) . و لم تلد له .

و تزوّج أبو العاص بن الربيع بن عبد شمس زينب بنت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم فلم يسلم . فلما هاجرت مع النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ، أسلم أبو العاص فتركهما النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم على نكاحهما . و ولدت له امامة فتزوّجها على ابن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه بعد موت فاطمة . فلم تزل عنده حتى قتل عنها .

مضت خديجة .

ثم تزوّج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم بمكة بعد موت خديجة بسنة ، و ذلك قبل الهجرة بأربع سنين ، سودة بنت زمعة بن قيس بن الأسود من بني عامر بن لؤى ثم بنى بها بمكة . و كانت قبله عند السكران بن عمرو أخي سهيل بن عمرو بن عامر بن لؤى

مضت سودة بنت زمعة

ثم تزوّج على سودة بمكة عائشة بنت أبي بكر عبد الله بن عثمان بن عامر بن عمر بن كعب بن سعد ابن تيم بن مرة قبل الهجرة بسنين و هي بنت ست سنين يومئذ . و لم يتزوّج بكرا غيرها .

ثم بنى(١٢) بها بالمدينة سنة احدى ، و هي يومئذ بنت تسع سنين . ثم توفى عنها و هي بنت ثماني(١٣) عشرة سنة . فقالت عائشة " دخل عليّ و ان لى بنات ألعب معهن(١٤) " تعنى اللعب(١٥) .

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١) في الاصل " عزا " . ٢) في الاصل " يكنا " . ٣) في الاصل " ابنتا " .

٤) في الاصل " ابني " . ٥) في الاصل " جا " .

٦) في الاصل " ضخم " و التصحيح من " اللسان " حيث يورد ابن منظور نفس القصة . و معنى " الضغم " العض من غير النهش ، و قيل هو العض ما كان . " اللسان " ( ضغم ) ، ١٢/ ٣٥٧

٧) زيادة مني . ٨) اى برأس عتبة . ٩) في الأصل " جا " .

١٠) في الاصل " يدفنونها " .

١١) أنظر ص ٤٠٥ ١٢) في الاصل " بنا " . ١٣) في الاصل " ثمانية " .

١٤) في الاصل " بهن " .

١٥) وردت نفس القصة بخلاف بسيط في " طبقات ابن سعد " ٨/ ٤٠ . " عن عائشة قالت ـ تزوجني رسول الله و اني لألعب مع الجوارى فما دريت أن رسول الله تزوجني " . . . " و لقد دخلت عليه و إني لألعب بالبنات مع الجوارى " فأتتها حاضنتها و هي تلعب مع الصبيان . " و كنت ألعب على المرجوحة ، فأتيت و انا ألعب عليها . و قد ورد في كتاب " سير اعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ١٠٨ ما يلي " كنت ألعب بالبنات شتى اللعب " .

و زعموا أن جبريل قال " هذه امرأتك " قبل أن يتزوّجها فتزوّجها . فهؤلاء (١) ثلاث من قريش . تزوجهن بمكة . خديجة في الجاهلية ، ثم سودة بعدها في الاسلام ، ثم عائشة بعد سودة .

مضت عائشة .

ثم تزوج بالمدينة قبل وقعة بدر في سنة اثنتين(٢) من التاريخ أم سلمة و اسمها هند / بنت أبي أمية زاد الركب (٣) بن المغيرة بن عبد الله بن عمر بن مخزوم . وكانت قبله عند أبي سلمة ، و هو عبد الله بن عبد الأسد بن هلال ( بن عبد الله بن عمر بن مخزوم )(٤) المخزومي . وذكر عن حماد بن سلمة عن ثابت البناني عن ابن عمر بن أبي سلمة عن أمه ، عن أم سلمه (٥) ، قالت " قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ، اذا اصابت أحدكم مصيبة فليقل انا لله و انا اليه راجعون ، اللهم عندك أحتسب مصيبتي فأجرني فيها و أبدلني منها خيرا " فلما احتضر أبو سلمة بن عند الأسد قال " اللهم اخلفني في اهلي بخير مني " فلما قبض قلت " انّا لله و انّا اليه راجعون ، اللهم عندك أحتسب مصيبتي فأجرني فيها " وكنت اذا أردت أن أقول " اللهم ابدلني بها خيرا منها " قلت " و من خير من أبي سلمة "

قالت " فلم أزل حتى قلتها " . فلما انقضت عدتها خطبها أبو بكر فردّته ، ثم خطبها عمر فردّته ، ثم بعث اليها رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فخطبها فقالت " مرحبا برسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم و برسوله . أقرئ رسول الله السلام و أخبره اني امرأة غيرى و اني مصبية (٦) ، و انه ليس أحد من أوليائي شاهدا " فقال لها رسول الله (٧) صلى الله عليه و سلم " اما قولك انك غيرى فاني سأدعو الله فتذهب غيرتك ، و اما قولك اني مصبية فان الله سيكفيك صبيانك ، و اما اولياؤك فانه ليس احد منهم شاهد و لا غائب (٨) الا استرضاني (٩) " . فقالت " قم يا عمر فزوج رسول الله " فتزوجها . فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم " اما اني لا أنقصك مما أعطيت أختك شيئا (١٠) ، / جرّتين و رحاتين و وسادة من أدم حشوها ليف " (١١) . و كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم يأتيها و هي ترضع ابنة أبي سلمة . و كانت اذا جاء (١٢) رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم أخذتها و وضعتها في حجرها ترضعها . و كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم حييا كريما ففطن لها عمّار بن ياسر ، و كان أخوها في الرضاعة . قال فأراد رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم أن يأتيها ذات يوم فجاء (١٣)

