ʻAdī Ibn Zayd al-ʻIbādi and the Origins of Arabic *Khamriyya*

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The development of Arabic wine poetry into a distinctive poetic genre of the *khamriyya* is closely related to the poetic heritage of the late antique Arab city of al-Ḥīra. Some of the earliest attestations of Arabic *khamriyyāt* are attributed to ʻAdī ibn Zayd al-ʻIbādī, an outstanding early Arab poet from al-Ḥīra who lived in the second half of the sixth century. This chapter focuses on two texts by ʻAdī Ibn Zayd, poems XI and XIII in his *dīwān*,¹ providing examples of his treatment of the wine theme. The discussion of both texts reveals the gradual process of the “emancipation” of Arabic wine song, initially part of the qaṣīda, to an independent poetic genre.

**Historical and Literary Context**

Early Arabic poetry has often been regarded as rooted exclusively in the Bedouin cultural environment of Arab tribal society of the pre-Islamic era.² In acknowledging a dominant impact of the Bedouin culture and recognizing the crucial importance of poetry as the main medium of

¹ For the full Arabic text of the poems adopted from the edition by Muḥammad Jabbār Muʿaybid, *Dīwān ʻAdī ibn Zayd al-ʻIbādī* (Baghdad, 1965) and my translation into English, see the chapter appendix.

² On the influence of this postulate from the perspective of Arab cultural tradition, see Samir Kassir, *Das Arabische Unglück* (Berlin, 2006), 37–42.
cultural memory for the Arabs, one should also consider the diversity of the late antique context of early Arab cultural history and the complexities of literary developments manifested in early Arabic poetic sources. Already Gustav von Grünebaum pointed to the existence of various schools of early Arabic poetry and attempted to classify them chronologically. An analysis of stylistic features and metrics led Grünebaum to the conclusion that one of the earliest and most affluent schools of early Arabic poetry, distinguished by the “ideas of non-Bedouin background, and a definite colour of local tradition,” was flourishing in al-Ḥira (الحيرة), an Arab city on the western bank of the Euphrates in southern Mesopotamia. Emphasizing al-Ḥira’s outstanding significance as a center of early Arabic literary culture is also the fact that the Arabic tradition, as Dmitry Frolov has pointed out, attributed probably the earliest pieces of Arabic poetry to the members of the Christianized tribe of Tanūkh, as well as to poets affiliated with the Lakhmid dynasty of al-Ḥira. Along with having such deep historical roots, the poetic heritage of al-Ḥira presents itself as one of the most innovative of the corpus of early Arabic poetry reflecting the

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6 On the Lakhmid dynasty, see Frolov, *Classical Arabic Verse*, 102.
urban environment of its origin defined by intertribal, intercultural, and interreligious aspects.

In late antiquity, from the beginning of the fourth to the beginning of the seventh century, al-Ḥīra was the center of the Lakhmid principality, and one of the largest Arab cities. The dynamic urban development of al-Ḥīra was stimulated by its healthy climate as well as its location at the crossroads of trading routes connecting East and West Arabia. Close proximity to Sasanian Iran and its capital of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, one of the largest urban centers of the late antique world, facilitated intercultural exchange with Persia. In addition, the population of al-Ḥīra was religiously diverse and included a large and influential Christian group known as the ‘Ībad—a Nestorian community of Arabs from various tribal backgrounds. In attracting Arabs from different parts of

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the Arabian Peninsula, al-Ḥīra remained an Arab city closely connected to the tribes of eastern, central, and western Arabia. These factors defined al-Ḥīra as a gateway of political, economic, and cultural exchange among Persia, Arabia, and Byzantine Syria and fostered the development of Arab culture during late antiquity. The crucial role of al-Ḥīra as “Berührungspunkt aramäisch-hellenistischer Kultur und des vorislamischen Arabertums” is indirectly confirmed by evidence found in medieval Arab historiography that the Arabic script was first introduced in al-Ḥīra and from there it spread to other regions of Arabia.

The cultural diversity of al-Ḥīra had a significant impact on its literary tradition. Due to its populations from different Arab tribes, in al-Ḥīra poets of various tribal affiliations could creatively, directly engage with each other, then promote their literary innovations in other parts of Arabia. The court of the Lakhmids attracted poets from various regions of Arabia to the city, among them such renowned figures of early Arabic poetic tradition as Zuhayr Ibn Abī Sulmā, Ṭarafa Ibn al-ʿAbd, and an-Nābigha adh-Dhubyānī. The courtly environment of al-Ḥīra strongly

(Leiden, 2010), 340.


stimulated poetic production in Arabic, which significantly increased in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{12} It also promoted the professionalization of the poets and the establishment of the panegyric as the major genre of the \textit{qaṣīda}—a polythematic ode representing the nucleus of early and classical Arabic poetry.

