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One Qaṣīda with Several Chaste Love Affairs in Light of al-Muṣafḍalīyyāt and al-Āṣmaʾīyyāt

ALI A. HUSSEIN

Abstract

Old Arabic poetry is acquainted with two main types of love affairs: erotic escapades and sincere or chaste affairs. In the first, the poet-protagonist boasts of his ability to conduct sexual escapades with one woman or more. In the second, the poet-lover tells of a sincere and heart-breaking love affair. In this, the latter instance, the lover may recall some romantic encounters with his beloved; nonetheless, such encounters play only a marginal role. The main subject here is the separation between the lovers, the deep suffering of the lover, and sometimes his attempts to recover. The two kinds of affairs are well represented in the Muʿallaqa of Imruʿal-Qays.1 Mentioning more than one beloved in an erotic poem is reasonable. However, it is expected that a lover with a sincere love experience deals—in a certain poem—with only one beloved. But this is not always the case. Some old Arabic poems do include a mention of two or more sincere love affairs experienced by the same lover. The present article aims to shed some light on such a phenomenon in poems composed by pre-Islamic and muḥaddram poets. This article is a preparatory paper to a forthcoming article that discusses the same issue in the poetry of the muḥaddram Mulayh b. al-Hakam who, in our opinion, was unique in describing this phenomenon.

The Qaṣīda with Several Chaste Love Affairs: Modern Research and Classical Criticism

Readers of pre-Islamic and early Islamic love poetry were familiar with the phenomenon in which one qaṣīda contains the names of two or more women. These names sometimes indicate different beloveds, while others present different nicknames for the same persona. The reasons for mentioning two or more beloveds in the same poem, despite the lover not boasting of his sexual capacities, are almost ignored by modern research. Only a few remarks here and there are found. ‘Abd al-Haqq al-Hawwas believes that women’s names in old Arabic qaṣīdas do not always refer to real beloveds but are symbols for other—but deeper—issues. Suʿād, for example, is a symbol for joy and

1The affair with Fātimah (verses [vv.] 18–22) is a good example of a chaste affair; the escapades presented in vv. 11–17 and 23–41 are a good example of the sensual or erotic escapades. See the poem in az-Zawzan, Sharḥ al-Muʿallaqa as-sabʾ (Beirut: Maktabat al-Maʾarif, 1972), 10–60.
happiness; while Nu′m is a symbol for a specific kind of joy: the happy life that a man enjoys in the company of his tribe. As examples of such symbolism, al-Hawwās discussed a few qašīdas that mention two beloveds. One of these is a qašida by al-Mutanakhkhil al-Hudhali (no date of his death is given) in which he refers to Salmā and Umayma. Salmā is a beloved who is separated from her lover. The lover feels no sorrow at her departure; rather, he blames himself for recalling such a love affair. On the other hand, Umayma is mentioned immediately before the lover starts praising himself. Neither Salmā nor Umayma is considered by al-Hawwās as a real woman. The first is a symbol for the youth of the protagonist when he was foolish. It is a time that he no longer wishes to recall. The second is a symbol for the tribe with its habits and customs as well as the protagonist’s courage. Al-Hawwās alludes to other poems: one by Imru’ al-Qays (d. c. 544 AD), two by Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā (d. c. 609), and one by al-‘Abbās b. Mīrdās (d. c. 18/639) in which the two names Salmā and Asmā’ are mentioned. Although when contemplating Zuhayr’s two poems Salmā does not refer to the name of a woman, but a geographical region, nevertheless al-Hawwās interprets this name symbolically. It is a symbol for Asmā’. The latter is not the name of an actual beloved of the protagonist but is an allusion to the story of Asmā’ al-Bakriyya, whose lover al-Muraqqish al-Akbar (d. c. 552 AD) died of heartbreak because of her marriage with a Yemenite man. In other words, Zuhayr uses the name Asmā’ to allude to the heart-breaking love affair between al-Muraqqish and Asmā’. The need to make such an allusion, instead of composing a love affair of his own, is not explained by the author. Imru’al-Qays and al-‘Abbās also use the same name for the same reason. As for Salmā, referred to in the poems by the three poets, is used as an expression of the Asmā’ of al-Muraqqish. Al-Hawwās also discusses the Mu‘allaqa of al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilīza (d. c. 570 AD), in which Asmā’ and Hind are mentioned. Hind here is considered a symbol for the confederation of the north Arabian tribes in the Khazāzā war. During that war, the north Arabian tribes defeated the Yemenite troops. Asmā’ on the other hand is regarded as a symbol of the separation


between the two tribes of the same origin Bakr (the tribe of al-Harith) and Taghlib. By introducing the stories of his confederated tribes and that of the separated peoples, al-Harith sends a message to his tribe, as well as to Taghlib, that it is better to improve the relationship between the two tribes than to oppose each other.8 The author also discusses a poem in which he mentions two names, Umāma and Khawla. This poem is the lāmiyya by ‘Amr b. Qamī’a (d. c. 540 AD). The two names symbolize the tribe of the protagonist and a neighbouring tribe that shared its pastures. Separated by Khawla and Umāma indicates the loss of happiness and security due to the separation between the protagonist and the aforementioned tribes.9

According to this approach by al-Hawwās, different beloveds in the same poem should be regarded as symbols for different and deeper issues with which the poet is concerned. Using this approach, al-Hawwās ignores love as a theme with which the old Arabic qaṣīḍa had been involved. He—as well as other modern scholars such as Najib al-Bahbīṭī, Naṣrat ‘Abd ar-Rahmān, and ‘Abdallāh al-Fifi, who give the names of the beloveds political, mythological and religious connotations10—rejects dealing with the Arabic qaṣīḍa as a realistic work. Behind every motif, every expression, and every name, there is a hidden, profound connotation that the poet intended to deliver to his audience. The beloved is not really a beloved; aṭţāl is not a gloomy lover’s description of the place where the beloved once lived; and the hunting-scene is not intended to depict hunting activities. These motifs, as well as many others, are symbolic expressions used by the Bedouin poet to express a more sophisticated and much deeper meaning. Any study of the qaṣīḍa as a realistic work is considered, directly or indirectly, as superficial. Ewald Wagner considered these approaches regarding the pre-Islamic Arabic ode as exaggerated. The conclusions reached by these modern studies are far from true, and sometimes even verge on the ridiculous.11 Renate Jacobi too is suspicious concerning such approaches.12

In contrast with this symbolic approach represented by al-Hawwās, a more realistic approach is suggested by other scholars. Ahmad Muhammad al-Ḥufī considers mentioning more than one beloved in the same poem as a characteristic of sensual love poetry (ghazal ḥissī), in which poets used to describe their erotic escapades with


more than one beloved. *Ghazal hissi*, as used by al-Hūfī, as well as *ghazal šarih* used by Shawqī Dayf or *ghazal Ḥijāzī* or *ibāhī* (licentious) as used by Blachère, is to some degree a similar concept, but not completely identical, with that of *erotic ghazal* suggested at the beginning of this paper. As mentioned above, our present article is concerned with another kind of love poetry.\(^\text{15}\)