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١) في الاصل "فهاولاى" . ٢) في "طبقات ابن سعد" أن الرسول تزوجها في سنة أربع . ٨/ ٦١
٣) واسمه "حذيفه" انظر "سيراعلام النبلاء" ٢/ ١٤٣ . ٤) الزيادة من "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ٦٠
٥) في "طبقات ابن سعد" ما يلي "حدثنا حماد بن سلمة بعني عن ابيه ان ام سلمة قالت ، قال ابو سلمة ، قال رسول الله . . ." ٨/ ٦٢ . ٦) امرأة مصبية ،اى ذات صبيان . "اللسان" ( صبا ( ١٤/ ٤٥٠
٧) في الأصل "رسول الله رسول الله" فحذفت واحدة . ٨) في الاصل "غايب" .
٩) في "سير اعلام النبلاء" ٢/ ١٤٤ "الا سيرضى بي" وفي "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ٦٢ "الا سيرضاني" .
قال ،قالت يا عمر قم فزوج . . . الخ" . ١٠) في "سير اعلام النبلاء" ٢/ ١٤٢ "مما اعطيت فلانة . . . " .
١١) في "سيرة ابن هشام" ٢/ ٦٤٥ "واصدقها رسول الله (ص) فراشا حشوه ليف وقدحا و صحفة و مجشة"
وفي "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ٦٣ "اما اني لا انقصك مما اعطيت اختك فلانة ،رحيين و جرتين و وسادة من أدم حشوها ليف" .
١٢) في الأصل "جا" .
١٣) في الاصل "جا" .

عمّار فنشط(١) زينب من حجرها و قال "دعي هذه المقبوحة المشقوحة(٢) التي(٣) قد آذيت بها رسول الله" . فدخل صلى الله عليه و سلم فجعل يقلّب بصره في البيت و يقول "أين زناب؟ مالي لا أرى(٤) زناب؟ أين زناب؟" قالت "جاء(٥) عمار فذهب بها" فبنى(٦) رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم بأهله. و قال "ان شئت أن أسبع لك" يعني كما سبّعت للنساء(٧)

مضت أم سلمة

ثم تزوج صلى الله عليه و سلم بالمدينة في اثنين من التاريخ في عقب بدر ، بعد ما رجع الى المدينة ، حفصة بنت عمر بن الخطاب . فكانت قبله عند خنس بن حُذَامة بن العبداق السهمي(٨). و الدليل على وقت تزوجه اياها ، أنه تزوجها بعد وفاة رقية بنت النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم التي كانت عند عثمان ، و كان النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم كلّف عثمان بالمدينة حين غزا بدرا ليمرض رقية . فلذلك قسم له قسمة من شهد بدرا ، و لم يقسم لأحد لم يشهد بدرا غيره . فماتت فدفنت يوم أتى أهل المدينة البشير بفتح الله على رسوله ببدر . فقام على قبرها . / فلما قدموا المدينة رأى عمر عثمان مغتما فسأله عن غمّه فشكا اليه اغتمامه لانقطاع الصهر بينه و بين النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم . فقال له عمر "الا ازوجك ابنتي" فلم يجبه . و أتى(٩) رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فشكا اليه ذلك اذ ظن عمر أن تزويجه ابنته و مصاهرته اياه يذهب عنه غم ما دخل عليه من وفاة ابنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ، و انقطاع صهر ما بينه و بين النبي عليه السلام . فقال له النبي عليه السلام "بل يزوجك الله خيرا من ابنة عمر و تتزوج ابنة عمر خيرا منك" . فزوجه النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم أم كلثوم بنت محمد و تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم حفصة . فهذا دليل .

و زعم بعضهم أن عثمان خطب الى(١٠) عمر فردّه . فشكا ذلك الى النبي عليه السلام ، فقال النبي عليه السلام تلك المقالة .

مضت حفصة

فهؤلاء(١١) خمس من قريش تزوجهن بمكة و بالمدينة

ثم تزوج صلى الله عليه و سلم سنة ثلاث من التاريخ من حلفاء(١٢) قريش زينب بنت جحش بن رئاب(١٣) بن يعمر من بني غنم بن دودان بن أسد بن خزيمة و أمها أميمة بنت عبد المطلب بن هاشم و كانت قبله عند زيد بن حارثة بن مروة مولى(١٤) النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم. و كانت حين خطبها النبي عليه السلام على زيد مولاه أبت فأنزل الله عزّ و جلّ "و ما كان لمؤمن و لا مؤمنة اذا قضى الله و رسوله أمرا أن يكون له الخيرة / من أمرهم" (٣٣، ٣٥) حتى ينتهي الى آخر الآية . فقالت "يا رسول الله أمري اليك فأصنع ما أحببت" . فأنكحها زيدا . فكان زيد لا يزال يشكوها(١٥) الى النبي عليه السلام لشيء يكون بينهما . و قد كانت نفس النبي عليه السلام تتبعها ، و كان يخفي ذلك . فاذا شكاها يقول له النبي "اتّق الله و امسك عليك زوجك" . فطلقها زيد . فلما انقضت

