hood, contemporaneous observers would have included many more individuals and orations, knowing both *qāṣṣ* and *qiṣṣa* without feeling compelled to use the terms explicitly. Conversely, some of those labeled as *quṣṣāṣ* in later Islamic sources may have rejected the label—famously pious early Muslim figures, such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Zayd b. Thābit, Qatāda b. Diʿāma, Ibn ʿAbbās, and others, tended to accumulate labels posthumously as their legacies grew, becoming all things to all people. Practical questions about the *quṣṣāṣ* that could have offered a clearer understanding of the *quṣṣāṣ* are not asked. Thus, it remains unclear how one became a *qāṣṣ* to begin with and whether this was some sort of official or quasi-official position. Armstrong mentions a few reports about payments to the *quṣṣāṣ*, but does not offer much insight into how they were compensated, if at all. The silence of the sources makes it difficult, perhaps impossible, to answer such questions definitively, yet some discussion of these aspects would have been useful. In addition, it is striking that so much of Armstrong's discussion of the *quṣṣāṣ*'s status in society focuses on their relationships with political leaders, as well as with occasional rebels, despite only one of the *qaṣaṣ* texts he uncovered being overtly religio-political. This incongruity between their perceived relationship to power and their preserved orations merits further discussion. These minor shortcomings, however, are inherent to any first attempt to provide a comprehensive treatment of a somewhat nebulous early Islamic social group. Armstrong's study is thorough and well researched and provides opportunities for more in-depth research to fill in the inevitable gaps now revealed. While a clear picture of the *quṣṣāṣ* and their significance in early Islam remains elusive, Armstrong's work is an impressive contribution to our understanding of this important element of the early Islamic scholarly community.

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The Rhetorical Fabric of the Traditional Arabic Qaṣīda in Its Formative Stages: A Comparative Study of the Rhetoric in Two Traditional Poems by ʿAlqama l-Faḥl and Bashshār b. Burd. By Ali Ahmad Hussein. Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes, vol. 98. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015. Pp. xv + 292. €78 (paper).

In the study under review, Ali Ahmad Hussein turns his careful, honest, and engaging scholarship to the challenge of analysing exactly what happened to rhetorical texture during the transition from pre-Abbasid to *muḥdath* ("modern") poetry. He develops a literary critical toolbox that combines Classical Arabic poetics with twentieth-century European criticism.

The challenge of accounting for change in poetry is one Hussein faced in his earlier work. In *JAL* articles in 2004 and 2005 (35,3: 297–328 and 36,1: 74–102 respectively) and in his monograph *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic Poetry: Function, Narration and Idiosyncrasy in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Poetry* (Harrassowitz, 2009), he argues that Classical Arabic accounts of structure failed to enable critics to either locate or discuss development and innovation. This holds true whether the critics were Classical Arabic scholars or twentieth-century Europeans. The Europeans failed to identify the changes observed by Hussein because of their dependence on the Arabic scholarly heritage to understand how the sections of Classical Arabic poems fit together; this led them to treat the poetry as "imitative and traditional" (*The Lightning-Scene*, xii).

In *Rhetorical Fabric* the challenge is the same, but this time Classical Arabic resources are substantially more useful to the author. Hussein commits to the Classical Arabic toolbox of rhetorical figures, and supplements it with European accounts of rhetorical figures. He explains that he wants to do for his two poems what the Muʿtazilī exegete al-Zamakhsharī did for the Quran in the twelfth century: give a complete account of poetics throughout a literary text. Hussein selects eleven rhetorical figures from al-Zamakhsharī, ranging from metonymy (*kināya*) to redirection (*iltifāt*) via paranomasia (*tajnīs*) and ploke (πλοκή, *radd al-ʿajuz ʿalā l-ṣadr*), and then builds his own critical toolbox with the help of François Moreau from late twentieth-century France: metonymy, simile, metaphor, analogy, and the loose trope (synecdoche). Hussein is careful, and appropriately historicist, when it comes to historical

development—he knows and says that the figures enumerated in Classical Arabic are not quite the same as those found in twentieth-century European and Anglophone criticism. But in this book he is committed to the use of rhetorical figures to explain how poetry works and changes. He is also, by extension, committed to the existence of certain rhetorical figures across time and language.