In his book on love poetry, Shukri Faysāl ignored the mention of two beloveds in the same poem. However, he discussed the *ghazal hissi* composed by the Umayyad ‘Umar b. Abi Rabī’a (d. 93/711). The author noted that ‘Umar’s poems mention several women: these are the beloved and her friends or, sometimes, her sisters. Faysāl assumes that this is a unique characteristic of ‘Umar’s love poetry; since the poetry before his time mentioned one woman only. Here, Faysal does not refer to two beloveds in the same poem, but with the beloved accompanied by her friends. In any case, the conclusion by Faysal about the uniqueness of the poetry of ‘Umar in this regard seems far from accurate. Various pre-Islamic and early Islamic poems describe the beloved in the company of maidens of her tribe during the scene of her tribe departing.\(^\text{14}\) Other modern scholars have analysed poems that mention two different beloveds, but they have totally ignored any discussion of the reasons for including more than one beloved in the same text.\(^\text{15}\)

Classical critics, on the other hand, tend to interpret the mention of more than one beloved in the same poem as a purely stylistic measure. Ibn Rashiq al-Qayrawānī (d. 456/1064) considers the names of the beloveds used in Arabic poetry as imaginary in that they are not the real names of the women loved by the poets. Poets frequently, but not always, used to replace the real name of the beloved by another sweet, attractive name such as Laylā, Hind, and Salmā. As for those poets who mention more than one name in the same poem, Ibn Rashiq states that ‘*wa-rubbamā atā sh-shuʿūrā’u bi-l-asmāʾi l-kathiratī fi l-qāṣidātī; iqāmatan li-l-wazni, wa-tahliyatan li-n-nasībi […]’ ‘[Sometimes poets mention many names in the poem in order to straighten the metre and to sweeten the love verses’]. Ibn Rashiq consequently regards the different names as a form of filling the main aim being to make them suit the metre and to make the *nasīb* more amusing, more attractive for the listeners. These names have no serious weight in the

\(^\text{13}\)See al-Hūfī, *Al-Ghazal fi l-ʿasr al-jāhilī* (Cairo: Matbaʿat an-Nahda l-ʿArabīyya, 1961), 250–3; Dayf, *Al-ʿAsr al-Islāmī*, 11th ed. (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1989), cf. 347–54. Dayf differentiates between this kind of *ghazal*, which mainly characterizes the Umayyad *ghazal*, and the pre-Islamic *ghazal* such as that of *Imrūʿ* al-Qays. According to him, although in the *ghazal šarih* the love poem does not deal with chaste affairs, nonetheless it does not deal with sexual escapades such as those presented in the pre-Islamic poetry. Blachère explains that such a *ghazal*, which is also called *ghazal ibāhī* or *Ḥijāzī*, excludes *iifa* (i.e. chasteness). It does not refuse to yield to desire neither by the lover nor by the beloved. At the same time, the *ibāhī* poets did not ‘descend to indecency or depravity’. See Blachère, ‘Ghazal’, *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1. in Arabic Poetry’, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new (2nd) ed., vol. II (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 1028–33; and Blachère, *Tarih al-adab al-ʿarabī*, trans. İbrahim al-Kilānī (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1984), cf. 837 and 848–50. Our use for the term *erotic ghazal* covers the *ghazal* such as that of *Imrūʿ* al-Qays on the one hand as well as the *ghazal šarih, hissi, ibāhī* or *Ḥijāzī*, on the other.


\(^\text{15}\)See, for example, Rumīyā’s analysis of ‘Amr b. Qamīʿa’s *lāmīyya* that mentions Umāma and Khawla (the same poem mentioned in endnote 9) in *ar-Rihla fi l-qāṣida l-ḥādīthyya*, 285–7. Against such an ignorance of the phenomenon in ‘Amr’s poem, the same author analysed the different names in another poem, the *Muʿallaqa* of al-Ḥarīth, symbolically. See note 8.
poem. Ibn Rashiq takes his examples from the poetry of Yazid b. al-Hakam (d. 105/723), Jarir (d. c. 110/728–9), as-Sayyid al-Ḥimyari (173/789), and Abū Tammām (d. 231/845). He adds that inserting more than one name in the same poem, albeit acceptable in Old Arabic poetry, is nevertheless a negative characteristic in the poetry of the muḥdathun; that is, in the modern poetry of the ‘Abbāsid era. He states that in the muḥdath poetry he knows only a few examples of poems of this kind.16

The explanation for this phenomenon given by Ibn Rashiq is less convincing. It is hard to accept that skilful poets such as Jarir really need to pad out their poetry by listing senseless names in order to establish the rhythm or to make their nasib more appealing. In his study on the love poetry of the ninth and tenth centuries, Thomas Bauer discussed this passage by Ibn Rashiq and supports Ibn Rashiq’s statements on this subject. Bauer considers the names of the beloveds as merely a stylistic trait used in early Arabic love poetry, both in the nasib (i.e. the love affair which opens the multi-thematic poem) and even in the ghazal (i.e., the poems that deal only with love). Both types of the ghazal of the Umayyad era, the ‘Udhri and the Hijāzī, also used this stylistic feature. The nasib of the ‘Abbāsid time is considered as also having the same characteristic. Only in the ‘Abbāsid ghazal do the lovers mention the real names of their beloveds. In other cases, however, they tell their readers that they are deliberately concealing these names.17 Bauer does not discuss whether or not he supports Ibn Rashiq’s idea that different names for the beloveds in the same poem do not indicate different women but are only a form of ‘filling material’. In another work by the same researcher, Bauer showed that pre-Islamic poets as well as mukhadram poets often opened their nasib verses by using formulaic phrases which occurred repeatedly in different texts and were used by different poets. Each of these formulae usually included a specific beloved name that reappeared in different poems whenever such a formula was used. This work by Bauer supports the fact that poets often create fictitious names for their beloveds.18 In our opinion, the realism or the fiction of the names is of minor importance. It is not so important to know whether the names of the beloveds are genuine or fictitious or whether the love affairs mentioned in a certain poem are historically true or whether they were totally the imaginative creation of the poets. It would help towards an understanding of the poem as a literary text to deal with a beloved in a certain poem as a literary figure; that is, a real beloved that had her own existence not in the historical life of the poet but in his literary work.