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١) في "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ٦٣ "فأنتشطها" .
٢) جاء في "اللسان" (شقح) ٢/ ٤٩٩ ما يلي "العرب تقول قُبحا له و شُقحا ، و قَبحا له و شَقحا و كلاهما اتباع ، و قيل هما واحد . . . و قالوا شقيح و دميم ، و جاء بالقباحة و الشقاحة . . ." 
٣) في الاصل "اللتي" . ٤) في الاصل "ار" . ٥) في الاصل "جا" .
٦) في الاصل "فبنا" . ٧) في الاصل "للنسا" .
٨) اسمه كما ورد في "سيرة ابن هشام" ٢/ ٦٤٥ "خنيس بن حذافة السهمي" ، و كذلك اورده مؤلف "سير اعلام النبلاء" ٢/ ١٦٢ و مؤلف "الطبقات" ٨/ ٥٦ .
٩) في الاصل "اتا" . ١٠) في الاصل "لما" . ١١) في الاصل "فهاولاي" .
١٢) في الاصل "حلفا" . ١٣) "رياب" بدلا من "رئاب" . ١٤) في الاصل "مولا" .
١٥) في الاصل "ليشكوها" .

عدتها أتاه جبريل بأن الله عزّ وجلّ قد زوجه اياها . فكانت تفخر بذلك على سائر أزواج النبي عليه السلام . فأنزل الله عزّ وجلّ في تتبع نفسه اياها " و اذ تقول للذى أنعم الله عليه و انعمت عليه امسك عليك زوجك و اتق الله و تخفي في نفسك ما الله مبديه و تخشى الناس و الله احق ان تخشاه " ( ٣٣/ ٣٧ ) . فقالت عائشة " لو كتم رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم شيئا من الوحي ، كتم هذه الآية . قال " فلما قضى زيد منها وطرا زوجناكها " ( ٣٣/ ٣٧ ) الى آخر الآية . فقالت اليهود(١) ، " تزوج محمد امرأة ابنه " ، و كان يدعى زيد بن محمد . فأنزل الله عزّ وجلّ " وما جعل أدعياءكم أبناءكم " الى قوله " و ليس عليكم جناح فيما اخطأتم به و لكن ما تعمدت قلوبكم " ( ٣٣/ ٤-٥ ) فكان بعد هذه الآية يقال(٣) " زيد مولى(٢) رسول الله عليه السلام "

مضت زينب .

ثم تزوج في سنة خمس من التاريخ من سائر العرب جويرية(٤) بنت الحارث بن حرار المصطلقة من بني عمر بن خزاعة . و كان سباها يوم " المريسيع " . و كانت عند صفوان ابن ذى الشفر الخزاعي(٥) . و هو الذى يقول يوم المريسيع و هو يقاتل /

أنا ابن الشُفْرْ وحدّى مبذول
رمحي ذو الطول و سيفي مسلول
قد علمت نفسي بأني مقتول

فقتل يومئذ ، فوقعت جويرية في سهم ثابت ، فجاءت الى عائشة لتكلم لها رسول الله عليه السلام ليعينها في فدائها . و كانت حلوة حسّانة عتيقة . فكلمته ، فقال لها " الاخير من ذلك ، أعتقك و أتزوجك ، و أجعل صدقتك عتقك " . فقالت " بلى " . فلما رأى ذلك المسلمون ، أعتقوا ما في أيديهم من سبايا بني المصطلق ، و قالوا " أصهار رسول الله "

مضت جويرية .

ثم تزوج في سنة ست من التاريخ من قريش أمّ حبيبة بنت أبي سفيان بن حرب بن أمية . و كانت قبله عند عبيد الله بن جحش بن رباب بن يعمر من بني عمرو بن غنم بن دودان بن اسد بن خزيمة . و كان هاجر بها الى ارض الحبشة مع من هاجر اليها ثم تنصّر بالحبشة . و أبت ام حبيبة أن تتنصّر فمات عنها نصرانيا . و أتمّ الله عزّ وجلّ على أم حبيبة الاسلام و الهجرة حتى قدمت المدينة فخطبها النبي عليه السلام فزوجها اياه عثمان بن عفان . و زعم بعضهم أن النبي عليه السلام كتب الى النجاشي فزوجها اياه ، فساق عنه أربعين اوقية . فقدمت عليه المدينة قبل فتح خيبر . قدم بها عليه عمر بن امية الضمرى ، فبنى بها قبل قدوم جعفر و أصحابه ، لان / جعفرا كان آخر من قدم من الحبشة . فقدم عليه حين فرغ من فتحها . و فتح خيبر في سنة سبع . و غزا النبي عليه السلام خيبر و ام حبيبة عنده .

مضت ام حبيبة .

ثم تزوج النبي عليه السلام من بني اسرائيل سنة سبع أيضا صفية بنت حي بن أخطب من بني النضير من بني هارون . فكانت مما أفاء الله على رسوله يوم خيبر . و كان فتح خيبر في رمضان سنة سبع . فأعتقها و تزوجها ، و جعل

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٢) في الاصل " يهود " . ٢) في الاصل " فقال " . ٣) في الاصل " مولا " .
٤) في الاصل " حريره " .
٥) في " طبقات بن سعد " " تزوجها مسافع بن صفوان ذى الشفر بن سرح . . . فقتل يوم المريسيع " ٨/ ٨٣
٦) في الاصل " را " .
٧) في " طبقات بن سعد " " فقالوا اصهار رسول الله صلعم يسترقون ؟ فأعتقوا ما كان في أيديهم من سبي " ٨/ ٨٣
٨) في " طبقات بن سعد " " ان النجاشي اصدقها عن الرسول اربع مائة دينار " ٨/ ٧٠
٩) في " طبقات بن سعد " ان الذى جهزها للنبي النجاشي و بعث بها مع شرحبيل بن حسنة ٨/ ٧٠
١٠) في الاصل " فبنا "
١١) في " طبقات بن سعد " ان صفية بنت حي وقعت في سهم دحية الكلبي و اشتراها الرسول منه ٨/ ٨٧