Another important factor shaping specific features of Arabic poetry in al-Ḥīra was the influence of Persian culture, particularly music and singing. An analysis of poetic works by Abū Duʿād al-Iyādī (sixth century) allowed Grünebaum to ascertain that the poetic meter of \textit{ramal} was adopted as an Arabic poetic technique from Persia, via the poets of al-Ḥīra, who developed a preference for using the short meters \textit{ramal} and \textit{khaṣṣ} that were particularly suitable for songs.\textsuperscript{13} An evaluation of the metrical repertoire of early Arabic poetry carried out by Dmitry Frolov on a much larger scale confirms that \textit{ramal} was used mainly by poets closely connected to al-Ḥīra. In contrast, poets of the tribes in northwestern Arabia, as well as those of the Dhubyan tribe in central Arabia and the Tamīm in eastern Arabia, who “were not influenced by the Christianised culture of al-Ḥīra,”\textsuperscript{14} largely avoided the \textit{ramal} meter.

Apart from the metric repertoire,\textsuperscript{15} other important aspects of the poetry from al-Ḥīra—such as the development of specific poetic genres, motifs, and imagery—remain practically

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Robert Hoyland, \textit{Arabia and the Arabs from the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam} (London, 2001), 242.
\item Grünebaum, “Abū Duʿād al-Iyādī,” 102.
\item See also Bruno Paoli, \textit{De la théorie à l’usage: Essai de reconstitution du système de la métrique arabe ancienne} (Damascus, 2008).
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
unstudied. Nonetheless, Régis Blachère in his monumental survey of Arabic literary history remarks that the poetic tradition of al-Ḥira manifests in three dominant traits: bacchic, elegiac, and religious. This chapter focuses on the first characteristics, the poetic treatment of the wine theme, to explore the development of early Arabic khamriyya through the example of poems XI and XIII in the dīwān of ʿAdi ibn Zayd al-ʿĪbādi.

ʿAdi ibn Zayd al-ʿĪbādi and the Poetic School of al-Ḥira

Works of at least twenty poets who lived from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the seventh centuries and were closely associated with al-Ḥira have been transmitted in various literary, biographical, and historical sources. Most of these poets are reported to have been Christians. In fact, the outstanding representative of the poetic school of al-Ḥira—ʿAdi ibn Zayd al-ʿĪbādi (d. ca. 600)—belonged to the Nestorian Christian community. Apart from his poetic oeuvre, ʿAdi ibn

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18 Compare Frolov, Classical Arabic Verse, 236.

Zayd is known as, according to Arabic historiography, the first to introduce the Arabic script into administrative usage. This might reflect the professional role of ‘Adi ibn Zayd as a high official at the courts of the Sasanians in Ctesiphon and the Lakhmids in al-Ḥira, as well as his Christian background and familiarity with the written heritage of the Nestorian community of his native city. No archaeological evidence of the usage of the Arabic script in pre-Islamic al-Ḥira has been found yet. Nonetheless, a few preliminary excavations in the area have brought to light some fragments of Syriac texts featuring biblical phraseology, which clearly testifies to the existence of written culture among the Christians in late antique al-Ḥira. Against this background, it appears plausible that ‘Adi ibn Zayd and other Christian Arab poets of al-Ḥira actively contributed to the development of Arabic literacy.

Christian culture is reflected in the poetic texts by ‘Adi ibn Zayd, one of which provides a poetic adaptation of the biblical story of Creation and the Fall. The literary aspects of this poem, as well as the history of its transmission in Arabic sources, support its authenticity. Moreover, the Christian cultural environment is echoed in the popularity of wine theme by the poets from al-

20 Josef Horovitz, “‘Adi ibn Zeyd, the Poet of Hira,” Islamic Culture 4 (1930): 38.


22 Julius W. Hirschberg, Jüdische und Christliche Lehren im vor- und frühislamischen Arabien (Krakow, 1939), 53–57.

Hīra, particularly in the texts by al-Aʾshā (died c. 7/629)\textsuperscript{24} and Ṭāwil ibn Yazd, who lived one generation earlier.

