

كتاب في حواره الشعرية

للأصمعي

تحقيق المُستشرق
ش. توري

قَدَمَ لَهَا
الدكتور صلاح الدين المنجد

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مقدِّمة

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ما زال العلماء منذ ظهور الإسلام حق يومنا يهتمون بالشعر القديم وينقدونه ، ويحفظونه ، ويشروحونه ، ويقلّدونه ، والرسالة التي أقدّم لها تمثل لونا من هذا الاهتمام . فقد تضمّنت آراء الأصمعيّ ، العالم والناقد واللغويّ والراوية ، في فحولة طائفة من الشعراء الجاهليين والإسلاميين ، رواها عنه تلميذه أبو حاتم سهل ابن محمد بن عثمان السجزي ، ورواها عن أبي حاتم تلميذه ابن دريد اللغوي .

لا نجد في الرسالة تفسيراً واضحاً لمعنى « فحولة » الشاعر . فقد سأل أبو حاتم أستاذه الأصمعيّ عن معنى « الفحل » ، فقال : من كان له مزية على غيره ، كتمزية الفحل على الحِقاق . (ج . حقّ ، من الإبل ، الداخلة في السنة الرابعة) . على أننا نجد في اللسان ما يلي : « فحولة الشعراء هم الذين غلبوا بالهجاء من هاجاهم ، مثل جرير والفرزدق وأشباههما ، وكذلك كل من عارض شاعراً فغلب عليه » . لكن هذا التعريف يبدو ناقصاً ، لأننا نجد الأصمعيّ في رسالته يصف بعض الشعراء بالفحولة لغير ما ذكره « اللسان » . فقد قال إن « طَفَيْلًا فحلّ » لأنه غايةٌ ، في النعت وإن كعب بن سعد الغنوي ليس من الفحول إلا في المراثية ، فإنه ليس في الدنيا مثلها ، وإن لببداً ليس بفحل ، وإن شعره كأنه طيلسان طبري ، يعني أنه جيد الصنعة وليست له حلاوة ، وإن الحويدرة لو قال خمس قصائد مثل قصيدته كان فحلاً ... ، ومن هذا نرى أن الأصمعيّ كان ينظر في الفحولة إلى جودة السبك ، وبراعة المعنى ، ووفرة الشعر معاً .

وتبدو قيمة الرسالة في أنها جمعت عدداً كبيراً من الشعراء الجاهليين والإسلاميين ، وأن الأصمعيّ نفسه كان له شأن كبير ، نظراً لمكانته في تاريخنا اللغوي والأدبي .

وُلد الأصمعيّ - وهو عبد الملك بن قسْرَيْب بن عبد الملك . . . بن أصمّ ، وإليه نسبته - في البصرة سنة ثلاث وعشرين ومائة من الهجرة . وكانت البصرة يومئذٍ تجتمع العلماء والشعراء والأدباء . فلما شبّ أخذ القراءات واللغة والأدب على أبي عمرو بن العلاء ، أحد القراء السبعة . وأخذ عن طائفة العلماء منهم الخليل ابن أحمد الفراهيدي ، والإمام جعفر الصادق ، وحماد عجرد ، وحماد بن سلمة ، وحماد بن زيد وهما محدثان ، وخلف الأحمر ، وسفيان بن عُيَيْنَةَ ، وآخرون . ولقي عدداً كبيراً من الشعراء الفصحاء ، وأولادهم ، وسمع منهم أشعارهم . ثم إنه عني بأمر لم يُعْنَ به أحدٌ مثله هو السماع من الأعراب ، وأهل البادية ، فكان يحفظ ما يسمعه منهم . فاجتمع له من رواية الشعر ما لم يجتمع لغيره ، وكان يفخر بهذه الميزة التي أوتىها . وكان يملك إلى ذلك كله ، عدداً ضخماً من الكتب ، يُطالع فيها . خرج مرة مع الرشيد إلى الرقة فحمل معه ثمانية عشر صندوقاً من الكتب ، وذكر أنه خفف الحمل ، ولو ثقّله لحمل أضاف ذلك . وهذا يدلّ على ما كان عنده من الكتب .

اشتهر الأصمعيّ بروايته الواسعة ، ومعرفته بالشعر ونقدم ، وبالتفسير والحديث والنحو ، وكذلك اشتهر بحفظه وقوة ذاكرته ، وعُرف عنه الذكاء واستحضار الحجّة ، وخفة الروح ، وظرفُ النادرة ، وحلاوةُ المزاج ، ولذعُ التهكّم . وقد امتلأت كتب أدبنا العربي بالرواية عنه ، أو ذكر أخباره ، حتى ما تكاد تلقى كتاباً من المصادر الكبيرة ، لا ذكر له فيها . لقد كان من العلماء النوادِر الذين أغنوا الأدب العربي ، وساعدوا على توضيح معالِمه .

ألّف الاصمعيّ كتباً كثيرة ، أورد صاحب الفهرست مسرداً بها^(١) ، وفتاته بعضها ، وهذا بيان ما جمعناه من أسماء مؤلفاته :

(١) الفهرست (ط. أوروبا) ص ٥٥ - ٥٦ .

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| ٢٧ - جزيرة العرب | ١ - خلق الانسان |
| ٢٨ - الدلو | ٢ - الاجناس |
| ٢٩ - الرحل | ٣ - الأنواء |
| ٣٠ - معاني الشعر | ٤ - الهمز |
| ٣١ - مصادر | ٥ - المقصود والمدود |
| ٣٢ - القوائد الست | ٦ - الفرق |
| ٣٣ - الارجيز | ٧ - الصفات |
| ٣٤ - النخلة | ٨ - الاثواب |
| ٣٥ - النبات والشجر | ٩ - الميسر والقдах |
| ٣٦ - الحراج | ١٠ - خلق الفرس |
| ٣٧ - ما اتفق لفظه واختلف معناه | ١١ - الخيل |
| ٣٨ - غريب الحديث | ١٢ - الابل |
| ٣٩ - السرج واللجام والشوى والنعال | ١٣ - الشاء |
| ٤٠ - غريب الحديث والكلام الوحشي | ١٤ - الاخبية والبيوت |
| ٤١ - نوادر الاعراب | ١٥ - الوحوش وصفاتها |
| ٤٢ - مياه العرب | ١٦ - الأوقات |
| ٤٣ - النسب | ١٧ - فعل وأفعل |
| ٤٤ - الاصوات | ١٨ - الامثال |
| ٤٥ - المذكر والمؤنث | ١٩ - الأضداد |
| ٤٦ - الاصمعيات | ٢٠ - الالفاظ |
| ٤٧ - الدارات | ٢١ - السلاح |
| ٤٨ - النخل والكرم | ٢٢ - اللغات |
| ٤٩ - أسماء الحجر | ٢٣ - الاشتقاق |
| ٥٠ - ما تكلم به العرب فكثير في أفواه الناس | ٢٤ - النوادر |
| ٥١ - فحوة الشعراء | ٢٥ - أصول الكلام |
| | ٢٦ - القلب والابدال |

هذا ما جمعناه من مؤلفاته. وما أثبت منها بحرف أسود هو المطبوع منها^(١).