The book starts with an exemplary bibliography of Classical Arabic criticism from the eighth to the fourteenth century, which includes references to the reports of pre-Islamic critical practice and culminates with al-Zamakhsharī (chapter one). As Hussein explains with admirable methodological frankness, al-Zamakhsharī had noted that the correspondence between figure and text, between critical taxonomy and the poetry itself, was not always clear: "even the classical critics were sometimes unsure of the rhetorical figures of speech used in a certain phrase or, in other words, they used to rhetorically interpret a certain phrase in different ways" (p. 19). This sets up the question that Hussein must answer: do we need a stable taxonomy to map change in poetic technique? One answer is to be found in the existing scholarship on figures of speech (*badīʿ*), where we can read in Hussein's presentation of the work of each scholar (Wolfhart Heinrichs, Suzanne Stetkevych, Ewald Wagner, and more) that everyone did construct or locate their own stable taxonomy (chapter two). Heinrichs, for example, used four of Ibn al-Muʿtazz's five main figures of speech to track the development of *badīʿ* in a poem by Muslim b. al-Walīd (p. 31).

In chapter three, Hussein provides a detailed and conscientious eleven-part review of the main rhetorical figures that he found in the two poems by ʿAlqama and Bashshār. This review includes consideration of the problems of translation: *kināya* is not quite the same thing as "metonymy" or "periphrasis" and Hussein is clear that he is, in effect, rewriting English critical vocabulary for his purposes: "we will use the term 'synecdoche' as synonymous for the 'loose trope;' although synecdoche basically covers only one type—the most familiar type—of the loose trope: viz. when a part of something refers to the whole, or vice versa" (p. 43 n. 5, "loose trope" referring to *majāz mursal*). It is refreshing to see the inevitable translation gymnastics laid out with frankness, and with a commitment to contemporary relevance; in a classic example of metonymy referring to a great deal of generous cooking for guests, "having lots of ash," "can a modern generous person who does not produce ash at all in cooking be described as *kaṯīr ar-ramād*?" (p. 45). Hussein thinks not, but the question is worth asking.

Chapters four through seven are the meat of the book's analysis: a chapter on ʿAlqama's *mīmiyya* (*hal mā ʿalimta . . .*), a chapter on Bashshār's *dāliyya* (*maliku mabītī . . .*), and then two chapters that work through Hussein's toolbox of rhetorical figures for both poems: chapter six for imagery (metonymy, simile, metaphor, analogy, and loose trope) and chapter seven for a further set of figures, ranging from antithesis to rhyme, that unlike those in chapter six serve to create "a certain sound effect" (p. 234). The Classical distinction between figures of the *maʿnā* (content) and figures of the *lafẓ* (form) lies productively in the background here. Hussein's translation, commentary, and analysis are systematic and well referenced. This is particularly useful and important when it comes to the lexical depth and indeterminacy that characterize some of the images under consideration: *al-ʿuljūm* can be the night, a mountain at night, the waves of the sea, an old/tall/great camel, or a gazelle with a white belly and a tawny back, and as Hussein says: "all these meanings fit the context" (p. 89). His provision of Arabic with accurate critical voweling in the main text of the monograph is a tremendous boon to the reader. His translations (provided within square brackets) are accurate and informative, while making no pretense at aesthetic impact; affect is left to the Arabic original.

Hussein's frank and honest accounting for methodology, in both the terminology chapter and throughout the meat of his analysis, enables us to engage with his approach in detail and identify its advantages and disadvantages. The main disadvantage is that the rhetorical figures themselves, however carefully delineated, translated, and consciously manipulated they may be, inevitably exert a certain force on the analysis. Having selected a repertoire of figures, the critic has no option but to use them. This produces tension even when, as in Hussein's case, the selection of figures was itself made through the poems. In this book, tension is most visible in the case of metonymy. Hussein gives a comprehensive enumeration of the different types of metonymy in chapter two (pp. 42–47), and then identifies all instances of metonymy that appear in the poems. The problem is that metonymy metastasizes into a space so broad that it necessitates literary critical identification of aspects of language that are not in themselves poetic. Hussein reads *al-bāsiṭ l-mutaʿāṭī* as a "linguistic metonymy." It translates

as: "the one who stretches out to take something" (p. 72). Should this phrase be understood as a salient figure in the rhetorical fabric of the poem or not? Should it be considered an instance of the rhetorical figure of metonymy to be thus enumerated in the comparative statistics or not?