\textbf{The Origins of the Arabic \textit{Khamriyya} Genre}

The emergence of Arabic wine poetry and its development into a distinctive poetic genre, \textit{khamriyya}, is closely related to the poetic school of al-Ḥīra and its receptiveness to the creative impulses arising from both late antique Christianity in Arabia and the cultural sophistication of Iran, radiating especially from the splendor of the Sasanian court in Ctesiphon. Several Arab poets from al-Ḥīra made significant contributions to the development of the \textit{khamriyya}. Some of the earliest pieces of Arabic wine poetry are attributed to Ṭāwil ibn Zayd. In the collection of Ṭāwil’s works, the bacchic topic is represented in the framework of his polythematic \textit{qaṣīdas} and in separate poetic fragments. The question of whether such fragments should be regarded as independent examples of \textit{khamriyyāt} or are merely excerpts from lost \textit{qaṣīdas} remains in dispute.\textsuperscript{25} Nevertheless, remarkable for understanding the impact of Ṭāwil’s wine poetry on early Arabic poetic tradition is the statement of the \textit{Kitāb al-Aghānī} that bacchic poetry by Ṭāwil ibn Zayd used to be recited for al-Walid ibn Yazid (d. 6/743),\textsuperscript{26} whose own poetry in turn inspired Abū

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} In the chapter on al-Walid, Abū al-Faraj al-Islāhānī cites parts of the \textit{qaṣīda} XIII by Ṭāwil ibn Zayd, which is discussed below. See \textit{Aghānī} 6: 59–60, 7: 37.
\end{itemize}
Nuwās (140–198/755–813). With al-Walīd, khamriyya clearly manifests as an independent genre of Arabic poetry, and in Abū Nuwās, it finds its unequaled genius. The mention of ‘Adī ibn Zayd together with al-Walīd and Abū Nuwās is recognition of his foundational significance for the creation of the new genre of the khamriyya. The novel character of ‘Adī’s poetry in this respect reveals itself not so much in separate poetic fragments about wine but in his qaṣīdas, in which the theme of wine becomes prevalent, transforming the poems into what we can call wine qaṣīdas.

The starting point in the development of the khamriyya was the description of wine as a subject of the qaṣīda, which steadily transformed into an independent genre. This can be seen clearly on the basis of the material provided by early Arabic poetic texts. Furthermore, such a development is indirectly confirmed by the history of other genres of Arabic poetic tradition, foremost, love poetry (ghazal), which also emerged through transformation of the qaṣīda form. This process has often been regarded as disintegration of the polythematic qaṣīda into separate poems dedicated to one specific theme. However, the development of various genres in Arabic poetry resulted not just from a formal dissolution of different parts of the qaṣīda into separate units; it went hand in hand with gradual changes in the qaṣīda form itself. Early Arabic lyrical poetry, for instance, has transitional forms of two major types: ghazal in the form of a “nasīb without qaṣīdhah,” and ghazal structured independently of the nasīb patterns. Early Arabic wine

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poetry also demonstrates transitional forms beyond the polarity of a polythematic qaṣīda with passages on wine and a khamriyya as an isolated poem.

The theme of wine occurs in pre-Islamic Arabic qaṣīdas mainly in the section dedicated to the poet’s self-praise (fakhr) or in the context of description of the beloved, especially her saliva\textsuperscript{39}, in the nasīb, the opening part of the qaṣīda. Such interpolations are intrinsic to the qaṣīda structure. They stimulated the diversity of poetic motifs within the normative framework of the qaṣīda, its structure and content alike. Wine was just one of the poetic themes in the repertoire of Arab poets used for artistic similes and descriptions. Considering the normative poetics of early Arabic literature, it is important to note that the characteristics of the qaṣīda as genre are defined both by the polythematic form, including one other main part in addition to a nasīb, and by correlation of all the parts of the qaṣīda in scope, composition, and content. This provides the qaṣīda genre with a wide range of possible variations and allows for the development of novel literary forms, leading to the emergence of new independent poetic genres. This process advanced gradually and involved changes and innovations affecting the structure and content of the qaṣīda.


One can observe this in the example of poetic texts, which, though conventional *qaṣīdas*, concurrently expose features reflecting the emergence of new genres. The following discussion of two poems by ‘Adi ibn Zayd, number XI and XIII in his *dīwān*, illustrates this in relation to the history of early Arabic *khamriyya*.

**Poems XI and XIII by ‘Adi ibn Zayd**

Poems XI and XIII are both twenty-two lines and consist of three main parts.