The Qaṣīda with Several Chaste Love Affairs According to al-Mufaddaliyyat and al-Āṣmaʾiyyat

In order to gain a general idea about those poems which mention two or more different beloved figures, poems composed before the time of Mulayh—that is, by pre-Islamic and mukhadram poets—a sample survey was carried out in the Āṣmaʾiyyat and the

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In the two anthologies, we sought every poem that mentions different women’s names or nicknames. In the following, a treatment for those poems is made. We will discuss first whether these names do or do not refer to different women. Then, if they do, we will answer the question whether these women are all beloved by the same poet-protagonist. In the poems in which different names indicate different beloveds for the same lover, we will analyse the reason/s for inserting more than one beloved woman in the same poem.

Section 2.1

According to these two anthologies, there are cases in which different names mentioned in one poem do not imply different personas, but rather hint at one and the same woman. Here, only one of the names is a name for the woman, while the others are nicknames for her. In some cases no name is given for the woman, although different nicknames are used. In some of these cases, the woman is a beloved, while in others she is either the protagonist’s wife or someone who slanders him. In this domain, one can point out several poems such as the mīmiyya by al-Muraqqish al-Asghar (d. c. 570);20 the rā’iyya by ‘Urwa b. al-Ward (d. c. 593 A.D.);21 and the bā’iyya by ‘Abdallah b. Salima (other variations are Salīma or Salīm) al-Ghamidi, a pre-Islamic poet (no date for his death is given).22 Since these poems do not deal with two different figures, discussing them will not contribute much to this article.

Section 2.2

In other cases, it is more difficult to identify accurately whether the two names indicate one or two women. This appears clearly in a tā’iyya by the ṣu’luk ash-Shanfarā l-Azdī (d. c. 554 A.D.).23 The poem has been studied by several modern scholars. Although ash-Shanfarā does not mention clearly in the poem that Umm ‘Amr and Umayma are both a name and a nickname for the same woman, there is, nonetheless, an agreement among modern scholars that both appellations refer to the same woman. The poem includes two main parts: one deals with Umm ‘Amr and Umayma; and another in which the protagonist deals with his raids and other related issues. The poem has been discussed by several scholars. Albert Arazi, for example, deals with the first part of the poem only and considers it a genuine love poem that deals with one beloved.24 Suzanne Stetkevych considers this tā’iyya as a symbolic expression of the rite-of-passage pattern. It includes two main parts: the first is the nasib that, on the literal level, expresses a separation

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22 See poem no. 18, 19 vv., wafir, in al-Mufaddal ad-Dabbī, Dīwan al-Mufaddalīyyāt, 182–90; cf. 182.
23 See poem no. 20, 34 vv., tawīl, in ibid., 194–207.
between two lovers: the protagonist and Umm ‘Amr/Umayma. Umm ‘Amr or Umayma is regarded by Stetkevych as one single beloved. On the symbolic level, this part expresses the separation phase in the rite-of-passage pattern. It is the separation of the su‘luk from his society and its cultural conditions. The second part of the poem symbolizes the second phase in this pattern; that is, the liminality of the su‘luk. Unlike the traditional pre-Islamic ode, this poem by ash-Shanfarā does not include the third phase of the rite-of-passage pattern, which is the reunion with the tribe.25

Alan Jones considers the nasib a hint at ash-Shanfarā’s life before he became a su‘luk. Umm ‘Amr/Umāma is a beloved for him. It might be a real woman that existed in the life of ash-Shanfarā, but it could also be an imaginary beloved. The second part of the poem, according to Jones, expresses the time after ash-Shanfarā became a su‘luk. He was separated from his tribe. Unlike some conventional opinions about this poem, Jones does not see in the second part any expression of any revenge made by ash-Shanfarā against the Salamānis. This part expresses only some of the su‘luk’s thoughts about the tribe and about his brigand-colleagues. The battles mentioned in the poem are not connected to any attempt at revenge made against the killer of ash-Shanfarā’s father; they only boast of the life and the courage of the su‘luk.26

As opposed to Jones, James E. Montgomery interprets the two parts in this poem differently. In the nasib, Umm ‘Amr/Umāma is not merely the protagonist’s beloved; she is his wife. The separation between the two spouses indicates an objection on the part of the wife to continue living with her husband. Montgomery agrees with Jones that Umm ‘Amr, or Umāma, might be either a real figure (i.e. one that does exist in the real life of ash-Shanfarā) or a fictitious one. In both cases, Montgomery sees in this figure a deeper symbolism. It symbolizes ash-Shanfarā’s tribe and its idealistic features: chastity, generosity, and modesty. As was the case put forward by Stetkevych, Montgomery also understands the separation between the two (Stetkevych sees them as two lovers) as a symbol of the separation between ash-Shanfarā and his own tribe. The gloom and despair caused to the protagonist in this emblematic nasib leads him to reject the values of the tribe. Consequently, he leads a life of danger expressed in the second part of the poem.27

Accepting this division made by Arazi, Jones, Stetkevych and Montgomery, we too can believe that the nickname and name mentioned above indicate one woman only, and that the poem includes two main parts: Umm ‘Amr/Umāma’s affair (vv. 1–14), and the revenge—contradictory to Jones’ analysis—carried out by the protagonist against a pilgrim of the Salāmān tribe (vv. 15–34). Unlike Montgomery, we do not see that verses

25Stetkevych, The Mute Immortals Speak: Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 132–43. We offer another analysis for verse no. 32, in addition to Stetkevych’s analysis. According to Stetkevych, the verse expresses the will of ash-Shanfarā, in case of his illness, not to have any friend to visit him; rather, his cure would be to flee to the mountain of Dhū l-Burayqatayn, to live there with wild animals instead of going back to his own tribe as the non-su‘luk poets used to do. We understand this verse differently. In the case of the protagonist’s illness, he will recall his running rapidly in the past in Dhū l-Burayqatayn, either in fleeing from his enemies or surprising them by his swift attacks. This ability to run fast is a characteristic employed by some of the sa‘lik poets. The protagonist’s cure, therefore, is to sink deeply into memories of his past escapades.

26Jones, Early Arabic Poetry, Volume One: Marāthi and Su‘luk Poems (Reading: Ithaca Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Oxford University, 1992), 185–204.

15–26 in the second part are an expression of the same revenge-raid made by the protagonist, in verses 27–31, against the Salâmání pilgrim. The revenge itself is triumphantly expressed in a few verses (vv. 27–34; cf. 27–31), but most of this part (vv. 15–26) includes a description of another raid that is not basically—or at least it is not stated in the poem—the same revenge raid expressed in verses 27–31. The description of this raid, which is conducted by Ta’abbātha Sharran, the protagonist, and other saʿālīk, is a threatening message forwarded to the Salâmân tribe after the revenge has been committed. If they try to harm the protagonist, they will suffer great defeat as the protagonist will be supported by brave fighters such as Ta’abbātha Sharran and his fellow-brigands.