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والمعجب أن رسالة «فحولة الشعراء» لم يذكرها صاحب الفهرست، ولا الذين كتبوا عن الأصمعي في عصرنا، كعز الدين التنوخي، والزركلي، وكحالة، وسركيس، مع أنها طُبعت منذ أمد طويل. وهي ذات شأن كبير، وتستحق الدراسة العميقة.

وقد كان المستشرق تشارلس تورّي قد نشر هذه الرسالة في عام ١٩١١ في المجلد ٦٥ من مجلة جمعية المستشرقين الألمان. مع ترجمة إنكليزية، ويبدو أن أبناء العربية لم يطلعوا عليها، ولم يفيدوا منها في دراساتهم عن الشعر القديم.

والمستشرق تورّي كان أستاذاً في جامعة ييل Yale بالولايات المتحدة، وقد نشر عدداً من النصوص العربية، منها «فتوح مصر وإفريقية والمغرب» لابن عبد الحكم، و«اغلاط الضعفاء» لابن برّي، و«فحولة الشعراء للأصمعي»، وغير ذلك، وتوفى سنة ١٩٤٨ هـ، وكان مولده سنة ١٨٦٣ م.

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روى هذه الرسالة كتابةً عن الأصمعي تلميذه أبو حاتم السجستاني، وهو سهل ابن محمد. كان من كبار علماء البصرة باللغة والشعر. وقد نحى نحو أستاذه الأصمعي في مؤلفاته الكثيرة، وكان ثقة. توفى سنة ٢٤٨ هـ. وكان من تلاميذه ابن دريد اللغوي المتوفى سنة ٣٢١ هـ، وهو الذي روى عنه رسالتنا هذه. فتكون الرسالة قد وصلت إلينا بطريق عالين كبيرين ثقتين عن الأصمعي.

صلاح الدين المنجد

بيروت، ١٩٧١

(١) للتوسع في ترجمة الأصمعي أنظر: عز الدين التنوخي، الأصمعي، في مجلة المجمع العلمي العربي بدمشق، المجلد ١٤ (١٩٣٦) ص ٨٣ - ١١٠؛ وكحالة، معجم المؤلفين ٦ / ١٨٧؛ والزركلي، الأعلام ٤ / ٣٠٧؛ ونزهة الألباء ص ١١٢ (طبعة محمد أبو الفضل إبراهيم، وما ذكره من المصادر)؛ وبروكلمن، المجلد الأول ٧٦٣، والذيل الأول ١٠٤.

كتاب فحول الشعراء

رواية ابن ذرير عن أبي حاتم عن الأصمعي

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم قال أبو بكر محمد بن الحسن بن
ذرير الأزدي قال أبو حاتم سهل بن محمد بن عثمان السجزي
سمعت الأصمعي عبد الملك بن قريب غير¹⁾ مرة يفضل النابغة
الذبياني على سائر شعراء²⁾ للجاهلية وسألته آخر ما سأته قبيل
موته من أول الفحول قال النابغة الذبياني ثم قال ما أرى في الدنيا
لأحد مثل قول امرئ القيس

وَقَاعُمْ جَدَّهُمْ بِنِي أَبِيهِمْ وَيَالْأَشَقِيْنَ مَا كَانَ الْعِقَابُ³⁾

قال أبو حاتم فلما رأيت أنكب كلامه فكرت ثم قال بل أولهم
كلهم في الجودة امرؤ القيس له الخطورة والسبق وكلهم أخذوا من
قوله وأتبعوا مذهبه وكأته جعل النابغة الذبياني من الفحول قال
أبو حاتم قلت ما معنى الفحل قال يريد أن له مزينة على غيره
كمزينة الفحل على الحفان قال وبيت جرير يدلك على هذا

وَأَبْنُ اللَّبُونِ إِذَا مَا نَزَا⁴⁾ فِي قَرَانٍ لَمْ يَسْتَضِعْ صَوْلَةَ أَنْبَزِلِ الْقِنَاعِيْسِ⁵⁾
قال أبو حاتم وسأله رجل أي الناس طراً أشعر قال النابغة قال
تقدم عليه أحدا قال لا ولا أدركت العلماء بالشعر يفضلون عليه
أحدا قلت فزهير بن أبي سلمى قد اختلف فيه وفيهما⁶⁾ ثم قال
لا قال أبو عمرو وسأله رجل وأنا اسمع النابغة أشعر أم زهير فقال
ما يصلح زهير أن يكون أجيراً للنابغة قال [و]أوس⁶⁾ بن حجر أشعر²⁰⁾

1) Ms. عن.

2) Ms. الشعراء.

3) Ahlwardt, *Dirans* I, 120; Agh. VIII, 69; Cheikho, *Šuʿarā' an-Naṣrānīya* I, 17, etc.

4) Ms. نون. The verse cited in *Lisān* s. v. نون and قنعس.

5) The text of this passage is queried by the copyist, and كذا is inserted here in Landberg's hand.

6) So corrected in Ms.

من زهير وُلِدن اننابغة ططاً منه قال أوس

جَيْشٍ تَرَى مِنْهُ الْفَضَاءَ مَعْضَلًا¹⁾

في قافية وقال النابغة فجاء بمعناه في نصف بيت وزاد شيئاً آخر
فقال (2) fol.

جَيْشٍ³⁾ يَبْضُلُ بِهِ الْفَضَاءَ مَعْضَلًا يَدْعُ الْإِكَامَ كَأَنَّهُنَّ حِكَارِي 5

قال ابو حاتم حدثنا الاصمعي قال حدثنا شيخ من اهل نجد
قال كان طُفَيْلُ الْعَنْوَرِي يَسْمَى فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ مُحْبِرًا لِحَسَنِ شَعْرِهِ قَالَ
وطفيل عندي في بعض شعره اشعر من امرئ القيس الاصمعي يقوله
ثم قال وقد اخذ طفيل من امرئ القيس شيئاً قال ويقال ان كثيراً
10 من شعر امرئ القيس لصعاليك كانوا معه قال وكان عمرو بن قميئة⁴⁾
دخل معه الروم الى قيصر قال وكان معوية بن ابي سفيان يقول
دعوا لي طفيلاً فان شعره اشبه بشعر الأولين من زهير وهو فحل
ثم قال من العجب ان النابغة لم ينعت فرساً قط بشيء الا قوله

صُفْرًا مَنَاحِرُهَا مِنَ الْجَرَّارِ⁵⁾

15 قال ولم يكن النابغة وأوس وزهير يحسنون صفة الخيل ولكن طفيل
غاية في النعت وهو فحل ثم انشد له

يُرَادُ⁶⁾ عَلَى فَأْسِ اللَّجْجَامِ كَأَنَّمَا يُرَادُ⁷⁾ بِهِ مِرْقَانَةٌ جِدَّحٍ مُشَدَّبٍ

1) Cf. the verse quoted from this poet in *Lisān* XIII, 478.

2) Ahlw., *Divans*, p. 14 has جَمْعًا Diw. Cairo 1293 (with Comm. of Baṭalyūsi), p. 37 has جَمْعٌ. On this verse see also Ibn as-Sikkī, p. 343.

3) Ms. قَمِيَّةٌ.

4) Ahlw. p. 14; Diw. Cairo 1293, p. 38, and elsewhere.

5) Elsewhere always يُرَادِي or تُرَادِي; see Krenkow, "Tuḥail al-Ganawī", JRAS. 1907, p. 852 (vs. 45), and the references given by him, pp. 825, 827.