عتقها مهرها . وكانت قبله عند سلام بن مشكم ثم خلف عليها كنانة بن أبي الحقيق . فقتله النبي عليه السلام يوم خيبر . ثم لما فرغ النبي عليه السلام من خيبر وتوجه معتمرا سنة سبع ، قدم جعفر فخطب عليه ميمونة (١) بنت الحارث الهلالية . فأذنت وجعلت أمرها الى العباس . فأنكحها اياه والنبي عليه السلام محرم . فلما اراد الرجعة أمر أبا رافع فخطها اليه فبنى (٢) بها بسرف (٣) . ثم ارتحل سائرا الى المدينة . ثم توفيت بعد وفاة النبي عليه السلام بسرف ، وكانت قبله عند أبي رهم بن عبد العزى (٤) بن عامر بن لؤى أو عند ( سبره )(٥) ابن ابي رهم . فلقيت من سفهاء (٦) أهل مكة أذاً يوم حطت .

مضت صفية .

ثم تزوج النبي عليه السلام فاطمة بنت شوع . وكانت وهبت (٧) نفسها للنبي عليه السلام . وأنزل الله عزّ وجلّ " وامرأة مؤمنة ان وهبت نفسها للنبي ، ان أراد النبي أن يستنكحها خالصة لك من دون المؤمنين " (٣٣/٥٠)

ثم تزوج زينب بنت خزيمة ، وهي ام المساكين (٨) ، وهي احدى نساء بني عامر بن صعصعة . وكانت قبله عند طفيل بن عباد بن الحارث ابن المطلب (٩) . فلم تلبث عند النبي الا يسيرا حتى ماتت عنده (١٠) .

وبعث (١١) ابا أسيد بن عدى بن مالك الانصارى من بني ساعدة يخطب عليه هند بنت يزيد من القرظاء من أبي بكر بن كلاب ، زوجها النبي عليه السلام . فقدم بها عليه فلما ابتنى بها النبي عليه السلام ، ولم يكن رآها ، رأى بها بياضا فطلقها وردها الى أهلها وأعطاها الصداق .

وزعم بعضهم أن هذه ( هي )(١٢) الكلابية (١٣) .

مضت زينب

وتزوج رسول الله عليه السلام من اهل اليمن أسماء بنت النعمان (١٤) من بني الجون من كندة . فلما دخلت عليه دعاها اليه فقالت " تعال انت " . وأبت ان تجئ فطلقها .

وقال آخرون بل كانت اجمل النساء (١٥) ، فخافت نساؤه ان تغلبهن عليه فقلن لها انه يحب اذا دنا منك أن تقولي " اعوذ بالله منك " . فلما دنا منها قالت له ، فقال " قد عذت بمعاذ ، وان عائذ الله اهل لجار ، وقد اعاذك الله مني . " فطلقها . وامر الساقط بن عمرو الانصارى فجهزها ثم سرحها الى قومها . فكانت تسمي نفسها " الشقية " .

وقال آخرون ، بل رأى بها ما رأى بالعامرية ، ففعل بها ما فعل بتلك . /

وزعم آخرون ان التي (١٦) عاذت بالله من سبي بني العنبر بن عمر يوم " ذات الشقوق " . وكانت جميلة فأراد النبي

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١) يقال ان اسمها " برّه " وقد اسماها النبي (ص) ميمونة . " طبقات ابن سعد " ٨/ ٩٨ وكذلك " سير اعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ١٧٢ . ٢) في الاصل " فبنا " .

٣) سرف موضع على ستة اميال من مكة ، وقيل سبعة وتسعة واثنى عشر . " معجم البلدان " ( سرف ) ٣/ ٧٧-٧٨

٤) في الاصل " العزا " .

٥) كذا في الاصل . وقد ورد في " سير اعلام النبلاء " ما يلي " تزوجها اولا مسعود بن عمر الثقفي ثم ... أبو رهم بن عبد العزى " ٢/ ١٦٩ . ٦) في الاصل " سفها " .

٧) ورد في " سيرة ابن هشام " " ان التي وهبت نفسها للنبي (ص) زينب بنت جحش . ويقال ام شريك غزية بنت جابر بن وهب من بني منقذ بن عمرو ... ويقال هي امرأة من بني سامة بن لؤى " ٢/ ٦٤٦ . وورد في " طبقات ابن سعد " " ان ميمونة بنت الحارث هي التي وهبت نفسها للنبي . ٨/ ٩٧ . وفي مكان آخر من " طبقات ابن سعد " ايضا " ان قتيلة بني قيس اخت الاشعث كانت ممن وهبت نفسها للرسول " ٨/ ١٠٥

٨) اعطيت هذا اللقب لكثرة معروفها . " سير اعلام النبلاء " ٢/ ١٥٤

٩) جاء في " سيرة ابن هشام " " وكانت قبله ( اى قبل الرسول ص ) عند عبيدة بن الحرث بن المطلب بن عبد مناف . وكانت قبل عبيدة عند جهم بن عمرو بن الحارث وهو ابن عمها " ٢/ ٦٤٧ . اما في " طبقات بن سعد " فقد ورد ما يلي " وكانت عند الطفيل بن الحارث بن المطلب بن عبد مناف فطلقها " ٨/ ٨٢ . وفي مكان آخر من المصدر نفسه ما يلي " فتزوجها ( بعد الطفيل ) عبيدة بن الحارث فقتل عنها يوم بدر شهيدا وكانت تحب عبيدة " " طبقات " . ٨/ ٨٢

١٠) بقيت عنده ثمانية اشهر . " طبقات ابن سعد " ٨/ ٨٢ . اما في " سير اعلام النبلاء " فقد جاء ما يلي " ... شهرين او اكثر " ٢/ ١٥٤ . ١١) اى الرسول (ص) . ١٢) زيادة مني .