**Poem XI**

Poem XI, composed in the in *sariʿ* meter, has the following structure:

I  *Nasīb* 1–2  
II  Praising of ‘Abd Hind 3–13  
III  The dream of liberation 14–22

The opening two lines of the *qaṣīda* resemble a conventional *nasīb*. Explicit mention of particular geographic names emphasizes the distance between the poet and the subject of his longing, implying the pain of their separation—a common motif in early Arabic *nasīb*. In contrast to a traditional *nasīb*, however, the lines address not the beloved woman of the poet, but his patron, ‘Abd Hind. Accordingly, instead of a conventional description of the beloved, the following part of the poem praises the poet’s patron (ll. 3–13). Apart from a brief note on the moral virtues of ‘Abd Hind in line 8, his merits are highlighted through allusion to his privileged status as someone who enjoys delicious food (ll. 3 and 4), entertaining and hunting (ll. 4 and 7), and precious wine (ll. 5

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31 On the rarity of long *sariʿ* as a *qaṣīd* meter, see Frolov, *Classical Arabic Verse*, 181–88.

and 7). ‘Adi ibn Zayd appeals to the patron to remember him (ll. 9–10 and 12) and includes two gnomic interpolations (ll. 11 and 13) indicating his current sorrow as a prisoner, which leads to the third main part of the text, an expression of the poet’s dream of liberation. With its nine lines (ll. 14–22), this part forms almost half of the qaṣīda. The thematic focus here is on wine and wine drinking. The poet uses bacchic images to carry himself into the pleasant environment of a carousal (ll. 14–18) and emphasizes that the joy of carousing is beyond comparison (ll. 19–22).

One should not overlook the fact that the wine theme features prominently already in the beginning of the poem. The opening line of the qaṣīda mentions al-Khuṣūṣ as the place near where the addressee of the poem is still lingering:

\[
\text{أَلْبَّابْ عَلَيْبَا} \\
\text{بَلْ يِنَّهُ نَآمَرَ} \\
\text{فََلْا قَرِيباً مِنْ سِوَادَ الْخَصَصَمُ} \\
\]

Report, my friend, to ‘Abd Hind for

you are still near the vicinity of al-Khuṣūṣ.

This clearly implies bacchic elements: according to Yāqūt (d. 626/1229), al-Khuṣūṣ is a place located by the city of al-Kūfa and particularly known for its production of wine barrels,\(^{33}\) a fact that reveals al-Kūfa and al-Ḥīra as part of the wine trade in late antique Arabia. Furthermore, the theme of wine is emphasized in line 5 of the poem, which describes the consumption of red wine originating from Khuṣṣ, a village near al-Qādisiyya, to the southwest of al-Ḥīra.\(^{34}\) Also, Imru‘ al-


\(^{34}\) al-Ḥamawī, Jacut’s geographisches Wörterbuch, 449.
Qays, a famous Arab poet of the sixth century, refers to al-Khuṣṣ in the context of wine trade:\textsuperscript{35}

Like wine merchants, who go up from al-Khuṣṣ with imported wine,

until they discharge it at Yusur.

Moreover, both place-names, al-Khuṣṣ and (al-)Khuṣṣ, allude to the bacchic topic on the lexical level. The Arabic word \textit{khuṣṣ} (pl. \textit{khaṣāṣ, khuṣūṣ}) means both “wine of the best quality” and “shop of a vintner.”\textsuperscript{36}

Introducing the wine theme at the beginning of the poem in the context of praise, ʿAdi ibn Zayd employs wine and wine-drinking motifs to underline the nobility of the patron and illustrate his lavish lifestyle. This reflects wine as a symbol of luxury and pleasure. It is obvious that such usage implies that the wine motifs are subordinate within the framework of praise. Nonetheless, the weight of the wine theme in the poem increases in the second part, which revolves around the symbolism of wine. The poet’s wish to be released from his current imprisonment is directly associated with bacchic motifs of liberation. The joy and the pleasures to which the poet aspires are expressed in images of a carousal:

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\textsuperscript{36} Lane, \textit{Arabic-English Lexicon}, 1585.
\end{center}
If only I knew—and I was rich—
when will I (again) see drinkers (gathered together) around a wine jug.

In a pleasant setting of a tavern:

In the house of wine barrels: cool is its cover,
in it are wine-skins and bowls of palm leaves (used to serve dates).

Where a sophisticated cupbearer serves wine in a fine jar:

And the feeder [i.e., host or cupbearer], embroidered is the lower part of his sleeves,
he is moving slowly as if guiding [lit. protecting] someone whose feet are damaged.

His sleeves are radiating with musk,
ambergris, bay, and storax of Qafūs;

And a fine jar, he serves with it
clear wine, fragrant like cold water from the clouds.
The conventional comparison of wine with fresh rainwater is extended in the last four verses of the poem to emphasize that wine drinking at a carousal is better not only than imprisonment (l. 19) but also the liberty of an eagle, the waywardness of a wild camel (ll. 20–21), or kites devouring their prey (ll. 19–22). The reference to such powerful images carrying poetic symbols of important significance for Arab culture highlights that ‘Adi ibn Zayd understands wine not merely as symbolic of prestige and pleasure but also as an expressive symbol of liberation.