قوله يبراد على فاس اللجام تقول راودته على كذا أى حاولته عليه
ويقال اردته أيضا وإنما يصف عنقه¹⁾

. . . . وهو جيد الصفة للخييل جدًا ثم انشد

يشدّ الشُّورِ، أو أَرَادَ لِيَبْرُأ²⁾

5 وقد احسن في قصيدته أنتى يقول فيها

تِلْكَ الْمَكَارِمُ لَا قَعْبَانَ³⁾ مِنْ لَيْمٍ شِيْبًا بَمَاءِ فَعَادَا بَعْدَ أَبَوَالَا⁴⁾

قلت ما مذهبه في ذا فان هذا البيت يدخل في شعر غيره⁵⁾ قال
لما قال سوار ابن الحياء القشيري ومنا ناشد رجله ومنا الذى اسر
حاجبا ومنا الذى سقى اللبن قال النابغة حينئذ (fol. 3)

10 تِلْكَ الْمَكَارِمُ لَا قَعْبَانَ مِنْ لَيْمٍ

قال الاصمعي لو كانت هذه القصيدة للنابغة الاكبر بلغت كل
مبلغ قلت فالاعشى اعشى بنى قيس بن ثعلبة قال ليس بفاحل
قلت فعلقمة بن عبدة قال فحل قلت فالحرث بن حلزة قال فحل
قلت فعمر بن لُثُوم قال ليس بفاحل قلت فالسيب بن علس
قال فحل قلت فعدي بن زيد فحل هو قال ليس بفاحل ولا انثى¹⁵⁾
قال ابو حاتم وإنما سألته لانى سمعت ابن مناذر لا يقدم عليه
احدا قلت فحسان بن ثابت قال فحل قلت فقيس بن الخطيم قال

1) In the Ms. there is no sign of a gap here, nor does any one appear to have noticed it. It is plain that from speaking of Ṭufail's description of horses al-Aṣma'ī then passed on to speak of his acknowledged rival in this regard, Nābigha Ja'dī. The place where the omission occurred must be the one which I have indicated, and it may be that the text has suffered the loss of only a line or two.

2) The verse appears to come from the long *qaṣīda* of this poet of which small portions are given in Agh. IV, 130 f., Hiz. I, 513 f., and elsewhere, while 70 or 80 verses from it appear in the Jamhara, 145 ff. A similar verse (but not the same) is Jamh. 147, 4.

3) Ms. قَعْبَانَ.

4) See especially Brockelmann in *Nöldeke-Festschrift* I, 118.

5) Landberg's copyist queries the line beginning with this word and ending with ومنا.

فحل قلت فالمُرَقَشَانِ، قال فحلان، قلت فابن قمبئة¹⁾ قال فحل قال هو قمبئة²⁾ بن سعد بن مالك وكنيته ابو يزيد قلت فابو زبيد³⁾ قال ليس بفحل قلت فالشماخ قال فحل قال الاصمعي واخبرني من راي قبر الشماخ بأرمينية قلت فمُزَرَّد اخوه قال ليس بدون الشماخ ولكنه افسد شعره بما يهجو الناس⁴⁾ قال واخبرني الاصمعي قبل هذا ان اهل الكوفة لا يقدّمون على الاعشى احدا قال وكان خاف لا يقدّم عليه احدا قال ابو حاتم لانه قد قال في كل عروص وركب كل قافية⁵⁾ قلت فعروة بن الورد قال شاعر كريم وليس بفحل قلت فالجويدرة⁶⁾ قال لو قال مثل قصيدته خمس قصائد كان فحلا قلت فمهلهل قال ليس بفحل ولو كان قال مثل قوله

أَيْلَتْنَا بَدَى جُشْمٌ⁷⁾ أَيْبِرَى

كان أَحْلَهُمْ قال واكثر شعره محمول عليه قلت فابو دؤاد⁸⁾ قال صالح لم يقل انه فحل قلت فالراعي قال ليس بفحل قلت فابن مقبل قال ليس بفحل قال ابو حاتم وسألت الاصمعي من اشعر الراعي ام ابن مقبل قال ما اقربهما قلت لا يقنعنا هذا قال الراعي اشبه شعرا بالقديم وبالأول قلت فابن احمر (fol. 4) الباهلي قال ليس بفحل ولكن دون هؤلاء وفوق طبقته قال واري ان مالك بن حريم الهمداني من الفحول قال ولو قال تعليبة بن صعير المازني مثل قصيدته خمساً كان فحلا قلت فكعب بن جعيل قال اضته من الفحول ولا أستيقنه قلت فجزير والفرزدق والاختل قال هؤلاء لو كانوا في الجاهلية كان لهم شأن ولا اقول فيهم شيئا لانهم اسلاميون

1) Ms. قمبئة.

2) Ms. زبيد.

3) Apparently a leaf of one of the parent Mss. was misplaced, for this passage plainly belongs above, after the statement that al-A'ṣā was not a *fahl*.

4) Ms. فالجويدرة.

5) Better حُسم or حَسْم; Nöldeke, *Del. Carn.* p. 44, *Lisān* s. v.

حسم, etc.

6) Ms. داود.

قال ابو حاتم وكنت اسمعه يفضل جريرا على الفرزدق كثيرا فقلت له يوم¹⁾ دخل عليه عصام بن الفيض انى اريد ان اسألك عن شيء ولو ان عصاما يعلمه من قبلك لم اسألك ثم قلت سمعتك تفضل جريرا على الفرزدق غير مرة فما تقول فيهما وفي الاخطل فاطرق ساعة ثم انشد بيتا من قصيدته²⁾

لَعَمْرِي لَقَدْ أَسْرَيْتُ لَا لَيْلَ عَاجِزٍ بِسَاهِمَةٍ³⁾ اَلْحَدِيثِ طَاوِيَةِ الْقُرْبِ
فانشد ابياتا زهاء العشرة ثم قال من قال لك ان⁴⁾ في الدنيا احدا قال مثلها قبله ولا بعده فلا تصدقه ثم قال ابو عمرو بن العلاء كان يفضلهُ سمعت ابا عمرو بن العلاء يقول لو ادرك الاخطل من الجاهلية يوما واحدا ما قدمت عليه جاهليا ولا اسلاميا ثم⁵⁾ قال الاصمعي انشدت ابا عمرو بن العلاء شعرا فقال ما يطيق هذا من الاسلاميين احد ولا الأخطل قال ابو حاتم وسألته عن الاغلب اهل هو من الرجاز فقال ليس بفاحل ولا مفلح وقد⁶⁾ اعيان شعره وقال لى مرة ما اروي للأغلب⁷⁾ الا اثنتين ونصفا قلت كيف قلت نصفا قال اعرف له ثنتين وكنت اروي نصفا من التى على⁸⁾ القاف فطولوها ثم قال كان ولده يزيدون فى شعره حتى افسدوه قال ابو حاتم وطلب منه اسكف بن العباس رجلا للأغلب⁹⁾ وطلب منى [...] فاعرته¹⁰⁾ فاخرج منها نحو من عشرين (fol. 5) فقلت الم تزعم انك لا تعرف له الا اثنتين ونصفا قال لى بلى ولكننى انتقيت¹¹⁾ ما اعرف فان لم يكن له فهو لغيره ممن هو²⁰⁾

1) The line of Landberg's Ms. beginning with this word is queried.