As for Umm ‘Amr and Umayma, not much is told about their identities. Umm ‘Amr, while appearing in the first three verses of the poem, is depicted during her rapid departure, leaving the protagonist totally astonished. Umayma is mentioned in the following verses (vv. 4–14) as a faithful and beautiful married woman who was also separated from the protagonist (cf. v. 4). Some verses describe her pure moral character (vv. 5–11).28 These verses show that ash-Shanfara does his best to convince the reader that Umayma is far from committing any sin. On the other hand, she was in close contact with the protagonist. Since it is unlikely that a faithful woman would have connections with a strange man, one who is not her legal husband, it is more probable that Umayma was simply the wife of the protagonist.29 Here, we fully support Montgomery’s aforementioned analysis for the identity of this woman. The fact that one of the meanings of the word jārātī mentioned in verse 5 is a wife supports this analysis.30 For some unknown reason, Umayma is separated from the protagonist.

As for Umm ‘Amr, mentioned in the first verses of the poem, there are some indications that she is a married woman and that she lived in the same house with the protagonist. On one hand, the nickname Umm ‘Amr, which means literally the mother of ‘Amr, may imply that she was a married woman. On the other hand, in verse 3, the protagonist describes Umm ‘Amr during the night before her departure. He watches her during the evening (amsat), then after she goes to bed (bātat), then when she wakes up (ashbahat), and when she prepares herself for departure (qaddat umiratān) and, finally, after she had departed (ja-staqallat fa-wallatt). Watching all these actions, especially her sleeping and awakening, implies that the protagonist was living in the same house as Umm ‘Amr; it is thus reasonable to consider her to be the protagonist’s spouse. Accordingly, a textual analysis of the poem should lead us to the conclusion that Umm ‘Amr is the nickname of the same Umāma. Arazi, Stetkevych, Jones and Montgomery are therefore right in saying that the first part of the poem discusses the same persona. However, unlike them, here we follow Montgomery by thinking that Umm ‘Amr/Umāma is the protagonist’s wife, perhaps a divorced one, but not his beloved.

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28See a discussion on these moral characteristics in Lichtenstädter, ‘Das Nasib der Altarabischen Qaṣīda’, Islamica 5 (1932): 81.

29Lichtenstädter also concludes that the woman in this poem is a faithful married woman, see ibid, 38–9.

30See Lane, An Arabic–English Lexicon, online version (a copy of the edition of Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1968), 483. Contrary to our opinion, Lichtenstädter considers the word jāra in this poem by ash-Shanfara as meaning a beloved. See ‘Das Nasib der Altarabischen Qaṣīda’, 84. It is strange that none of the classical interpreters of the poem explains the appropriate meaning of this word as used in this context. This may be because they assumed that its exact meaning is clear from the context.
Section 2.3

Al-Mufaddalīyyaṭ includes another category of poem that mentions different names to indicate different women. One of these names is that of the beloved and the other is the name for a slanderer. In this category one can place the daliyya by Mu‘awwiya b. Malik b. Ja‘far, known as Mu‘awwid al-Hukamā’ (no date for his death is given), in which Umāma and Sumayya are mentioned.31 In the opening verses, the protagonist imagines the vision of Umāma (vv. 1–2). He then presents Sumayya (vv. 8, 11), who slanders him and who reproaches him for wasting his money. Sumayya’s character is totally different from that of Umāma. She is the woman for whom the protagonist yearns, while Sumayya is an unpleasant woman from whom the protagonist flees. A woman who dares to blame the protagonist for spending his money is probably very closely related to him and may be his own wife, mother or sister. Thinking of Umāma, the beloved, in the same context in which the slandering woman is presented, functions as a psychological means for the protagonist to recover from the painful moments he spent in company of Sumayya. In the two opening verses of the poem, in which the vision of Umāma is mentioned, the protagonist is presented through a voyage he takes together with some comrades. The destination of the voyage is not specified, but it may imply a separation between him and Sumayya. Included in this category is another poem by the mukhadram ‘Amr b. al-Ahtam (d. 57/676).32

Section 2.4

There is a different kind of qasīda in which various names in the same poem indicate two different beloved figures. In this kind of poem, a third woman appears as a slanderer who mocks the lover for not having the will, as he had in the past, to have any further love affairs. The daliyya by Dawsar b. Dhuhayl al-Quray‘i (no date for his death is given) is one example.33 In this poem, Laylā and Hind represent two beloved figures with whom the protagonist was in contact in the past. The two young women are mentioned only in the first verse of the poem. A slanderer mocks the protagonist for forgetting both of them and losing all desire to have any more love affairs in the meantime. The exact identity of this woman is not known, but she states that after her (ba‘danā; lit. after us, v. 1), the protagonist’s heart recovered of the two other women, Laylā and Hind (sahā qalbuh ‘an āli Laylā wa’an Hindi; lit. of Laylā’s Family and of Hind). The phrase ba‘danā indicates that the woman was one of his beloveds. She might have been a third woman, perhaps a more recent one with whom the protagonist was involved, but she may also be one of the two maidens, Laylā or Hind. The reason that the protagonist mentions āli Laylā (the Family of Laylā) instead of Laylā alone can be interpreted as an exaggerated expression uttered by the slanderer to show that the protagonist was so assertive in his decision to forget Laylā. He has forgotten not only her but everything connected to her: her āl; which literally means her family or her kinsfolk.34 It is possible too that in this specific poem, Laylā and Hind do not represent real beloved figures for the protagonist; but may have been mentioned metaphorically by the slanderer to show that the lover ceased to seek any

32Poem no. 23, qāfiyya, tawil, 23 vv., ibid., 245–53.
33Poem no. 50, daliyya, tawil, 11 vv., in al-Asma‘i, al-Asma‘iyāṭ, 150–1.
34See the meaning of this word in Lane, An Arabic–English Lexicon, 127.
amorous relationship after cutting the ties with the slanderous woman herself. Hence, Laylā and Hind are metonyms (kināya) for any beloved figures. After us, so claims the slanderer, the protagonist stopped seeking any relationship with any other woman.

The protagonist describes no love affair in detail, neither for the slanderer nor for Hind and Laylā. The affairs themselves are not important for the poem’s narration. Mentioning the beloved women is only a means for depicting the present miserable situation of the protagonist. This situation is expressed in the rest of the poem. At first, the lover suffers because of his old age and his grey hair. Secondly, he suffers from a kind of lack of contact between him and his tribe. He is presented as being far from his tribe, yearning—together with his camel, which yearns no less than he does—for its abodes. It seems that these two painful issues—his old age and becoming distant from his tribe—are the reasons for the protagonist to make his strict decision concerning love and women. The protagonist, however, makes an attempt to recover from his sadness by reflecting on his past glories and his present great personality.