The importance of wine within the thematic scope of the poem is also manifest at the structural level. The second part of the qaṣīda is dedicated entirely to the theme of wine. The composition consolidates the weight of this topic and merges individual wine motifs together into a core of thematic and structural gravity. This can be considered an initial step in the process of the development of the new genre of the khamriyya. The second text, poem XIII in the diwān of ‘Adi ibn Zayd, takes it to the next stage and offers an example of a fully fledged wine qaṣīda.

Poem XIII

Poem XIII is composed in khafti, a short poetic meter typical of the metrical repertoire of poets from al-Ḥīra. The usage of short meter, as has been mentioned earlier, made poetic texts more

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suitable for singing. Also, poem XIII by ʿAdī ibn Zayd can be defined as a wine song, which is indirectly confirmed by the transmission of some of its verses in The Book of Songs.\(^{38}\)

The poem comprises three main parts: nasīb, the wine theme and description of water as well as the place of its origin:

I  \textit{Nasīb}

1–3 reproaching visitors

4–8 description of the beloved

II Wine

Description of wine and the story of its purchase

9 description of wine

10–11 a Jewish wine merchant

12 the virtues of wine buyer

Carousel

13 morning feast, wine serving by a singing girl

14 description of wine

15–16 mixing of wine with water

III Water

17–18 running mountain water

19–22 pure rainwater

The text opens with a nasīb spanning just over one third of the poem’s length (ll. 1–8). Two

\(^{38}\) \textit{Aghānī} 6:59–60, 7:37.
conventional motifs presented here—visitors reproaching the poet and a description of his beloved—clearly indicate the poet’s intention to introduce the poem with a nasīb, common for traditional early Arabic qaṣīdas, in which the general mode is set by reflection on the lost pleasures of love of bygone days. The feelings of sadness and grief related to this express emotional aspects of the crisis in which the poet depicts himself in the nasīb, and which he is supposed to overcome in the following part(s) of the qaṣida, by manifesting the supremacy of the ethical norms of the collective consciousness over the feebleness of an individual against fate and time dragging his life toward an inevitable, tragic finale.

The motif of reproaching visitors (ʿādhilūn) illustrates the conflict between the self-consciousness of the poet and normative ethics imposed by the society to which he must submit himself. It is noteworthy that the time when the poet confronts his visitors asking him whether he has yet recovered is early morning. In pre-Islamic Arabia—and later—wine was preferably consumed in the morning. Analyzing bacchic motifs in the poetry of al-Akḥāl (20–92/640–710), a Christian Arab poet of the Umayyad period closely associated with the tradition of al-Ḥīra and al-Kūfa, Ignaz Krachkowsky notes that in almost all references to carousals, one finds lexemes derived from bakara, ṣabaḥa, and ghadā—verbs that still preserve meaning related to early morning. Placing the opening scene at dawn can therefore be interpreted as alluding to the


context of wine drinking. Also, in the following section of the poem, the wine consumption is
described at a morning carousel:

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\text{فَقَالَتْ: قَمْ نُزِّلْ وَيْلًا عَلَى الْمَرْضَى فَحَافِرِتَ}
\]

Then they called to the morning feast, and

a singer came with a jar in her right hand.

Moreover, as Krachkowsky has observed, not only female (‘ādhila, pl. ‘awādhil) but also male
reproachers (‘ādhilān, the word used also by ‘Adī ibn Zayd) are recurring images in early Arabic
wine poetry.\(^{41}\) In this respect, it is worth mentioning that in a variant of the poem transmitted in
Kitāb al-Aghānī,\(^{44}\) verses 1–3 describing the reproachers are immediately followed by the above-
quoted verse 13, suggesting that the call to the morning carousel was put forth by the poet's
visitors. Last, it seems plausible that the visitor's question about the poet's awakening or recovery
(istafāqa) hints at his groggy state resulting from intoxication, as drowsiness was regarded in early
Arabic poetry as an effect of wine drinking.\(^{43}\) This leads to the conclusion that, as in poem XI,
already the opening line of poem XIII introduces the theme of wine, which is then fully developed
in the sections following the nasīb.

As a rule, it is the function of these following parts of the qaṣīda to express and prove a

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\(^{44}\) Aghānī, 5:127; see also Geyer, Zwei Gedichte von al-ʿAšā, 1:211–12.