2) *Dīwān*, ed. Salhani, p. 17, etc.

3) Ms. بساهمة.

4) Ms. ان.

5) Ms. للاصمعي.

6) Ms. وقال.

7) Ms. لا اغلب.

8) Ms. لاغلب.

9) Thus Landberg Ms.

10) Ms. فاعربه, corrected by Landberg's copyist.

11) Ms. اسمعت.

ثبت أو ثقة قال أبو حاتم وكان أروى الناس للرجز الاصمعي قال أبو حاتم سمعت مرة تجرانياً كان قد طاف بنواحي خراسان فسأله فقال اخبرني فلان بالرتي انك تروي اثني عشر¹⁾ الف ارجوزة قال نعم اربعة عشر²⁾ الف ارجوزة احفظها فتعجبت فقال لي اكثرها 6 قصار قلت اجعلها بيتا بينا اربعة عشر الف بيت قال الاصمعي انما اعياني شعر الاغلب قال خلف³⁾ فكان من ولده انسان يصدق في الحديث والروايات ويكذب عليه في شعره قلت فحاتم الطائي قال حاتم انما يعد بكرم ولم يقل انه فحل قلت فمعفر البارقي حليف بنى نمير قال لو اتم خمسا او ستا لكان فحلا ثم قال لم ار اقل شعرا من كلب وشيبان قلت فابو ذؤيب الهذلي قال فحل قلت 10 فساعدة بن جوية قال فحل قلت فابو خراش الهذلي قال فحل قلت قلت فاعشى همدان قال هو من الفحول وهو اسلامي كثير الشعر وسالت الاصمعي عن كعب بن سعد الغنوي قال ليس من الفحول الا في المرتبة فانه ليس في الدنيا مثلها قال وكان يقال له كعب الامثال وسألته عن خفاف ابن ندبة وعنترة والزبيرقان بن بدر قال 15 هؤلاء اشعر الفرسان ومثلهم عباس بن مرداس السلمى لم يقل انهم من الفحول وبشر بن ابي خازم⁴⁾ وسمعت ابا عمرو بن العلاء يقول قصيدته التي على الرءاء ألحقته بالفحول

ألا بان الخليط ولم يداني وقلبك في الطعائن مستعار⁵⁾

20 قلت فبالاسود بن يعفر النهشلي قال يشبه الفحول قلت أرايت

1) Ms. عشرة. 2) Ms. عشرة. 3) Ms. خلف.

4) Very often written خازم; thus e. g. Aghānī and Index, Yāqūt (see Index), Lane, *Lex.* s. v. عور, etc.

5) See Yāqūt I, 76, where the verse (in the recension of as-Sukkarī) is given in what appears to be the more primitive form, with يزاروا in place of يداني. Yāqūt probably cites other portions of the same *qaṣīda* in I, 393 f., IV, 10, 47, 128, 480. So too, perhaps, the verse given in the *Lisān* and Lane s. v. عور.

عمرو بن شاس الأَسَدِي ما قلت فيه¹⁾ (fol. 6) قال ليس بفاحل هو
دون هؤلاء قلت فلبيد بن ربيعة قال ليس بفاحل وقال لي مرة
أخرى كان رجلاً صالحاً كأنه ينفى عنه جودة الشعر وقال لي مرة
شعر لبيد كأنه طَيْلَسَانٌ طَبْرِيٌّ يعني أنه جيد الصنعة ولمست له
حلاوة قال وجرادة بن عميلة العَنَزِيُّ له اشعار تشبه اشعار الفحول²⁾
وهي قصار وهذا البيت له

أَتَى أَهْتَدِيَّتِ وَكُنْتَ غَيْرَ دَلِيلَةٍ شَهِدْتُ عَلَيْكِ بِمَا فَعَلْتَ شُهُودٌ
قلت فأوس بن غلفاء الهَجِيمِي قال لو كان قال عشرين قصيدة
لحُفَّ بالفحول ولكنه قُطِعَ به قال وعميرة بن طارق اليربوعي من
رؤوس الفرسان هو الذي أسر قابوس بن المنذر وسألته عن خداش¹⁰⁾
بن زهير العامري قال هو فاحل قلت فكعب بن زهير بن أبي سلمى
قال ليس بفاحل قلت فريد الأيل الضائي قال من الفرسان قلت
فسليك بن السلكة قال ليس من الفحول ولا من الفرسان ولكنه
من الذين كانوا يَغْزُونَ فيَعْدُونَ على أرجلهم فيختلسون قال ومثله
ابن بَرَّاقَةَ الهَمْدَانِي ومثله حاجز الشمالي من السرويين وتنابط شراً¹⁵⁾
واسمه ثابت بن جابر والشنفرى الأزدي السروى وليس المنتشر
منهم ولكن الأعلم الهذلي منهم قال وبالبحجاز منهم وبالسرارة أكثر
من ثلاثين يعني الذين يعدون على أرجلهم ويختلسون قال وسلامة
بن جندل لو كان زاد شيئاً كان فحلاً قال والمتلمس رأس فحول
ربيعة قال ودريد بن الصمة من فحول الفرسان قال ودريد في بعض²⁰⁾
شعره اشعر من الذبياني وكاد يغلب الذبياني قلت فاعشى باهلة
امن الفحول هو قال نعم وله مرثية ليس في الدنيا مثلها وهي³⁾
أَتَى أَتَتْنِي لِسَانٌ لَا أُسْرُ بِهَا مِنْ عَلُوِّ لَا كَذِبٌ فِيهَا وَلَا سَخَرٌ³⁾

1) Ms. منه.

3) Ms. سَخَّرَ.

2) The whole poem, Jamh. 135 ff. This opening verse also cited, in somewhat varying form, in the larger native lexicons, s. v. علو.

(fol. 7) 1) قال وولد العجاج في الجاهلية وكان حميد الأرقط
يُشَدِّب الرجز وينقحه وينقيه قال ورايته يستجيد بعض رجز أبي
النجم ويضعف بعضا لأن له رديئا كثيرا قال مرة لا يعجبني شاعر
اسمه الفضل بن فدامة يعني أبا النجم قال أبو حاتم وسألت الأصمعي
6 عن الفخيف العامري الذي قال في النساء قال ليس بفصيح ولا
حجة وسألته عن زياد الأعجم فقال حجة لم يتعلق عليه بلحن
وكنيته أبو أمامة قلت فاخبرني عن عبد بنى الحساس قال هو
فصيح وهو زجى أسود قال وأبو²⁾ دلامة عبد رايته مولد حبشي
قلت أفصحا³⁾ كان قال هو صالح الفصاحة قال وأبو عطاء السندي
10 عبد أخرج مشقوق الآن قلت أوكان⁴⁾ في الاغراب قال لا ولكنه
فصيح قال عبد العزيز بن مروان⁵⁾ لايمن بن خريم⁶⁾ الاسدي كيف
تري⁷⁾ مولاى يعني نصيبا قال هو اشعر اهل جلدته وكان أسود
قال وعمر بن أبى ربيعة مولد وهو حجة سمعت أبا عمرو بن العلاء
يحتج في النحو بشعره ويقول هو حجة وقضالة بن شريك الاسدي
15 وعبد الله بن الزبير الاسدي وابن الرقيات هؤلاء مولدون وشعرهم
حجة ورايته طعن في الأفيشر ولم يلتفت الى شعره وقال ولا يقال
ألا رجل شرطي فقلت قال الأفيشر⁸⁾

إنما يشرب⁹⁾ من أموالنا فاسألوا الشرطي ما هذا الغضب

فقال ذاك مولد قال وابن هرمة¹⁰⁾ ثبت فصيح قال وابن أنيفة
20 ثبت في طبقة ابن هرمة وهو دونه في الشعر وقد كان مالك يروى

1) It is possible that something is missing here. 2) Ms. أبو.