Another poem belonging to this category is the ‘aynīyya by the Yemenite ‘Amr b. Ma’dirākib (d. 21/642).35 Here one encounters more than two beloved figures. Unlike Dawsar’s qaṣīda, the poem by ‘Amr describes a detailed love affair with Salmā. There is also a very brief mention of Rayḥāna and other women.36 All these affairs are included within a defensive speech that the protagonist makes against Umāma, a slanderer woman who is amazed at the grey colour of his hair. In reaction, the protagonist devotes some verses to defend himself by praising his heroic deeds; among them, he includes these love affairs. One of the beloveds, Salmā, seems to be recent, while the others are the loved ones of the protagonist’s past. By mentioning love affairs with more than one woman during his youth as well as at the present time, the protagonist tries to convince the slanderer as well as himself that old age does not prevent him from experiencing amorous feelings. He has had many affairs in his past and can also conduct affairs in the present. He can still fall in love and be loved. He has the ability to conduct love affairs just as well as other and younger men can.37

Section 2.5

In our opinion, the ‘aynīyya by Suwayd b. Abī Kāhīl presents an additional category in which the poem includes more than one love affair, not as a response against a slanderer, as is the case of Dawsar and ‘Amr, but as an independent theme. The poem itself was

36Some classical commentators consider Rayḥāna to be ‘Amr’s sister, while according to others she is his divorced wife. See al-ʿAsma‘ī, al-ʿAsma‘īyyat, 172; ‘Amr b. Mā’dikarīb, Shi'r 'Amr b. Ma'dikarib az-Zubaydi, 139–40; and Ahmad Muhammad al-Musharraf, Aṣḥāb al-wāḥida fī l-'asr al-jāhilī (Irbid: ʿĀlam al-Kutub al-Hadīth, 2005), 258–62. The poem confirms the two assumptions. Some classical scholars believe that Rayḥāna is the beloved of the protagonist. See ‘Amr b. Mā’dikarīb, Shi'r 'Amr b. Ma'dikarib az-Zubaydi, 140; and al-Musharraf, Aṣḥāb al-wāḥida, 258. The text itself supports this last assumption.
37The mention of a love affair now being conducted by the old protagonist, and a hint of other earlier ones conducted during his youth, is found in the Mu‘allaqa, nāmiyya, wāfīrah, 103 vv., of ‘Amr b. Kulthūm (d. c. 584 AD). Mentioning these affairs is a response against the sāqiya (the cup-bearer) who humiliated the protagonist by rejecting an offer of wine made to him. See cf. vv. 5 and 9–21, in az-Zawzanī, Sharḥ al-Mu‘allaqat as-sab‘, 163–87.
one of the famous old Arabic qaṣīda poems, to be taught to Muʿawiya’s son. As will be discussed in a forthcoming article, this poem is the closest from all those analysed above, to the pattern developed later by Mulayh b. al-Ḥakam. Due to its importance, it will be discussed in greater detail than those mentioned above.

In this ‘ayniyya, we encounter Rabiʿa and Salmā. There is no doubt that the two names indicate two different beloveds. It is not clear which verses indicate the conclusion of the affair of Rabiʿa and which initiate Salmā’s affair. Ahmad Muhammad Shākir, ‘Abd as-Salām Hārūn, and ‘Umar at-Ṭabbā, the editors of the Mufaddalīyyāt divān, have all ignored the fact that the poem includes two different beloveds. Khalīd Muḥyi d-Din al-Barāḍī’ considers the two names, Rabiʿa and Salmā, to be different names for the same woman. The reason for using two different names is not given by al-Barāḍī.11 Muhammad Sādiq ‘Abdallāh, on the other hand, sees Rabiʿa and Salmā as two different beloveds, but provides no explanation for mentioning two different love affairs in this poetic text. Rabiʿa is presented in the opening verses of the poem as a woman who was very generous in her relationship with the lover. She stretched the rope for us (basaṭat Rabiʿatu l-ḥabla la-nā). This metaphor indicates that the beloved was liberal in her relationship with the lover. The following verses include a description of Rabiʿa’s beauty, praising her white and shining teeth, sweet saliva, white face which is brighter than the sun’s rays, her eyes, and also her long and perfumed hair (vv. 2–7). Then, in verses 8–15, the vision (khayāl) of a certain woman is mentioned. This vision imagined by the lover during a certain voyage (cf. v. 9), stirred up his longing for his beloved (hayyaja sh-shawqa khayālun za’irun min ḥabībin, v. 8). The distance between the two lovers is very wide (shāhīt), yet the vision was able to cross over to the lover without fear of walking at night through the dangerous desert. The protagonist wonders at the courage of his beloved, but he immediately concludes that (v. 11):

This is his famous long poem called al-Yatīma (The Orphan Poem), Mufaddalīyya no. XL, ramal, 108 vv. in al-Mufaddal ad-Dabbi, Dīwān al-Mufaddalīyyāt, 381–409. About the inclusion of this poem in Muʿawiya’s collection see Kister, ‘The Seven Odes: Some Notes on the Compilation of the Mu’allaq’, Rivista degli Studi Orientali 44 (1969): 27–36; and see a translation of this article in ‘al-Qasīda wa-Abī al-Barāḍī’, ed. ‘Umar at-Ṭabbā (Beirut: Dār al-Arqam, 1998), 179–90.

See page 1## of this article.


Kheṣūbat al-qasīda l-jahīlīyya wa-maʾāniha l-mutajaddidda: dirāsa wa-taḥḥīl wa-naqḍ (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, undated), 88 and 90.

The specific reason for the separation of the two lovers is not given in the poem. The destination of the protagonist’s voyage is also not mentioned here, but will be stated later in another part of the poem.

The affair of Salmā follows the description of the vision. Now, after his youth has gone (fa-da‘anī ḥubb Salmā ba‘damā/dhahaba l-jiddatu minnī wa-r-rayā‘; v. 16), the protagonist recalls Salmā. However, the identity of the vision, which appears between the affairs of Rabī‘a and Salmā, is not mentioned. Is it the ghost of Rabī‘a or of Salmā? Moreover, it is not known whether the protagonist recalls the two beloveds during his voyage, or at a different time and place for each one of them. A reading of verse 10 as well as at-Tibrizī’s (d. 502/1109) commentary on the above-quoted verse (v. 16) suggests a possible answer for these two questions. As for verse 10, it reads:

\[ānisin kāna idhā mā ‘tādāni/
\ hāla dūna n-nawmi minnī fa-mtana‘\]

It (the vision) behaved sociably; Whenever it came to me,/it used to prevent me from sleeping.

Once he sees the vision (in vv. 8–9), the protagonist recalls its behaviour in the past. As verse 10 tells, whenever the protagonist recalled the vision, he became sleepless. Its effect on the protagonist in the past was the same as that caused by watching the present vision. In both cases, the lover was and is still affected by it and cannot fall asleep.