\(^{43}\) Kračkovskij, "Der Wein in al-Aḥṭal's Gedichten," 162.
successful overcoming of the conflict expressed in the *nasib*, which generally takes the form of self-praise (*fakhr*) or praise of the poet’s tribe (*mufākha*). In this context, the description of the beloved in the *nasib* enhances the dramatic effect of lost love and/or indirectly exposes the merits of the poet presenting himself as someone who was able to secure the sympathy of attractive ladies. In wine poetry, the description of the beloved acquires an additional function of a transitional motif. One of the popular elements in early Arabic *nasib* is the saliva-wine simile, introducing the bacchic theme through comparison of the sweetness of the beloved’s saliva and the pleasant taste of wine.⁴⁴ ʿAdi ibn Zayd uses the same motif in verses 7–9 to proceed from the description of the beloved to the wine theme, and thus follows the established poetic convention:

\[
\text{فُرِّيَّكَ الْقَذَّاءَ كَمُنْيَتْ رَجِيْنَ}
\]

Wine sweetened them [i.e., teeth] in the morning, (red) like heart’s blood, (so clean) that (any) speck (in it) becomes visible, dark red, matured wine.

Notwithstanding the conventional *nasib*, in the following part of the poem the wine theme is developed to such an extent that it clearly brings it out of the *nasib* framework. The elaboration of the color and quality of wine, the mentioning of a Jewish wine merchant and the virtues of the wine buyer, and the depiction of wine serving and its mixing with water constitute the central part and main content of the *qaṣīda*.

On the structural level, the bacchic part extends just like the preceding *nasib* over eight verses (9–16). But the final part of the *qaṣīda* is closely related to the wine theme, as lines 17–22 are

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dedicated to the description of water to be mixed with wine. Verses 18 and 19–22 refer to the
mountain region where this water comes from. Stylistically forming the end of the qaṣīda, the
lines remain within the context of its wine topic. The interweaving of the themes of wine and
water is characteristic for the further development of the khamrīyya genre, particularly by authors
like al-Akhṭal. The interplay of wine and water in poetic texts stimulated the development of rich
poetic imagery of these two elements. The focus on the process of mixing wine with water and
an extensive reference to the purity of the latter in the poem by ʿAdi ibn Zayd show that already
for him both topics were closely linked.

The interpretation of poem XIII by ʿAdi ibn Zayd depends essentially on the
understanding of the wine theme, its meaning, and its function within the qaṣīda. The reference to
the virtues of the wine buyer in line 12 can be seen as expressing one of the popular subjects of
qaṣid poetry—the poet’s self-praise. However, it is mentioned only cursorily, and along with the
introductory comparison with the beloved, it does not define the exposition of the wine theme.
ʿAdi ibn Zayd provides the wine topic with a self-sufficing function and presents it as the main
content of his qaṣīda. The focus is on the symbolism of wine and defining the meaning of poetic
images and statements linked to it. This reflects an important change in the poetic narrative:
instead of using the wine motifs incidentally as background illustrations of ideas such as prestige,
pleasure, and intoxication, wine imagery comes to the fore and is showcased as a symbolic
embodiment of these ideas, and thus, it becomes the starting point and main subject of poetic
accounts of them. This is a necessary condition and impetus stimulating the development of the
khamrīyya as a distinguished poetic genre.

45 Heine, Weinstudien, 83–82.
Another important aspect is the relation between individual and collective consciousness, as has been observed also in the history of early Arabic ghazal poetry.\textsuperscript{46} Considering the outlined features of early Arabic qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ī\textsuperscript{da}, it becomes obvious that such a development of the bacchic theme as in ʿAdi ibn Zayd’s poem XIII expresses ideas central for the whole text and does not merely provide an elaborate description of yet another possible subject for the main theme of the qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida.\textsuperscript{47} Therefore, the theme of wine fully adopts the main function of the qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida as it was known in early Arabic poetic tradition, yet with a new meaning. It would be misleading to assume a radical break with the literary tradition in the wine poetry by ʿAdi ibn Zayd. The structural continuity of the qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida reflects the validity of literary conventions, yet it is precisely this conventional form that, in the perception of ʿAdi ibn Zayd’s audience, required a qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida to manifest an overcoming of personal crisis and to suggest a model to follow in compliance with the norms and values constitutive of the tribal society. As a structurally dominant part, the theme of wine absorbs the main function of the qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida, but it does so with a new emphasis on the legitimacy of an individual experience. One can presume that the depiction of wine is merely a variation of the so-called compensating motifs, such popular topics in early Arabic qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida as the


\textsuperscript{47} Compare, for instance, the thesis by Thomas Bauer on the “zweckfreien Themen” of the qa\textsuperscript{ṣ}ida—subjects that may not fulfill any other function but demonstrating the poetic skills of the author. Bauer, \textit{Altarabische Dichtkunst. Eine Untersuchung ihrer Struktur und Entwicklung am Beispiel der Onagerepisode}, Teil 1, \textit{Studie} (Wiesbaden, 1992), 262–73.
description of poet’s camel or his fearless journeys through solitary deserts. Structurally the theme of wine occupies their place, but it carries a different meaning, as can be seen in poem XIII. The morning visit of the reproachers is compensated with yet another carousal in the morning involving wine drinking and singing. Intoxication from love turns into intoxication from wine, but it remains an intoxication, and the appeal of the collective norm to the poet “to come to his senses” remains neglected. ʿAdī ibn Zayd replaces the ideal of the tribal hero with an ideal of the bacchic heroism of an individual.