3) Ms. أفصيح. 4) Ms. وكان. 5) Ms. مودت (sic).

6) Ms. خزيم, corrected (by Landberg?) to خزيم. Often written خزيم, see however Suyūṭī, *Huṣn*, I, 79, also Agh. XXI, 7.

7) Ms. بيري. 8) Agh. X, 91.

9) So orig. Ms., but corrected by copyist to نشرب. See note on the Translation.

10) Ms. هرمة.

عنه الفقه قال وطفييل الكِنَانِي مثل ابن هرمة قال ويزيد بن ضبة
 مولى لثقيف قال قال يزيد بن ضبة الف قصيدة فاقتسمتها العرب
 فذهبت بها قال الاصمعي لم يكن بعد روية وابي (8) fol. 8) تُخَيِّلَةٌ
 اشعر من جندل الطهوي وابي طوف وخطام الجاشعي ويلقب خطام
 الريح قال وكان ابن مفرغ من مؤلدي البصرة قال حدثني الاصمعي 5
 قال اخبرني وهب بن جرير بن حازم قال قال ابني (1) كنت اروي
 لأمية ثلثمائة قصيدة قال فقلت اين كتابه قال استعاره فلان فذهب
 به حدثني الاصمعي قال كان يقال اشعر الناس مغلبو مضر حميد
 والراعي وابن مقبل فاما الراعي فغلبه جرير وغلبه خنزر رجل من
 بنى بكر وللجعدى غلبته ليلى الاخيلىة وسوار ابن الحيا وابن مقبل 10
 غلبه الجاشعي من بنى الحارث بن كعب وحميد كل من هاجاه
 غلبه قال ابن احرر لم يهاج احدا قال وفُسْحَمُ شاعر جاعلي مُقْلَقٌ (2)
 ولم ينسبه قال وكان الجاشعي بن الحارثية (3) شرب الخمر فضربه على
 بن ابى طائب رصه مائة سوط ثمانين للسكر وعشرين لحرمة رمضان
 وكان وجده (4) في رمضان سكران فلما ضره ذهب الى معوية 15
 فمدحه * ونال من (5) على رصه (6) قال الاصمعي جامع [زهير] (7) قوما
 من يهود اى قاربهم فسمع بذكر المعاد فقال في قصيدته
 يُوخَّرُ فَيُوضَعُ فِي كِتَابٍ فَيُدْخَرُ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ أَوْ يُعْجَلُ فَيُنْتَقِمَ (8)

1) Ms. ابي. 2) Ms. مقلق. 3) Ms. الحيثية. 4) Ms. وجده.

5) Ms. ونال في. وقال في. In a marginal note Goldziher suggests the reading ونال instead of وقال. This change seems to me to necessitate reading من in place of في. I have adopted both emendations. If the reading of the Ms. is retained, we must suppose that a passage has been lost here; a supposition which may seem to be supported by the absence of the name (Zuhair) in what immediately follows. 6) Something missing here?

7) This name is wanting in the Ms., but fortunately the following lines are very well known as belonging to Zuhair; Arnold, *Mo'all.* p. 78, Ahlw. 95, Nöldeke, *Die Mo'allaga Zuhair's*, pp. 16, 30, etc.; see also my *Commercial Terms in the Koran*, p. 10.

8) Ms. فينتقم.

قال الاصمعي سئل شيخ عالم عن الشعراء فقال كان الشعر في
 الجاهلية في ربيعة وصار في قيس ثم جاء الاسلام فصار في تهيم قلت
 للاصمعي لِمَ لَمْ يَذَكَرَ الْيَمَنُ [قال] ¹⁾ انما اراد بنى نزار فاما هؤلاء
 كلهم فاذا تعلموا من راس الشعراء امرئ القيس وانما كان الشعر
 5 في اليمن وقال افي الدنيا مثل فرسان قيس وشعراؤهم ²⁾ الفرسان
 فذكر عدّة منهم عنتره وخفاف بن ندبة وعباس بن مرداس ودريد
 بن الصمة وقال لى مرة دريد وخفاف اشعر الفرسان حدثني الاصمعي
 [قال] ³⁾ ذهب امية بن ابي الصلت في الشعر (fol. 9) بعامّة ذكر
 الآخرة و[ذهب عنتره ب]عامّة ⁴⁾ ذكر الحرب وذهب عمرو بن ابي ربيعة
 10 بعامّة ذكر النساء ⁵⁾ قال الاصمعي لقي رجلا كثير عزة وهو كثير بن
 عبد الرحمن الخزاعي ابن ابي جمعة فقال له يا ابا صخر اي الناس
 اشعر قال الذي قال

أَثَرْتُ إِذْ لَاجِي عَلَى لَيْلِ حُرّةٍ هَصِيمِ الْحَشَا حُسَانَةِ الْمُتَجَرّدِ ⁶⁾

وهذا للحطيئة قال ثم تركه حينما حتى اذا ظنّه قد نسي
 15 ذلك لقيه فقال يا ابا صخر اي الناس اشعر قال الذي يقول

قِفَا نَبِيكَ مِنْ ذِكْرِي حَبِيبٍ وَمَنْزِلِ ⁷⁾

يعنى امرأ القيس وهو اول من بكى الديار وسير ⁸⁾ الظعن قال
 الاصمعي انعت الناس لمركوب من الابل عبينة ⁹⁾ بن مرداس وهو
 الذي يقال له [ابن] ¹⁰⁾ فسوة وانعت الناس لحلوب في انقصيد الراعي
 20 وانعتهم لحلوب في الرجز ابن لاجا التيمي ¹¹⁾ واسمه عمر قال الاصمعي

1) Ms. omits. 2) Ms. وشعراؤهم. 3) Bracketed words om. in Ms.

4) This saying also quoted from al-Aṣma'ī in Agh. III, 188, below.

5) Dīwān, Cairo 1323, p. 21; ed. Goldziher, ZDMG. 46, 203; Agh.

II, 61; Lisān, s. v. دلج.

6) The opening line of Imrulqais' Mu'allāqa.

7) Ms. وسير. 8) Ms. عتيبة. 9) Ms. om. 10) Ms. السمي.