The following statement is mentioned by at-Tibrizī as a commentary on verse 16: wa-ma‘nāhu hayyaja ḥubbī, wa-ba‘athani ‘alā mu‘awadati l-hāli l-īlā mina tībā‘ī l-hawā ba‘da mufāraqati sh-shabābi wa-dhahābi ray‘ānī.46 [It (the verse) means that it stirred up my love; and caused me to return to the first case of following love; after the separation from youth and losing its most excellent part has occurred]. This statement is a little obscure. Firstly, it is not clear to what the pronoun it refers. Secondly, it is not clear what at-Tibrizī means by the phrase al-hāli l-īlā mina tībā‘ī l-hawā (the first case of following love). Concerning the pronoun it, this seems to indicate the vision itself. As for the first case of following love, the most reasonable indication of this phrase is the protagonist’s behaviour whenever he was affected by love during his youth (before being separated from his shabāb). As soon as he saw the vision he became emotionally upset, unable to control his thoughts and emotions or to fall asleep. This interpretation given in at-Tibrizī’s commentary indicates that the protagonist is now, even during his old age, being attacked by a vision, and

45Lyall translates this verse as ‘The love of Salmā called me after that/the freshness of youth and its prime had passed away from me’. See ibid., vol. 2, 141.
he recalls his behaviour during his youth whenever this occurred. Even now, at the present moment, he cannot handle the situation, but is subject to his emotions and is unable to fall asleep. This interpretation by at-Tibrizī fits in with the above-mentioned interpretation for verses 8–10. It supports the fact that the two visions, those of the present and the past, indicate two different visions that are related to two different beloved figures. It is now clear, that the present vision in verses 8–10 is of the present time, while the past one is that of his youth. The present vision seems to be that of Rābi‘a, so the past one should therefore be for the beloved of his youth, Salmā, who is mentioned after the vision-scene ends. The poem is now clearer: the protagonist ends his relationship with Rābi‘a, he remembers a vision of her and this leads him to recall the vision of Salmā as well as his love affair with her.

Recalling Salmā, after imagining the vision of Rābi‘a, is psychologically plausible. It is normal for a passionate person attacked by momentary gloom to remember other sad incidents. Losing Rābi‘a makes the lover recall previous separations from other beloved women such as Salmā. One failure reminds him of another, one sad incident makes him remember another. The lover recalls how Salmā could affect him. In verse 17, he states that she corrupted his reason (khabalatnī), without giving him any chance to recover (thumma lammā tushfinī). His heart was torn apart (ja-fu‘ādi kullā awbīn mā jama‘a; i.e. My heart is distracted, torn this way and that). This bad effect was not only an incident of the present moment but also indicated a situation he had suffered during his youth. However, only one difference exists between his past relationship with Salma and his present one with Rābi‘a. The protagonist-lover recalls that he used to travel through the desert, no matter how long and dangerous the journey, to follow Salmā after her departure (vv. 20–22). Stating this fact, the lover says he used to relieve his passion by trying to find Salmā in her new abodes, although he can do this no longer for his present beloved. The reason is not stated in the poem, but it is probably the protagonist’s old age which is in itself a good reason to prevent him from following Rābi‘a. Yet old age does not mean that the protagonist is physically prevented from undertaking such a voyage since as explained below, he is still able to conduct such voyages. Old age means that a person should behave differently, more respectfully and wisely, than a younger one. Although he cannot control his thoughts about Rābi‘a, he can never follow her to her new abodes. Salma and Rābi‘a express the two different worlds of the protagonist: his past world and his present one, each completely opposed to the other.

Instead of travelling to meet Rābi‘a, the protagonist takes another journey into the desert no less dangerous than those he used to take in his youth, but this time it is to return to the abodes of his Bakr-tribe. He travels through the desert in order to rejoin this tribe (vv. 23–29). He then praises the Bakr-tribe and says that it compensates him for the loss of Rābi‘a. This is the way in which he recovers from his love-sickness. The praise for the tribe continues for 15 verses and covers many of the tribe’s attributes (vv. 30–44).

It is very interesting that Salmā reappears at the end of these verses of praise. In verses 45–50, the protagonist is attacked by the vision of Sulaymā (a diminutive form of Salmā) and is consequently prevented from falling asleep. Although the place and time in which the protagonist imagines the vision is not mentioned in the poem, it does not seem to have occurred during the voyage made by the protagonist. As will be shown below, the protagonist begins his second voyage after recalling the vision of Sulaymā. Although this is not mentioned in the poem, he seems to be in the atlāl of that woman. The vision is

47See the translation of this verse in al-Mufaddal ad-Ḍabbī, The Mufaddalīyāt, vol. 2, 141.
presented in verse 45. It is notable that the two hemistichs of this verse are fitted together with the *tasrī* (i.e. making the two hemistichs rhyme together):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{arraga l-`}\text{ayna khayalun lam yadi}^\prime \\
\text{min Sulaymā fa-}\text{fu}`\text{`adi muntaza}^\prime
\end{align*}
\]

The eye was sleepless because of a vision that did not last long; (The vision is of) Sulaymā; my heart was, consequently, wrested (from my chest).48

The reason for the separation is seen in verse 46. It is the departure of the lovers. Each one of the two lovers belongs to a different neighbouring tribe, which leave for two different destinations and thus the lovers are separated. And he can never reach his beloved again (*haythu lā aṭlubuhā*). The protagonist asserts that he can meet Sulaymā only in his dreams, and he is lucky to see her then for some very brief moments:

\[
\begin{align*}
lā `\text{ulaqiha swa-qa}l\text{bi }`\text{indahā} \\
ghayera ılmāmin `\text{idhā t-tarfu haja}^\prime
\end{align*}
\]

There is no meeting with her for me, though my heart be with her- save that drawing-near which comes when the eyes are closed in sleep.49

The protagonist implies in verse 48 that he used to sleep with Salmā, while in verses 49–50 he adds that she was obliged to depart with her tribe leaving the protagonist very sad and depressed. As is known from Old Arabic poetry, after the separation of the lovers’ tribes, the lover used sometimes to visit the *atlāl* of his beloved. There he recalls her, but then decides to recover by the *camel-section*.50 In this part of the poem, it is conventional for the lover to depict the rapid running of his camel by comparing it with the quick movement of an oryx, a wild cow, or even an ostrich, and this is actually found in the present poem. The verses that follow the affair of Sulaymā (vv. 51–60) describe the protagonist’s voyage on his camel (or horse?) and compare its speed with an oryx harassed by the hounds of the hunter. Such verses, together with the *nasib* verses, do not normally follow the praise, but they precede it in the traditional tripartite *qaṣida*; that is, the *qaṣida* which has the *nasib* (love)–*raḥīl* (camel-section)–*madīh* (praise) structure (sometimes it ends with another theme rather than the praise, such as invective or

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48Lyall translates this verse as ‘A vision of Sulaimā that will not stay with me (, but comes and goes,) / keeps mine eye wakeful, and my heart is distraught’. See ibid., vol. 2, 143.

49See the translation in ibid.