١٣) وفي رواية اخرى انها اسماء بنت النعمان من كندة . سيرة ابن هشام ٤/ ٢٥ x

١٤) ويقال انها امية بنت النعمان بن ابي الجون . " طبقات ابن سعد " ٨/ ١٠٣ . ١٥) في الاصل " النسا " .

١٦) في الاصل " الذى " .

عليه السلام أن يتخذها ، فلما قالت ما قالت أعتقها .

مضت (أسماء)(١)

ثم تزوج الرسول عليه السلام حين قدم وفد كندة عليه قتيلة بنت قيس أخت الأشعث بن قيس في سنة عشر ، ثم اشتكى(٢) في النصف من صفر ، ثم قبض عليه السلام يوم الاثنين ليومين مضيا من شهر ربيع الاول . ولم تكن قدمت عليه ، ولا دخل بها .

و وقت بعضهم وقت تزويجه اياها ، فزعم أنه تزوجها قبل وفاته عليه السلام بشهرين . و زعم آخرون أنه تزوجها في مرضه . و زعم بعضهم انه اوصى(٣) بقتيلة ان تخيّر ، ان شاءت ان يضرب(٤) عليها الحجاب ، وتحرم على المؤمنين و يجرى عليها ما يجرى على امهات المؤمنين ، و ان شاءت فلتنكح من شاءت . فاختارت النكاح ، فتزوجها عكرمة بن ابي جهل بحضرموت . فبلغ ابا بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه ، فقال " قد هممت أن اخرق عليها " . وقال عمر " ما هي من امهات المؤمنين ، ما دخل بها النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ، ولا ضرب حجابا " . فذكر بعضهم أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم لم يوص فيها بشئ ، و انها ارتدت . فاحتج عمر على أبي بكر في مقالته انها ليست من ازواج / ( النبي )(٥) صلى الله عليه و سلم بارتدادها . فلم تلد لعكرمة الا مخبلا .

مضت قتيلة .

و تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم ام شريك من بني النجار(٦) . ثم قال اني احب أن اتزوج من الانصار ، ولكني اكره غيرتهن " ، فلم يدخل بها . و زعم عبد القاهر ابن السرى و حفص بن النضر ، انه تزوج بسنا بنت اسماء بن الصلت(٧) الجرامية من بني سليم . فماتت قبل أن يبنى(٨) بها .

فجميع من تزوج النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم من قريش سبع نسوة اولهن خديجة ثم سودة ثم عائشة ثم ام سلمة ثم حفصة ثم ام حبيبة ثم فاطمة ثم واحدة من حلفاء قريش(٩) فذلك ثمان . و جميع من تزوج من سائر العرب تسع نسوة : جويرية ثم ميمونة ثم زينب ام المساكين ثم الكلابية ثم عمرة الغفارية ثم أسماء بنت الجون ثم قتيلة بنت قيس و ام شريك النجارية و سنا السلمية ، فذلك تسع . و صفية بنت حيي من بني اسرائيل فذلك عشرة .

و كانت له / صلى الله عليه و سلم وليدتان . احداهما مارية القبطية . و كان المقوقس صاحب الاسكندرية بمصر بعث بها الى النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم(١٠) . فولدت له ابراهيم . فأوصى بالقبط خيرا . وقال "هم أصهارنا" . وقال "لو بقي ابراهيم ما نسيت قبطية" .

مضت مارية القبطية .

و كانت له ريحانة بنت زيد بن شمعون من بني خنافة(١١) من بني النضير . وقال بعضهم "ربيحة القرظية" احدى نساء(١٢) بني خنافة . و كانت تكون في نخلة بالعالية . و كان يقيل عندها احيانا اذا ما جاء(١٣) النخل . و زعموا أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ابتدأه اول وجعه الذى توفي فيه عندها . سباها في شوال سنة أربع .

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١) زيادة مني . ٢) في الاصل "اشتكا" . ٣) في الاصل "اوصا" .
٤) في الاصل "تضرب" . ٥) فوزيادة مني .
٦) اسمها غزية بنت جابر بن حكيم . "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ١١٠
٧) اسمها كما ورد في "طبقات ابن سعد" سنا بنت الصلت بن حبيب السلميه . ٨/ ١٠٧
٨) في المخطوطة "يبتني" . ٩) هي زينب بنت جحش .
١٠) و كان ذلك في العام السابع من الهجرة . "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ١٥٣
١١) في الاصل "جنافة" و التصحيح من "طبقات ابن سعد" ٨/ ١٥٧
١٢) في الاصل "احد نسا ..."
١٣) في الاصل "جا"

## تسمية من طلق النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من نسائه

طلق حفصة بنت عمر ، فأتاه جبريل فقال له " راجعها فانها صوّامة قوّامة ، و هي في الجنة " . فراجعها.