أبى أناس اشعر قبيلة فقييل النجّل العيون، في ضلال القيسيل يعنى
الانصار قال ويقال الزرق العيون في اصول العضاء يعنى بنى قيس
بن ثعلبة وذكر منهم المرقش والاعشى والمسيب بن علس حدثنا
الاصمعى قال حدثنا ابن ابى الزناد قال أنشد حسان شعر عمرو
بن العاص فقال ما هو شاعر ولكنه عاقل قال الاصمعى سئل الاخطل⁶
عن شعر كثير فقال حجازى يكبد¹ البرد قال الاصمعى يوماً أشعرت
ان ليلى اشعر من الخنساء وقال لى مرة الزبيرقان فارس شاعر غير
مطيل وقال مالك بن نويرة شاعر فارس مطيل قال ليس في الدنيا
قبيلة على كثرتها اقل شعرا من بنى شيبان وكلب قال وليس لكلب
شاعر في الجاهلية قديم قال وكلب مثل شيبان اربع مرار حدثنا ابو¹⁰
حاتم قال حدثنا الاصمعى قال قيل لحسان من اشعر الناس قال
اشعرهم (fol. 10) رجلا ام قبيلة قيل² قال بل قبيلة قال هذيل
قال الاصمعى فيهم اربعون شاعرا مقلقا³ وكلهم يعدو على رجله
ليس فيهم فارس قال ابو حاتم سالت الاصمعى فمن اشعرهم رجلا
واحدا قال اما حسان فلم يقل في الواحد شيئا وانا اقول اشعرهم¹⁵
واحدا النابغة الذبياني وهو ابن خمسين سنة وانما قال الشعر
قليلا وقال النابغة للجعدى اُحَم ثلاثين سنة بعد ما قال الشعر ثم
نبيغ قال والشعر الاول من قوله جيد بالغ والآخر كله مسروق وليس
جيد قال ابو حاتم قال الشعر وهو ابن ثلاثين سنة ثم احم ثلاثين
سنة ثم نبيغ فقال ثلاثين سنة قلت للاصمعى كيف شعر الفرزدق²⁰
قال تسعة اعشار شعره سرقه قال واما جربير فله ثلاثون قصيدة ما
علمته سرق شيئا قط الا نصف بيت قال لا ادري لعله * واقف
بينى شيئا قلت، ما هو هجاء فلم يخبر⁴ قال ابو حاتم قد رايت

1) inserted here in Landberg's hand. See note on the Translation.

2) Ms. قال.

3) Ms. معلقا.

4) This passage is queried in the Ms. The text is corrupt, and it may be that something is missing.

انا بعد في شعره قال ابو حاتم حدثنا الاصمعي قال اظن¹⁾ جميل
بن مَعْمَر ولد في الجاهلية قال والاحوص مؤتد نبت بقباء حتى هرم
حدثنا الاصمعي قال قال فلان انما كثير كُرْبَجٍ يعني صاحب كربيج
قال يبيع الخيط والقطران قال الاصمعي كان ابو ذؤيب راوية ساعدة
5 وشذ²⁾ عليه في اشياء كثيرة * فذكر في قافية والرح في شعرهم³⁾ قال
واستجاد هذه للجيمية لابي ذؤيب قال ليس في الدنيا احد يقوم
للشماخ في الزائبة والجيمية الا ان ابا ذؤيب اجاد⁴⁾ في جيميته حدا
لا يقوم له احد قال هي التي قال فيها

بَرَكَ من جُدَامٍ لِيَبِيحُ⁵⁾

10 قال الاصمعي قال النمر بن تَوَلَّب جاهلي اسلامي قال وقال
الفرزدق للنوار امراته كيف شعري من شعر جرير فقالت شرَكَكَ⁶⁾
في حلوه وغلبك علي مرة قال الاصمعي قال سمعت ابا سفيان بن
العلاء يقول قلت لرؤبة كيف رجز ابي (fol. 11) النجم عندك⁷⁾
فقال كلمته تلك عليها لعنة الله لانه استجدها

15 للحمد لله الوهوب المَجْرَلِ⁸⁾

حدثنا الاصمعي قال الكمييت بن زيد ليس بحجة لانه مؤتد
وكذلك الطيرماح قال وذو الرمة حجة لانه بدوي ولكن ليس يشبه
شعره شعر العرب ثم قال آلا واحدة التي تشبه العرب وهي التي
يقول فيها

20 والباب ذون ابي غسان مسدود

تم والله اعلم

م

1) Ms. ظن. 2) Ms. وشذ. 3) The passage cannot be right as it stands. It is queried in the Ms. 4) Ms. أحاد.

5) *Dīwān*, Yale University Library, Ms. 303, fol. 103a; Haffner, *Texte zur arab. Lexikographie*, 116; *Lisān* s. v. بَرَكَ، جَدَم، شَيْب، ضَرَع، لَيْج، صَرَع، شَيْب، جَدَم، بَرَكَ، *Yāqūt* I, 852, III, 244.

6) Ms. شَرَكَكَ.

7) Ms. عبدك.

8) Agh. IX, 81, 10.

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The curse of Allah is upon this phrase of his, because *he* thought it excellent:

Praise to Allah, the bountiful giver.

Al-Aṣma'ī said, moreover: Al-Kumait ibn Zaid was not normative 5 (كُؤْمَيْتِ), because he was an Arab only by adoption; the same was true of aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ. Dū 'r-Rumma was normative, for he was a bedawī. His poetry, however, is not like the poetry of the true Arabs; excepting (he added) one poem in which he resembles them; that one, namely, in which he says:

10 And on Abū Ghassān the door is barred.

ancient poet in the Jāhiliya, and yet Kalb was four times as good as Saibān.

Said Abū Ḥātim: We have the following from al-Aṣma'ī. Some one asked of Ḥassān: Whom do you call foremost in poetry? He answered: (fol. 10) Do you mean What man? or What tribe? I meant the tribe. Ḥudail is the foremost, he replied. (Said al-Aṣma'ī: There were in that tribe forty notable poets. They were all men who ran on foot, not one of them was a knight.) Said Abū Ḥātim: I asked al-Aṣma'ī: What one man, then, was the foremost of the poets? He replied: Ḥassān did not express his opinion as to the individual, but I will give mine. The one greatest of them all was an-Nābigha of Ḍubyan, when he was fifty years of age. Nor did he compose much poetry. As for an-Nābigha al-Ja'dī, on the other hand, the flow of his poetry was stopped for thirty years after his first productive period, and then the stream flowed again. The poetry of his first period was extremely good, but all his later productions were unoriginal (مسرّوق) and of poor quality. (Said Abū Ḥātim: He began composing poetry when he was thirty years old; then he ceased for thirty years; then the flow was renewed for thirty years more.) I said to al-Aṣma'ī: How about the poetry of al-Farazdaq? He replied: Nine tenths of his poetry was borrowed. As for Jarīr, he composed thirty *qaṣida*'s, and I do not know that he ever plagiarized anything except one half-verse.¹⁾ According to Abū Ḥātim, al-Aṣma'ī said: I think that Jamīl ibn Ma'mar was born of a slave mother; 25 he flourished in Qubā' until his old age.

This from al-Aṣma'ī: Some one once said of Kuṭayyir that he was a small shop selling thread and tar. Said al-Aṣma'ī: Abū Du'aib was an excellent authority, and many instances of exceptional usage were based on his poetry.²⁾ He (al-Aṣma'ī) admired this *jim*-poem by Abū Du'aib; No one in the world, he said, could equal aš-Šammāḥ in his poems in *zāy* and *jim* except Abū Du'aib, who in his poem in *jim* reached such a limit of excellence as no other could equal; namely, in the poem containing the words:

The kneeling camel herd of Judām.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: an-Namir ibn Taulab flourished both in the Jāhiliya and in Islam. He also narrated: Al-Farazdaq once said to his wife, Nawār: How does my verse compare with that of Jarīr? She answered: He equalled you in the sweet, and conquered you in the bitter. Al-Aṣma'ī said further: I heard Abū Sufyān ibn al-'Alā' say that he once asked of Ru'ba: What do you think of the *rajaz*-poetry of Abū 'n-Najm? (fol. 11) He replied:

1) The text seems to be defective here, and I have left a passage untranslated.