50About this section see the article by Jacobi, ‘The Camel-Section of the Panegyrical Ode’, *Journal of Arabic Literature* 13 (1982): 1–22. Jaroslav Stetkevych considers the onager/oryx panels, which constitute a main part in the camel-section, a symbolic expression of a an imaginary creature: the unicorn. See his article ‘In the Search of the Unicorn: The Onager And the Oryx in the Arabic Ode’, *Journal of Arabic Literature* 33, no. 2 (2002): 79–130. Montgomery, on the other hand, analyses the oryx panel (or oryx episode, to quote the expression that he uses), more realistically than does Stetkevych. However, Montgomery still considers some symbolic expressions, in this panel, for the final part of the *qaṣida* (which is normally the praise or the invective). See Chapter Four in his book *The Vagaries of the Qaṣīdah*, 110–65. Jacobi is suspicious concerning the emblematic analyses for the camel-sections; see her book review, Jacobi, ‘Montgomery, James E.—The Vagaries of the Qaṣīdah’, 534.
appropriately for the affair of Salm which was expressed in verses 30–44 in this poem, but do not precede it.

Reading the verses on the love affair of Sulaymā carefully reveals that they are not appropriate for the affair of Salmā mentioned above. The incidents narrated here about the impossibility of meeting her again after the departure of the tribes contradict what was discussed above about the same woman. This fact obliges us to read again the two groups of verses in which the love affair with Salm was discussed above about the same woman. This fact obliges us to read again the two contradictories narratives regarding the same beloved?

Muḥammad Ṣādiq ‘Abdallāh discusses a rā’īyya by al-Marrār b. Munqidh, an Umayyad poet (date for his death is unknown), which opens with the nasīb followed by the lover’s voyage (the camel-section), and the praising of himself and his tribe. The poem then continues with many verses after the self-praising incident in which the nasīb is again mentioned. ‘Abdallāh concludes that such a poem by al-Marrār is rare; it is a kind that does not often occur in Old Arabic poetry. The reader thinks, wrongly, that the general text includes two different poems. This kind, according to ‘Abdallāh, is artistically less successful since the different themes are not presented in order but are placed arbitrarily; that is, the nasīb is not found in one place in the poem, but is divided into two parts and scattered in different sections of the qaṣīda.33 This hypothesis by ‘Abdallāh is not supported by the text. The analysis of Suwayd’s poem leads to a different conclusion. Khālid al-Barāḍī’i noticed that the present version of the poem by Suwayd is not original. Starting the poem without taṣrīʿ, but putting the taṣrīʿ in the middle of the poem (i.e. in the verses of Sulaymā’s affair), contradicts the jahili poetic tradition. Consequently, certain verses that should have opened the poem are missing.34

Al-Barāḍī’i’s assumption is fairly reasonable. The present version of the poem has suffered some damage. Contrary to al-Barāḍī’i, we believe that the main damage was not caused by a few missing verses at the beginning of the qaṣīda, but that the present version of this qaṣīda basically consists of two different poems. The two contradictory narratives in Suwayd’s qaṣīda, those of Salmā and Sulaymā, cannot be considered as two parts of the same text. If the poet really wanted to mention a different love affair in addition to Salmā’s affair at the end of his poem, then he should have chosen another name rather

elegy).31 Renate Jacobi is right to assume that such a structure corresponds to the ‘Abbāsid ode more than to the pre-Islamic one;32 some pre-Islamic qaṣīdas, however, do include such a tripartite structure. The verses discussed above in the poem of Suwayd (i.e. vv. 45–60) contain the first two themes that constitute the aforementioned tripartite structure: they include the nasīb (vv. 45–50); and the rāḥil (vv. 51–60). In the light of this discussion, we find two indications that the affair of Sulaymā and the camel-section following it are not in their proper places in the traditional tripartite qaṣīda. The two indications are the taṣrīʿ and the fact that the nasīb and the camel-section follow the praise, which was expressed in verses 30–44 in this poem, but do not precede it.

51Rūmiyya, ar-Rōhla fi l-qaṣīda l-jāhiliyya, 52–3. See also Hussein, ‘Classical and Modern Approaches in Dividing the Old Arabic Poem’, Journal of Arabic Literature 35, no. 3 (2004): 306–8. This article analyses Ibn Qutayba’s (d. 276/889) notes on the structure of the traditional Arabic ode. See Hussein, ‘Classical and Modern Approaches’, 306, note 41, in which there are references to modern studies that discuss these notes. About the structure of the traditional Arabic ode, see Jacobi, Studien zur Poetik, 10–13; and Husayn, ash-Shakl wa-l-madāmīn, 280–1. See also the sources mentioned in note 1 of the present article.

52See Jacobi, ‘The Camel-Section of the Panegyrical Ode’; and Jacobi, ‘Montgomery, James E.—The Vagaries of the Qaṣīda’, 535.


than that mentioned in the first part of the poem, neither Salmā nor Sulaymā. Using the same name in order to express two quite different love affairs in the same poem seems to be unwise because it would puzzle Suwayd’s audience. The verses on Sulaymā, consequently, must have been part of a qaṣīda different from the one describing the affair of Salmā. The love affairs of Salmā and Sulaymā, which have the same metre and rhyme letter, were wrongly intermingled in one poem.\(^5\) The verses following the affair of Sulaymā and the lover’s voyage contain praise of the protagonist’s own tribe (vv. 61–65). They also express a certain hostility between him and another, unnamed, person (vv. 66–108), which causes the protagonist to leave the abodes where this person lived (cf. vv. 66 and 108). It is not known for certain whether these verses should be considered part of the praise of the Bakr tribe that followed the affair of Salmā, or part of the second poem that is supposed to include the affair of Sulaymā. In other words, the present version of the mufaddaliyya does not provide any information stating whether the first qaṣīda should consist of verses 1–44, then verses 61–108; while the verses between verses 45–60, in which the affair of Sulaymā is mentioned, should be considered part of another, a different poem; or whether the present mufaddaliyya is composed of two separate poems as follows: the first poem ends with verse 44, while the second is from verses 45 to 108. We tend to support the second assumption: that is, the first poem consists of verses 1–44; while the second poem includes verses 45–108. Verses 1–44 are presented according to the aforementioned tripartite traditional structure of the qaṣīda: the nasīb (vv. 1–22); the camel-section (vv. 23–29); and the praise (vv. 30–44). According to the traditional structure of the poem, these verses constitute a complete poem. On the other hand, verses 45–60 alone do not constitute a complete poem. When reading these verses as a part of the remaining verses in the poem—when reading verses 45–108 as a complete entity—we can then find here an independent poem built according to the traditional tripartite structure: the nasīb (vv. 45–50); the camel-section (vv. 51–60); and the praise plus invective (vv. 61–108).