Conclusion

Both poems represent remarkable examples of the treatment of wine theme in early Arabic poetry. They reflect the emergence of the khamriyya as a new poetic genre in the process of its development within the conventional framework of the qaṣīda. While poem XI, despite being generously spilled over with various wine motifs from the beginning to the end, as a whole still remains grounded in the thematic trajectory of messaging, an appeal from the imprisoned poet to his patron, poem XIII celebrates wine and wine drinking as a carousal of poetic symbols that appear to create a poetic universe on their own—a universe of a new literary genre that would be so enthusiastically explored by later generations of poets uninterruptedly and unceasingly during all stages of the history of classical Arabic poetry.

References


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Appendix

Poem XI

سبيع

أَلْبَغْ خَليَّيْنِ َّنَّ، َّنَّ (فَلا) رَّيَّت فيَّمَا مِن سِنَواتِ الحَضوَمَن

2 ِّنَّ، َّنَّ غَيْرَ مِنْ عَيْدِ عَمِّي الذيَّ الحَضوَمَن

3 ِّبِيَّثَت كَثِمَةٌ رَيْبَةِ بِالْحَيْثَ تَدْنَا في أَصْوَلِ القَصِمَن

4 ِّوْلَا لَكِلَفَ لَهُمْ القَيْسِينَ ِّتِقُبَّضَانِ الحَتْيَ وَضَجَّامَةٌ ال

5 ِّكَنِّيَّةٌ مَا شَتَتَ وَتَغْتَلَّبَهَا خَتَمَاً مِنْ خَتَمٍ كَلُونَ الحَضوَمَن

6 ِّغَيْدَتُ عَلَّيْنِ (فِي سَاعَةِ الشَّنَّ) وَجَيْدَتْ ذَوَاتِ الغَيْدَيْنِ َّعِلَّت مَا شَاطَرَ وَتَغْتَلَّبَهَا

7 ِّلا تَتَسَطَّعُ ذَكَرْيِ عَلَّيْنِ الدَّابِرُ ِّكَأَسِّ وَطْفَ بِالْخُذُوفِ النِّحْمُي

8 ِّمَهْجَانِ هَـذِيّ الْكَلَّوْمِ اللَّمْوَمْ ِّكَدَّوْعُ عَهْدٍ وَلَوْ مَعْضَدِي

9 ِّيَا عَهْدَ (فَلَّتْ ذَلِكَ عَمَّيْنِ) مَسَّاعَ فيَّ مَؤْكَبٍ وَرَأَدَّ لِقَيْسِيْنِ

10 ِّيَوْمَ سَمِعَ الْأَرْكَبٍ إِذَا أَوْضَعْتُ يَقْفُفُ فِيهِمْ مِنْ نَحْيِ الْفَلْوَمَيْنِ

11 ِّقُدْ يُبْذِكُ العَمَّيْنِ مِنْ حَوْضِ ِّالْخَيْرَةُ قُدْ يُبْذِكُ عَهْدَ الْخَيْرَيْنِ

12 ِّفَلَا يَنْزِلَ مِسْتَرَكُ مِنْ رَيْحِ ِّذَكَرْيِ مَتَى لَخَمْيَ أَوْ خَلَوْمَيْنِ

13 ِّيَا لَخَمْيَ إِلَيْكِ وَلَقَدْ سَمِمْتَ ذَيّ ِّأَعْرَابِ إِنَّ الَّذِيُّ مَا إِنِّيْنَوْمُن

48 Muʿaybid, Dīwān ʿAdī ibn Zayd al-Ībāḍi, 68–72.
1. Report, my friend, to ʿAbd Hind

you are still near the vicinity of al-Khuṣṣūṣ,

2. in parallel with al-Fūra or near it,

not far from ʿUmayr al-Luṣūṣ.

3. Truffles have been picked for you in the springtime

on a plain between two rugged tracts, which moistens at the roots of cassia trees.

4. Horses chase you,

birds hunt you, but unrestrained you are from the joy of chasing.

5. You eat whatever you desire and take to drink after it

red (wine) from Khuṣṣ resembling the color of precious gems of a ring.
6. You have been taken away from me, ‘Abd, at the time of distress and have been protected from the calamities.