2) See the note on the text.

I heard this from al-Aṣma'ī: Umayya ibn Abū Ḥ-Ṣalt was supreme and unapproached in poetry (fol. 9) which had for its subject the world to come; 'Antara, where the subject was war; and 'Umar ibn Abū Rabī'a, where the subject was women.

5 According to al-Aṣma'ī, some one once met Kutayyir, the lover of 'Azza (this was Kutayyir ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmān, al-Huzā'i, Ibn Abū Jum'a), and said to him: O Abū Ṣahr, who was the greatest poet? He answered: The one who said:

I count my night ride better than a night with one free-born,
10 Slender of waist, most beautiful where stripped of clothing.

Now this was a verse of al-Ḥuṭai'a's¹). Thereupon he left him for a while, until he thought he had forgotten the incident; then he met him again, and said: O Abū Ṣahr, who was the greatest poet? He answered: The one who said:

15 Stand, let us weep at the remembrance of a beloved one and her abode;

meaning Imrūlqais, who was the first of the poets to depict weeping over deserted dwelling-places and the journeying of the howdas.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: The best at describing riding-camels was
20 'Uyaina ibn Mirdās (the one who was called Ibn Faswa²); for description of milch-camels, the best in the *qaṣīda* form was ar-Rā'i, and in *rajaz* verse Ibn Laja' at-Taimī (whose name was 'Umar). Said al-Aṣma'ī: What tribe or company of men ranked highest in the poetry it produced? Some say, The large-eyed ones in the
25 shady palm-gardens, meaning the Anṣār; others say, The blue-eyed ones at the root of the thorn-bushes, meaning the Banī Qais ibn Ta'labā; and he mentioned of their number al-Muraqqiṣ, al-A'ṣā, and al-Musayyab ibn 'Alas. Said al-Aṣma'ī: I heard the following
30 verses by 'Amr ibn al-'Aṣī, and said: He is no poet, but a man of sharp wit. Said al-Aṣma'ī: Al-Aḥṭal was asked about the poetry of Kutayyir, and replied: A Hijāzite, who fastens the cloak firmly³). Al-Aṣma'ī once said: Do you know that Lailā was a better poet than al-Ḥansā'? And he said to me on another occasion: Az-
35 Zibriqān was a poet-knight (فارس شاعر) who did not make a long story; Mālik ibn Nuwaira, on the other hand, was a poet-knight who did make a long story. No tribe in the world, he said, was less productive of poetry, in proportion to its number, than the Banī Ṣaibān and Kalb. In the latter tribe there was not a single

1) The same story in different form, and on other authority, in Agh. II, 61. See also the anecdote there, at the bottom of the page.

2) See especially Agh. XIX, 143.

3) What the phrase (بيكد البرد) means here, I do not know. It evidently puzzled Landberg also; see the note on the text.

'Ḥiṭam of the Wind"). Ibn Mufarrigh was one of the *muwallads*¹⁾ of Baṣra. Al-Aṣma'ī narrates that he heard the following from Wahb ibn Jarīr ibn Hāzim. My father once said to me: I was wont to recite three hundred *qaṣida*'s of Umayya. I asked: Where is the collection now? He replied: Such-a-one borrowed it and carried it off.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: It used to be said that the best of all the poets were "the Vanquished of Muḍar", namely Ḥumaid, ar-Rā'ī, and Ibn Muqbil²⁾. As for ar-Rā'ī, he was vanquished by Jarīr, and also by Ḥanzar, one of the Banī Bakr. Lailā of Aḥyal overcame al-Ja'dī, and so also did Sawwār [ibn Aufā] ibn al-Ḥayā³⁾. Ibn Muqbil was beaten by an-Najāšī, one of the Banī 'l-Ḥarīṭ ibn Ka'b⁴⁾. As for Ḥumaid, every one who attacked him vanquished him. Ibn Aḥmar⁵⁾ (said he) did not satirise any one. Fuṣḥum⁶⁾ was mentioned by him as a notable poet of the Jāhiliya, but he did not give his lineage. He said of an-Najāšī ibn al-Ḥarīṭiya: He was guilty of wine-drinking, and 'Alī ibn Abū Ṭalīb punished him by beating with a hundred stripes; eighty for drunkenness, and twenty for violating Ramaḍān (for he had found him drunk in the sacred month). So when he had been beaten, he went away to Mu'āwiya, and composed verse in praise of him, and vituperated 'Alī⁷⁾.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: [Zuhair] became intimate with certain Jews, and learned from them about the resurrection. Therefore he said in his *qaṣida*:

Either it is postponed, put down in a book, and stored
For the Day of Account; or else 'tis hastened, and soon avenged.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: A learned ṣāliḥ was asked about the poets, and replied: In the time before Muḥammad, poetry flourished first in Rabī'a; then it went over to Tamīm. I said to al-Aṣma'ī: Why did he not mention Yemen? He replied: He was only speaking of the Banī Nizār; as for these, they all learned the poetic art from Imrulqais, the chief of the poets; Yemen was the home of poetry. And he said: Are there any in the world equal to the knights of Qais? their poets were indeed the *fursān*. Then he mentioned a number, among them 'Antara, Ḥufāf ibn Nadba, 'Abbās ibn Mirdās, and Duraid ibn aṣ-Ṣimma. On another occasion he said to me: Duraid and Ḥufāf were the best poets of the *fursān*⁸⁾.

1) Arabs by adoption, not of pure blood. Generally meaning one born of a slave mother.

2) The name of Nābigha Ja'dī seems to be accidentally omitted here; see just below.

3) Agh. IV, 131, 6 from bottom, 132f.

4) *Kāmil* 187, 6.

5) *ī. e.* 'Amr ibn Aḥmar al-Bāhili, another of the poets of Muḍar.

6) So pointed in Ms. I have found no other mention of him.

7) See the note on the text.

8) Cf. the similar estimate given above, and see the Introduction.