Bashshār wrote that when he came to a damaged trough, his camel "loathed its little water" (*fa-ʿāfat niṭāfahū*). Hussein rightly takes this to mean that the camel did not drink the water; in the remainder of the line the camel finds a spring and presumably drinks from that. Hussein translates *ʿāfat* as "abstained." But he also identifies *ʿāfat* as part of the rhetorical fabric of the poem: "a metonymy as the camel did not drink the water." When a metonymy is so commonplace that it is elided in translation, and is equivalent to saying that one's child "didn't like her food" when she forewent it, it is hard to see the literary critical value of recording it as rhetoric. The same problem affected Classical Arabic literary critics too; one thinks, for example, of the identification of *majāz* (nonliteral) with any deviation whatsoever from a strict lexical accounting: if the dialect form *anẓūr* is a *majāz* version of *anẓur*, then what meaning does *majāz* have as a rhetorical category? Certainly not the same meaning as "metaphor" in English. Furthermore, Hussein is building toward a statistical accounting of the frequency of different uses of rhetoric in the two poems, so stretching the figure of metonymy risks distorting the ultimate results. Indeed, Hussein notes about the very same line that it also functions as "a metonymy for nobility": the protagonist's camel is so noble that it refuses to drink until it reaches good water (p. 147). There seems to me to be a difference between the impact and import of these two metonymies, a difference that is elided when they sit alongside each other in Hussein's accounting. A criticism composed of rhetorical figures also inevitably deconstructs and reforms the figures themselves in a process that is in tension with the accompanying taxonomical drive to keep each figure separate. A single image, such as "Every tent, however firmly pitched for however long, will inevitably be struck," can be both a metonymy and an analogy at the same time (pp. 101, 182, 222: *wa-kullu baytin wa-in ṭālat iqāmatuhū ʿalā daʿāʾimihī lā budda mahdūmū*).

Hussein pursues every single instance of language that could be classed as, for example, metonymy—rather than simply focusing on the moments when the poetry seems to us to be most powerful. He does this in part because his new adjusted toolbox defines each rhetorical figure not as the narrow trope (for example, of *kināya*) identified by the Classical Arabic critic, but rather as an expanded field that includes a scope envisaged for French poetry by Moreau (*métonymie*). This double movement is inevitable; European theory comes in with the European languages we use. But the process is not short on irony: Hussein uses François Moreau to expand the scope of his rhetorical figures, but in 1980s France, Moreau had been trying to move in the opposite direction and rationalize what he saw as a vague and sloppy set of figures that contemporary scholarship had made available to him (*L'image littéraire* [Paris, 1982], reviewed by Bettina L. Knapp, in *The French Review* 57,6 [1984]: 865–66, and translated into Arabic by Ali Nagib Ibrahim [Paris, 2004]). In a further France-related irony, Hussein's use of Moreau (who used Rabelais and others) was not enough for reviewer Brigitte Foulon (*Arabica* 64 [2017]: 87–127), who bemoaned his neglect of Paul Ricoeur.

The best argument for the success of Hussein's methodology is its results. He shows that metonymy plays a statistically more significant role in ʿAlqama than in Bashshār, and that ʿAlqama's metonymies tend to describe animals and are simpler than Bashshār's, which are employed for "psychological qualities and moral characteristics" (pp. 191–93). Furthermore, ʿAlqama's similes tend to express shapes whereas Bashshār's tend to express movement (pp. 203–4); and whereas ʿAlqama's metaphors mostly use particles, Bashshār prefers to make metaphors with verbs (p. 258).

Hussein's inclusion of commonplace and complex phrases under the rubric of metonymy makes us think about the relationship of poetry to ordinary language. What *is* a phrase such as ʿAlqama's *tulāḥiẓu l-sawṭa shazran*? Is it a metonymy for the fear of the camel (p. 80)? Or is it a literal description of what the camel is doing, looking askance at the whip? There can be no doubt that it is part of a poem; the classical and formal metered structure makes this perfectly clear, even without histories of genre and reception. How then should we read it? A critical approach based around rhetorical figures connects us to the sophisticated analyses of the Classical Arabic critics and enables us to fit the poems into comparative taxonomies. It leaves out a great deal of what made the poems successful and continues to keep them canonical now, but to deal with affect and irony would require an expansion of the toolbox beyond *naqd al-shiʿr* or literary criticism into the genres of *adab* and *akhbār*, one that is necessarily

beyond the scope of this work. Hussein's achievement is substantial: *Rhetorical Fabric* is both a reliable philological resource and an original, thought-provoking, honest argument about poetry.