و طلق سودة بنت زمعة . فقعدت له قبل صلاة الصبح . فلما مرّ قالت له " ايه إ ليس لي في الرجال أرب . و لكني أحب أن أبعث في أزواجك فراجعني ، و اجعل يومي لمن أحببت من نسائك " فراجعها و جعل يومها لعائشة .

و زعم / سعيد عن قتادة قال " مات النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم عن تسع. خمس منهن من قريش ، و ثلاث من سائر العرب ، و واحدة من بني هارون . عائشة و حفصة و ام حبيبة بنت أبي سفيان و سودة بنت زمعة و ام سلمة بنت أبي أمية . فهؤلاء[1] خمس من قريش . و من سائر العرب ، ميمونة بنت الحارث و زينب بنت جحش و جويرية بنت الحرث ، و من بني اسرائيل صفية بنت حي .

## تسمية من خطب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ولم يتزوج

خطب حمرة بنت الحارث بن عوف بن أبي حارثة الى أبيها ، فقال "ان بها سوءاً " . و لم يكن بها شيئا . فرجع اليها ابوها و قد برصت ، فهي ام شبيب ابن البرصاء[2] الشاعر .

و خطب ام حبيب بنت العباس بن عبد المطلب . فوجد أباها العباس بن عبد المطلب أخاه في الرضاعة . أرضعتهما أمة اسمها نوبية . أمة كانت لأبي صيفي ابن هاشم . و قال العباس للنبي صلى الله عليه و سلم " أراك تتزوج من نساء قريش ها هنا و ها هنا ، فما يمنعك من بيت حمزة ؟ " قال " ان أباها رضيعي " .

و عرض عليه الضحاك بن سفيان أحد بني أبي بكر ابنته ، و وصف جمالها ثم قال " و مع ما وصفت لك من جمالها انها لم تصدع قط " فقال " لا حاجة لي/ بها " .

و ذكر عبد الوهاب بن عبد المجيد الثقفي قال " سمعت يحى بن سعيد يقول " أخبرتني عمرة ان حبيبة بنت سهل كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم همّ بها ان يتزوجها و ان ثابت بن قيس تزوجها." قالت عمرة و كان رجلا شديد الخلق فضربها فأصبحت عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ، فرآها فقال " من هذه ؟ " قالت " أنا حبيبة " قال " ما شأنك ؟ " قالت "يا رسول ( الله )[3] لا أنا و لا ثابت" قال فأتى[4] ثابت. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم " خذ منها " فأخذ منها . فقالت " اى رسول الله عندى و الله كل شئ اعطانيه "[5] . قالت عمرة " و اخذ منها و قعدت عند اهلها " .

آخر الجزء[6]
و الحمد لله وحده و صلواته على سيدنا محمد و على
آله و صحبه و حاشا لله و لهم ، وغفر
الله لمن كتبه ولمن قرأه و الجميع
المسلمين

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[1] في الاصل "فهاولاى" . [2] في الاصل " البرصا " . [3] زيادة مني .

[4] في الاصل "فاتا " .

[5] في " طبقات ابن سعد " ما يلي " فقالت يا بني الله كلما اعطاني فهو عندى " ٨/ ٣٢٦

[6] في الاصل " اخرالحرو "

قال ابو عبيدة في يوم رحرحان –

" . . . فلما اصبح الصباح دعوا بها فوجدوها قد ذهبت . فسألوا عنها فقال هذا جِرِى رطباً من زُنَّهــا . وكانت المرأة يقال لها حنظله ، وهي بنت اخي زرارة بن عدس . فاتت قومها ، فسألها عمها زرارة عما رأت ، فلم تستطع ان تنطق . فقال بعضهم : "اسقوها ماء حارا فان قلبها قد برد من الفرق . ففعلوا وتركوها حتى اطمأنت . فقالت يا عمّ ، اخذني القوم امس وهم فيما ارى يريدونكم ، فأحذر انت وقومك . فقال : لا بأس عليك يا بنت اخي ، فلا تذعرى قومك ولا تروعيهم ، واخبريني ما هيئة القوم وما نعتهم . قالت : اخذني قوم يقبلون بوجوه الظباء ويدبرون بأعجاز النساء . قال زرارة : اولئك بنو عامر ، فمن رأيت فيهم ؟ قالــت : رأيت رجلا قد سقط حاجباه على عينيه فهو يرفع حاجبيه ، صغير العينين ، عن امره يصدون . قال ذاك الاحوص بن جعفر . قالت : ورأيت رجلا قليل المنطق ، اذا تكلم اجتمع القوم لمنطقه كما تجتمع الابل لفحلهــا ، وهو احسن الناس وجها ، ومعه ابنان له لا يدبر ابدا الا وهما يتبعانه ، ولا يقبل الا وهما بين يديــه . قال : ذلك مالك بن جعفر وابناه عامر وطفيل . قالت ورأيت رجلا هلقامه جسيما – والهلقامه الأفوه – قال : ذلك ربيعة بن عبد الله بن ابي بكر بن كلاب . قالت ورأيت رجلا اسود ، اخنس قصيرا ، اذا تكلم عذم القوم عذم المنخوس . قال ذلك ربيعة بن قرط بن عبد بن ابى بكر بن كلاب . قالت ورأيت رجلا صغير العينين ، اقرن الحاجبين ، كثير شعر السّبله ، يسيل لعابه على لحيته اذا تكلم . قال ذلك حندج بن البكّاء . قالت ورأيت رجلا صغير العينين ، ضيق الجبهة طويلا ، يقود فرسا له ، معه جفير لا يجاوز يده . قال ذلك ربيعة بن عقيــل . قالت ورأيت رجلا آدم معه ابنان له حسنا الوجه ، اصهبان ، اذا اقبلا نظر القوم اليهـما حتى ينتهيا واذا ادبرا نظروا اليهما . قال ذلك عمرو بن خويلد بن نفيل بن عمر بن كلاب ، وابناه يزيــد وزرعه . . . الــخ "