7. May you not forget to remember me under the pleasant influence of the goblet and the whirling with a fat, wild she-ass that did not conceive in the current year (= hunting).

8. Indeed, you are faithful and sincere, avoiding the guidance of a liar, a deceiver.

9. Oh, ‘Abd! Do you remember me at the time (when I was) in the squad of horsemen or riding freely for the hunt?

10. Once with the cavalcade when they were rushing, we were standing out among them racing with the speed of a young she-ostrich.

11. (Yet) at times the slow one gets its share, while good fortune precedes the burden of a passionately longing one.

12. May you not cease to worry remembering me, my ruin or demise.

13. Oh, (my) soul! Endure and avoid the reproach of a reputable one!—indeed, prudence does not become weak.

14. If only I knew—and I was rich— when will I (again) see drinkers (gathered together) around a wine jug.

15. In the house of wine barrels: cool is its cover, in it are wineskins and bowls of palm leaves (used to serve dates),

16. And the feeder (i.e., host or cupbearer), embroidered is the lower part of his sleeves, he is moving slowly as if guiding [lit. protecting] someone whose feet are damaged.
17. His sleeves are radiating musk,

ambergris, bay and storax of Qafūṣ;

18. And a fine jar, he serves with it

clear wine, fragrant like cold water from the clouds.

19. This is better than the guards by

the entrance, both shackles and scratchy fetters,

20. And the one ascending a mountain peak hunting the one

who is trying to escape, (and better) than an adult camel with a saddle (and) a restless

wild (camel).

21. It neither has a price nor does it

carry a second rider, nor does it submit itself to the pulp of palm leaves.

22. And better than kites gathered around the dead

eating meat from the tender sides (of the cadavers).
Poem XIII

خفيف

1. بذكر العادلون في وضح فصدهم
2. ونولون فيك يا ابن عند لـ
3. لنست أدري فقد نحن بضرمي
4. أطبب الطيب جيب أم علي
5. فهوا أخوين على البديع شباق
6. وأسبب على الخيني عين
7. ولا قصار كمُّولا هم رؤف
8. حان من غبار الأحوص لفوقي
9. ففي الذكر القذى كنَّنت رحيب
10. فانتوا على التدرج وحوالف
11. فانحات من النهيدي شوق
12. أرحبُوني على قوم درع
13. فنونه على المشروش فحات
14. يان صفي شفاهها يزاولون

49 Mu’aybid, Dīwān ‘Adī ibn Zayd al-Ibādi, 76–79.
1. Dispraisers came by the morning light
   saying to me: haven’t you come to yourself yet?

2. And reproaching me because of you, o daughter of ‘Abdallah,
   while my heart is enchained by you.

3. I do not know—you have already initiated my separation (from her)—
   whether it is an enemy reproaching me or a friend.

4. The best scent is the scent of Umm ‘Alayy,
   ground fragrance of musk and ambergis,

5. which she mixed with another (fragrance) and the Moringa oil,
   so that it is shining dark green over (her) hands.

6. Locks falling down on the forehead have adorned her,
full, sleek, perfumed.

7. And (her) teeth, white like a chamomile, sweet,
    neither short fragments nor tusks,

8. Shining, you imagine them like an early
    setting of falling stars.

9. Wine sweetened them in the morning, (red) like heart's blood,
    (so clean) that (any) speck (in it) becomes visible, dark red, matured wine.

10. A Jewish merchant kept it for two years,
    so that the maturing process has enriched its fragrance.

11. Then the seal was removed from the cork of the pitcher
    and the Jewish wine market opened.

12. It was purchased by a tall, generous, noble,
    magnanimous (man), his nourishment is soft bread.

13. Then they called to the morning feast, and
    a singer came with a jar in her right hand.

14. I served it on top of the best (drinks), (it is golden yellow)
    like the eye of a cock, a strainer has cleaned the best of it.

15. Sour wine prior to being mixed, but when
    mixed, sweet is its taste for someone drinking it.

16. On its surface are bubbles
    red like sapphire, when pouring decorates it.

17. She mixed it with fresh water, clean, clear
    and excellent, pouring has cleaned its composition
18. over the height, its peaks are unreachable,
   exhausting for an eagle and a kite.

19. Then rainwater was added to it,
   neither stagnant nor dirty.

20. It was on its way among the
   rocks, when . . . in it is an elegant one.

21. Its bottom is covered with blackthorn and its upper part
   is above the clouds, it exhausts wild goats and martens.

22. The place in the shade, surrounded by sandy
   hills, gusty wind drives away the dust (from it).