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Samarqand et le Sughd à l'époque 'abbāsside: Histoire politique et sociale. By YURY KAREV. Studia Iranica, Cahiers, vol. 55. Paris: ASSOCIATION POUR L'AVANCEMENT DES ÉTUDES IRANIENNES, 2015. Pp. 372. €40 (paper).

In this French volume under review, Yury Karev offers a multidisciplinary study that aims to "restituer de manière détaillée l'histoire politique et sociale du Māʾwarāʾannahr" (p. 27). The book focuses on Samarqand, the capital of ancient and medieval Sughd, in today's Uzbekistan, and covers the period from the beginning of the Abbasid revolution ("747" in the book) to the beginning of the Samanid era ("820s"). Karev provides a sound scholarly apparatus with transliteration tables of Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Cyrillic (pp. 11–12), historical maps produced by himself (pp. 38–40), two indexes of personal names and toponyms, without further subdivisions (pp. 355–72), and a detailed bibliography subdivided into Chinese, Byzantine, and "Arabo-Persian" primary sources, and secondary literature (pp. 13–26). The secondary sources contain a good number of Russian-language studies, including numismatic and archaeological reports from the archaeological excavations at Samarqand. Karev also adds plans of architectural sites, e.g., maps showing the oasis walls of Samarqand (p. 113) and 3-D reconstructions of the eighth-century Abbasid palace of Samarqand (pp. 119–21).

Karev's critical apparatus is relatively consistently applied. The footnoting is detailed, although not always adequate—for instance, for a citation from *Kitāb al-Qand*, the bibliographical reference is missing entirely and it is not clear whether the Arabic original or the Persian adaptation was used (p. 51). Transliteration errors and spelling mistakes are present, but not to such a degree that the reader is distracted by them.

Karev situates his study within the scholarship of V. V. Barthold, O. G. Bol'shakov, E. Daniel, F. Amabe, S. Said Agha, M. Shaban, and M. Sharon, which, he says, provided an important base for scholars studying the eastern Islamic lands of the Abbasids, but suffered from "un cadre centré sur Baghdād et Marw, une approche qui faisait du Māwarāʾannahr une partie périphérique et presque indistincte du Grand Khurāsān" (p. 35). He views É. de La Vaissière's study *Sogdian Traders* (2004, Eng. trans. 2005) as exemplary in giving Transoxanian places like Samarqand their due, and for studying them as centers rather than caliphal peripheries. There have been a number of other important studies in recent years on this region and its social and political currents (which Karev does not mention, such as those by Andrew Peacock, Richard Bulliet, Frantz Grenet, Minoru Inaba, Louise Marlow, Pavel Lur'e, Florian Schwarz, Michael Shenkar, Deborah Tor, and myself), but he is correct that they are still few and far between. Karev promises to interpret historical events "sous un autre angle, en s'appuyant sur une étude plus détaillée des sources" (p. 36).

While Karev does not specify the methods he applied in his research, he explains that his study is developed along two methodological axes: first, he pays attention "à la « stratigraphie » des événements—les rapports entre eux et surtout la chronologie [. . .]. Dans beaucoup de cas la restitution reste hypothétique . . ." (p. 28). In this way, Karev hopes to offer "un contexte chronologique plus serré [. . . et] de « tisser des liens » entre des faits établis et d'autres qui le sont moins." He suggests, further, that this would enable treatment of social aspects, such as "l'évolution des élites dirigeantes et des colons musulmans" (p. 28), A second "point focal" is the analysis of "le contexte « international »"—involving the three key forces: the central and local Abbasids, and their external rivals, the Tang and the Turks—which, according to Karev, the Chinese sources provide (p. 29).

From a historiographical point of view, it is clear that Karev takes his literary sources by and large at face value and without much source-critical elaboration. However, he goes beyond the published primary source base and consults numerous unpublished manuscripts as well. For example, for Balʿamī's