" الاغاني "
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م ١١ ص١٢٦–١٢٧

قال ابو عبيده في يوم شعب جبله :

" وذكر بشر بن عبد الله بن حيان الكلابي ان عبساً لما حاربت قومها اتوا بنى عامر وارادوا عبد الله بن جعده وابن الحريش ليصيروا حلفاءهم دون كلاب ، فأتي قيس بن زهير واقبل نحو بني جعفر هو والربيع بن زياد حتى انتهيا الى الاحوص جالسا قدام بيته . فقال قيس للربيع ، انه لا حلف ولا ثقة دون ان انتهي الى هذا الشيخ . فتقدم اليه قيس فأخذ بمجامع ثوبه دراء فقال هذا مقام العائذ بك ! قتلتم ابي فما اخذت له عقلا ولا قتلت به احدا ، وقد اتيتك لتجيرنا فقال الاحوص نعم ! انا لك جائر مما اجير منه نفسي . وعوف بن الاحوص عن ذلك غائب . فلما سمع عوف بذلك اتى الاحوص وعنده بنو جعفر فقال يا معشر بني جعفر اطيعوني اليوم واعصوني ابدا ، وان كنت والله فيكم معصيا . انهم والله لو لقوا بني ذبيان لولوكم اطراف الاسنة اذا نكهوا في افواههم بكلام . فابدأوا بهم فاقتلوهم واجعلوهم مثل البرغوث دماغه في دمه . فأبوا عليه وحالفوهــم . فقال والله لا ادخل في هذا الحلف . . . الـخ "

" الاغاني "
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م ١١ ص ١٣٢–١٣٣

قال ابو عبيده في " يوم الاياد "

" . . . قال و يقبل الجيش حتى ينزل الهضبة ، هضبة الخصي . ثم بعثوا ربيئتهم فاشرف الخصي و هو في قلة الحزن فرأى السواد في الحديقة و تمر ابل فيها غلام شاب من بني عبيد بالجيش . ( قال هبيره يقال له قرط بن اضبط ) فعرفه بسطام و كان عرف عامة غلمان بني ثعلبه حين اسر ( و قال سليط لا ، بل هو المطوّاح بن قرواش ) فقال بسطام ايه يا مطوح ، اخبرني خبر حيّك اين هم من السواد الذى بالحدقة ؟ قال هم بني زبيد . قال افيهم اسيد بن حناءة ؟ قال نعم . قال كم هم من بيت ؟ قال خمسون بيتا . قال فأين بنو عتيبه و اين بنو أزنم ؟ قال نزلوا روضة الثمد قال فاين سائر الناس؟ قال محتجزون بجفاف ـ و جفاف وموضع معروف ـ قال فمن هناك من بني عاصم، ابن الاحيمر ؟ قال فيهم . قال ابن معدان و قعنب ابنا عصمه ؟ قال فهما فيهم . قال فاين وديعه بن الاوس الازنمي ؟ قال فيهم. قال فمن فيهم من بني الحارث بن عاصم ؟ قال حصين بن عبد الله وعفاق بن عبد الله. فقال بسطام اتطيعونني ارى لكم ان تميلوا على هذا الحي الحريد ـ يعني المتنحي ـ من بني زبيد فتصبحوا غدا غانمين بالفيفاء سالمين . فقالوا و ما تغني بنو زبيد عنا لا يردون رحلتنا . قال ان السلامة احدى الغنيمتين . قالوا ان عتيبه قد مات . . . الخ . "

" النقائض "
تحقيق محمد اسماعيل عبد الله الصتاوى
القاهره ١٩٣٥
ج ٢ ص ٢٧١-٢٧٢

قال ابو عبيده في خبر يوم ذات كهف و يوم طخفة

" و كان من حديثه انه لما هلك عتاب بن هرمي بن رياح بن يربوع و كانت الرفادة له و كان الملك اذا ركب ردف وراءه " ، و اذا نزل جلس عن يمينه فتصرف اليه كأس الملك اذا شرب و له ربع غنيمة الملك من كل غزوة يغزو له اتاوة على كل من في طاعة الملك . فنشأ له ابن يقال له عوف بن عتاب . فقال حاجب بن زرارة ان الردافة لا تصلح لهذا الغلام لحداثة سنه ، فاجعلها لرجل كهل . قال و من هو ؟ قال الحارث بن بيبة المجاشعي فدعا الملك بني يربوع . فقال يا بني يربوع ان الردافة لعتاب و قد هلك و ابنه هذا لم يبلغ فاعقبوا اخوتكم ، فانى اريد ان اجعلها للحارث بن بيبة فقالت بنو يربوع انه لا حاجة لاخواننا فيها و لكن حسدوننا مكاننا من الملك . وعوف بن عتاب على حداثة سنه أحرى للردافة من الحارث بن بيبة و لن نفعل و لن ندعها . قال فان لم تدعوها فأذنوا بحرب . قالوا دعنا نسر عنك ثلاثا ثم آذنا بحرب . . . الخ "