The question remains: are the two poems two totally different poems composed by Suwayd, two poems which have no relation together despite their having a similar rhyme and metre, or are they two different versions of the same poem composed by Suwayd? We can add here two other possibilities similar to those suggested by Montgomery in his study on a bāʿiyyya, tawīl, by ‘Alqama l-Fahl (d. c. 603 AD): firstly, that the two poems by Suwayd represent two variations of the same poem, resulting from the oral transmission of the text; and secondly, that ‘Abbāsid scholars edited the first, original version of the poem to produce another more coherent, more literary, version. In our case, verses 1–44 might be the original text that needs to be refined, since—as shown above—it lacks some of the ambiguity that is not found in verses 45–108.\(^5\) However, although we have no material proof for any of the three assumptions


\(^{56}\) These two assumptions, in addition to that mentioned above (i.e. the two texts are two versions produced by the poet himself), are suggested by Montgomery in his The Vagaries of the Qaṣīdah, 38–40. Jacobi considers these assumptions very important and further studies need to be conducted on this issue. See Jacobi, ‘Montgomery, James E.—The Vagaries of the Qaṣīdah’, 533.
mentioned above, these assumptions seem to be less convincing. Most of the motifs mentioned in verses 1–44 by Suwayd do not appear in verses 66–108. The invective that permeates verses 61–108 does not appear at all in verses 1–44. When editing a certain version of an original poem, or producing a new refined version of it, one is supposed to preserve the basic lines found in the original poem, and not to omit them or to replace them by other, almost totally different, ones.

It will be argued, in a forthcoming article, that this kind of poem produced by Suwayd b. Abi Kāhil is the closest one, among all the pre-Islamic and early Islamic qasīdas discussed above, to the new pattern adapted by Mulayh b. al-Ḥakam. At the end of this article, it sheds some light on the structure of Suwayd’s qаስida. Table 1 presents the structural arrangement of the paragraphs \(^{57}\) in verses 1–44 of Suwayd’s poem; that is, in that part of the poem which was assumed to be the original version of the poem. The following are some remarks concerning the poem’s structure. Those remarks will be helpful in the forthcoming article on Mulayh’s pattern. Using them, an accurate comparison between Suwayd’s pattern and Mulayh’s will be carried out.

Table 1. Structural arrangement of paragraphs in verses 1–44 of Suwayd’s poem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Love Affair</th>
<th>The beloved’s attitude to the poet-protagonist (was generous in her relationship to the lover)</th>
<th>verse 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Two Love Affairs</td>
<td>The beauty of the beloved</td>
<td>vv. 2–7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The beloved’s vision (it seems there are two visions in these verses; a present one, and a past one. A vision of the current beloved, as well as the vision of the past beloved are presented)</td>
<td>vv. 8–11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The lover’s state of mind (sleepless at nights because of seeing the vision. Here too, it seems there are two psychological states: the present one, and one from the past)</td>
<td>vv. 12–15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Love Affair</td>
<td>The psychological state of the lover</td>
<td>vv. 16–18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The attributes of the beloved</td>
<td>verse 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The lover’s voyage (a renewed encounter with the beloved)</td>
<td>vv. 20–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praising the Tribe</td>
<td>The lover’s voyage (his reunion with his tribe)</td>
<td>vv. 23–29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Praising the tribe</td>
<td>vv. 30–44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{57}\)Here we use the term ‘paragraph’, which was suggested and explained in Hussein, ‘An Analytical Division of the Old Arabic Poem: A Suggestion for a New Method of Dividing and Analyzing the Old Arabic Poem with Application to a Text by Ḥassān b. Thābit’, *Journal of Arabic Literature* 36, no. 1 (2005): 76–7.
The following remarks concern the structure of Suwayd’s poem:

1. The two love affairs depend almost on the same general content. Two main paragraphs, which deal with the vision and the mental state of the lover when he notices the vision, are common to both love affairs. In addition, each of the two affairs includes a third paragraph that is similar. The first affair includes a description of the beloved’s beauty, while the second affair includes a paragraph in which the moral characteristics of the beloved are described. The moral characteristics can be regarded as similar to the paragraph describing her beauty—in the first affair. Here, too, the beauty of the beloved is portrayed. However, this is not a physical or external beauty as the first affair suggests, but a moral or internal one.

2. Moreover, Suwayd’s qasida does not seem to be purely a love poem. Only half of the poem, the first 22 verses, deals with love, while the other half (vv. 23–44) deals with another topic; this is not love, but the poet’s voyage towards his tribe and detailed praises of it. Although the two paragraphs concerning the voyage and the praise of his tribe may be interpreted as a reaction to the poet’s failure in love, there is no clear indication that this is really the case. It is possible to consider the journey towards the tribe, and praising that tribe, as an attempt by the protagonist to reintegrate himself with his own kinsfolk and thus compensate himself for his lost love.58 Despite such an interpretation, the two paragraphs can be regarded differently as independent paragraphs that are not connected in any way to love. Consequently, the poem deals with two separate themes; love and praise.

3. The transition between the two love affairs in this poem is not clear. As shown above, there is considerable ambiguity regarding the tayf (vision) and the psychological state of the lover, as well as the verses that end the first love affair and also initiate the second one. It is difficult to determine whether these verses should be considered a part of the first love affair, a part of the second love affair or, possibly, common to both affairs.

Conclusions

It has been shown in the present article that in pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry the same qasida sometimes includes a mention of more than one woman. Yet two different names (or sometimes nicknames) do not always indicate two different maidens. Even if this is the case, the reference is not necessarily to two different beloveds but may be, in most cases, the names for a beloved and a slanderer, a woman who mocks the protagonist for his behaviour.

However, some poems do refer to two or more love affairs, at least one of which is mentioned very briefly. Love is not normally an independent theme, but is mentioned by the protagonist in response to a certain woman who mocks either his will not to make any new loving contacts or his old age. In some cases, such as the poem by Suwayd b. Abī Kāhil which is supposed to be a mixture of two independent poems, love is not a

58 Consequently, this poem can be analysed according to Suzanne Stetkevych’s concept of the rite of passage, which is offered in some of her works, such as ‘al-Qasida l-‘arabiyya wa-tuqūs al-‘ubūr: dirāsa fī l-bunya n-namūdhiyya’, Majallat Majma’ al-lughā l-‘arabiyya bi-dimashq 60 (January 1985): 55–85; and Stetkevych, The Mute Immortals Speak.
response against slander, but is mentioned as a main theme in the poem. The old protagonist is separated from a present beloved, and this conjures up his failure with a beloved of his youth. The poem consequently deals with two love affairs. It will be assumed in a forthcoming article that Suwayd’s poem is closer to the unique pattern produced by Mulayh b. al-Hakam than the other pre-Islamic and early Islamic poems discussed in this article. Despite this similarity, many differences between the two patterns, both in structure and in content, do exist. This leads us to reject Suwayd’s poem as the main source from which Mulayh’s adapted his love qasida pattern.