" النقائض "
تحقيق محمد اسماعيل عبد الله الصاوى
القاهره ١٩٣٥
ج ١ ص ٦١

قال ابو عبيده في يوم " شعب جبله "

" . . . و تبعهم غثاء من غثاء الناس يريدون الغنيمة فجمعوا جمعا لم يكن في الجاهلية قط مثله اكثر كثرة ، فلم تشك العرب في هلاك بني عامر ، فجاءوا حتى مروا ببني سعد ابن زيد مناة ، سيروا معنا الى بني عامر. فقالت لهم بنو سعد " ما كنا لنسير معكم و نحن نزعم ان عامر بن صعصعه ابن سعد بن زيد مناة. فقالوا " اما اذا ابيتم ان تسيروا معنا فاكتموا علينا . فقالوا " اما هذا فنعم ".

" فلما سمعت بنو عامر بمسيرهم اجتمعوا الى الاحوص بن جعفر ، و هو يومئذ شيخ كبير قد وقع حاجباه على عينيه و قد ترك الغزو غير انه يدبّر امر الناس ، و كان مجربا حازما ميمون النقيبة ، فاخبروه الخبر . فقال لهم الاحوص " قد كبرت ، فما استطيع ان اجئ بالحزم و قد ذهب الرأى مني ، و لكني اذا سمعت عرفت ، فاجمعوا آراءكم ثم بيتوا ليلتكم هذه ثم اغدوا عليّ فاعرضوا عليّ آراءكم ، ففعلوا . فلما اصبحوا غدوا عليه ، فوضعت له عباءة بفنائه فجلس عليها ، و رفع حاجبيه عن عينيه بعصابة ثم قال " هاتوا ما عندكم ." فقال قيس بن زهير العبس " بات في كنانتي الليلة مائة رأى ." فقال له الاحوص " يكفينا منها رأى واحد حازم صليب مصيب ، هات فانثر كنانتك " فجعل يعرض كل رأى رآه حتى أنفد . فقال له الاخوص " ما ارى بات في كنانتك الليلة رأى واحد " وعرض الناس آراءهم حتى انفدوا . فقال " ما اسمع شيئا و قد صرتم اليّ ، احطوا اثقالكم و ضعناءكم ففعلوا ، ثم قال " احطوا ظعنكم فحطوها ، ثم قال " اركبوا " فركبوا ، و جعلوه في محفّة ، و قال " انطلقوا حتى تعلوا في اليمين ، فان ادركم احد كررتم عليه ، و ان اعجزتموهم مضيتم " . الخ "

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نصوص من "سيرة عنترة" نقلا عن مخطوطه محفوظه في المتحف البريطاني تحت رقم (add. 23,292) . و يلاحظ في النص اخطاء نحوية و لغوية لم نعن في تصحيحها ، لان الغرض من عرض النص كما هو الكشف عن التشويه الذى حصل في السيرة على ايدى الرواة و القصاصين

" قال جهينه اليمني و ابا عبيده و الاصمعي ، فنزلوا في ذلك الوادى و لما امسا المسا بات عنتره لهم حارسا و كان اكثر حرسه لنفسه لا لهم حتى الصباح و عولوا على الرواح و اذا قد لاح لهم هلال عالي على هودج سامي مجلل بالديباج المدثّر ، موشح بوشايح الحرير الملوك من الاحمر و الاصفر على ناقة عالية السنام طويلة الحطام طويلة الذمام يطير الزبد من اشداقها و تلطم الارض باخفافها و تطلب مراعي احداقها و تحن الى مرعاها من شدة اشتياقها و حولها جماعة من الاماء بالدفوف و المزاهر و عليهم الالوان من كل لباس فاخر من و ابن جماعة من العبيد كأنهم الاسود الذوابر متقلدين بالسيوف البواتر معتقلين بالرماح الخواطر و هم يتقلبون تحت درقهم فرحا و يلعبون بسيوفهم مرحا " .

نص آخر

" قال الاصمعي و ابا عبيدة ، ، و كان السبب في وصول هذه الخيل الى بني عبس العشره فرسان الذين سلموا من الواقعة الاوله لانهم انقسموا قسمين فمضى منهم خمسة الى ابو الجاريه و خمسة الى بحلها و ما منهم الا من يدعوا بالويل و الثبور و يخبر بعظايم الامور . و كانت حلل بني طي اقرب و لما سمع ابو الجاريه ذلك ركب و قد زاد به الغضب و تبعه من قومه ثلثمايه فارس اوقاح مثل اسد البطاح غايصين في السلاح . فلحقوا بني عبس قريب من المعمعة و قد اعاقهم ما جرا بينهم و بين عنتر من تلك الواقعة . و لما رأى عنتر الخيل قد تبادرت و الشجعان قد تسارعت ، علم انه يوم ثقيل و على الاصحاب طويل . فقال " يا بني عمي حياتكم الابطال، و اليوم يحل بكم الوبال حيث منعتموني من الغنيمة و منعتم حقي و طلبتم قتلي و قطع رزقي . لكن انا اسامحكم لاني في نعمتكم و بيت ربكم اعتز اذا اوليت . و هذه الغنيمة لكم و باسيافكم نهبتموها و انا كنت مزاحمكم فيها ، فاحطوا و خلصوها و قد اعترفت بذنبي و عفيتكم حربي ، فقاتلوا من اتا يأخذها منكم و ها انا منعزل عنكم "

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