Said Abū Ḥātim: I asked al-Aṣma'ī about al-Quḥaif al-Āmirī — who made verses about women — and he said: His diction is neither classically elegant nor normative¹). Upon my asking him about Ziyād al-A'jam, he said: He is normative; no solecism has been attached to him; and his *kunya* was Abū Umāna. I said: Tell me about the slave of the Banī 'l-Ḥaṣḥās²). He replied: His verse was classically elegant, though he was a negro. Abū Dulāma was also a slave, I think he was the adopted son of an Abyssinian. I asked: Was his poetry classically chaste? He replied: It was of good quality in this regard. Moreover, Abū 'Aṭā' as-Sindī was a slave whose ear was pierced. Was he then one of the genuine Arabs?, I queried. No, but his diction was chaste. 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Marwān once said to Aiman ibn Ḥuraim of Asad: What do you think of my *maulā*? meaning Nuṣaib. Aiman answered: He is a better poet than any other man of his skin (for he was a negro)³). Furthermore, 'Umar ibn Abū Rabī'a was the son of a slave mother, yet his poetry was considered normative; I have heard Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā' cite it as proof of correct grammatical usage, and formally declare it to be such. Also Faḍāla ibn Šarīk of Asad, and 'Abdallāh ibn az-Zubair of the same tribe, and Ibn ar-Ruqayyāt⁴), these all were sons of slave parents, yet their verse is normative. I saw, however, that he disparaged al-Uqaišir, and did not feel inclined toward his poetry; he said of him: He was only the "policeman" poet. Yes, I answered, it was al-Uqaišir who said:

25 You see, he 's drinking at our own expense!

So ask the policeman, Wherefore all this wrath?⁵)

He was slave-born, al-Aṣma'ī continued. Ibn Harma was both reliable and elegant in his compositions; Ibn Uḍaina was reliable, and in the same class (طبقة) as Ibn Harma, but was inferior to him in his poetry⁶). Mālik cited traditions on his authority, in his jurisprudence. Ṭufail of Kināna is also to be classed with Ibn Harma. Yazīd ibn Ḍabba was a *maulā* of the tribe Ṭaqīf. He composed a thousand *qaṣida*'s, but the Arabs divided them up and carried them off.

35 Al-Aṣma'ī said, moreover: After Ru'ba and Abū Nuḥaila (fol. 8) there were no poets more worthy of the name than Jandal aṭ-Ṭuhawī and Abū Ṭauq and Ḥiṭām al-Mujašī'ī (who was nicknamed

1) More exactly: to be used as proof (دليل) of correct usage.

2) *i. e.* Suḥaim.

3) The whole anecdote is given in Agh. I, 131.

4) *i. e.* 'Ubaidallāh ibn Qais ar-Ruqayyāt.

5) The story of al-Uqaišir's adventure with the policeman is told in Agh. X, 87 f., 91. According to the latter passage, the officer of the law, who had come to arrest al-Uqaišir for drunkenness, was himself made tipsy by wine which the poet supplied to him by means of a tube passed through the key-hole of the barricaded door.

6) Cf. Agh. IV, 113, 2 f.

I asked him about Ḥidāš ibn Zuhair al-Āmirī, and he replied: He is a *fahl*.

Ka'b ibn Zuhair ibn Abū Sulmā?

Not a *fahl*.

Zaid al-Ḥail aṭ-Ṭā'ī?

One of the *fursān*.

Sulaik ibn as-Sulakā?

Not one of the *fuhūl*, nor was he one of the *fursān*. He belonged to the number of those who used to make forays, running on their own feet and taking plunder. Another of the same sort 10 was Ibn Barrāqa of Hamdān¹⁾, and still others were Ḥājjiz²⁾ aṭ-Ṭumālī, of the *Sarwiyyūn*³⁾, and Ta'abbāṭa Šarran (whose name was Ṭābit ibn Jābir), and aš-Šanfarā al-Azdī, the *Sarwī*. Al-Muntašir was not of their number, but al-A'lam of Ḥudail belonged to them. Some of them dwelt in the Ḥijāz, and in the Sarāt there 15 were more than thirty (*i. e.*, those who used to run on their own feet and take plunder).

He also said: If Salāma ibn Jandal had accomplished somewhat more, he would have been a *fahl*. Al-Mutalammis is the chief *fahl* of Rabī'a. Duraid ibn aš-Šimma is one of the *fuhūl* among 20 the *fursān*. Moreover, Duraid in some of his poetry surpasses Nābigha of Dubyān in the art; he did, indeed, come near to vanquishing the Dubyāni.

I said: How about A'šā of Bahila, is he one of the *fuhūl*?

He answered: Yes, and there is an elegy of his which has 25 not its equal in the world, namely:

There has come to me a report, at which I am not rejoiced,
From the height; a report in which there is neither lie nor
mockery.

..... (fol. 7) He proceeded⁴⁾: Al-'Ajjāj was born in the Jāhi- 30 liya. Ḥumaid al-Arqaṭ used to prune and polish and purify the *rajaz* poetry. I saw that he (al-Aṣma'ī) pronounced some of Abū n-Najm's *rajaz* verse good, and some of it defective, for he composed much that was bad. On one occasion he said: I am not much impressed with a poet whose name is al-Faḍl ibn Qudāma 35 (meaning Abū n-Najm).

1) *Kāmil* 152, 19, Yāqūt III, 300.

2) Cf. Agh. XII, 49 below.

3) Those whose home was in the Sarāt, a mountainous district of Tihāma bordering on Yemen, whose inhabitants were noted for purity of speech (Yāqūt III, 66 f.: قال أبو عمرو بن العلاء أفصحُ الناس أهل السروات). See just below, also Yāqūt III, 65 ff. (p. 65 line 8, for أرمينية read أليمن?), Hamdāni ed. Müller, pp. 48 f., 67 ff.

4) Something missing here?

Fahl.

Abū Hiraš of Hudail?

Fahl.

Ašā of Hamdān?

5 He is one of the *fuḥūl*, though of Islam, and the author of much poetry¹).

I asked al-Aṣma'ī about Ka'b ibn Sa'd al-Ghanawī; and he answered: He is not one of the *fuḥūl*, except in his elegies: in that particular no other has equalled him. He added: He used to
10 be called "the Ka'b of the Proverbs".

I asked him also about Ḥufāf ibn Nadba. and 'Antara, and az-Zibriqān ibn Badr; and he replied: These are the best poets of the *fursān*²); and in the same rank with them is 'Abbās ibn Mirdās of Sulaim (he did not say that they were of the *fuḥūl*), and Bišr
15 ibn Abū Ḥāzim. I heard Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā' say: His (Bišr's) *qaṣida* rhyming in the letter *r* brought him into the company of the *fuḥūl*:

Ah, the horde has departed, without drawing near,
And thy heart, borrowed from thee, is in their howdas.

20 (Saīd Abū Ḥatim) I proceeded: What of al-Aswad ibn Ya'fur an-Nahšali?

He replied: He resembles (نَهْشَلِي) the *fuḥūl*.

Then as to 'Amr ibn Sa's al-Asadī, what do you say regarding him? (fol. 6).

25 He is not a *fahl*, but is below that rank.

And Labīd ibn Rabī'a?

No *fahl*. Moreover, on another occasion al-Aṣma'ī described Labīd to me as "a good man" — as though he intended to deny to him any high merit as a poet. And he once said to me:
30 Labīd's poetry is like a mantle from Ṭabaristān; meaning that it was well woven, but without elegance.

He said also: Jarāda ibn 'Umāila al-'Anazī composed some poems which resemble those of the *fuḥūl*, but they are short. This verse is one of his:

35 How wert thou led aright, when thou hadst no guide?
There are those who witness against thee what thou didst.

What of Aus ibn Ghalfā' al-Ḥujaimī?

If he had composed twenty *qaṣida*'s, he would have joined the *fuḥūl*; but he is cut short of it.

40 He also said to me: 'Umaira ibn Ṭariq al-Yarbū'ī was one of the chiefs of the *fursān*; he it was who took captive Qābūs ibn al-Mundir³).

1) See the Introduction.

2) See the Introduction, and cf. Agh. XVI, 139, where Ibn Sallām's ranking of Ḥufāf in the "fifth class" of the *fursān* is mentioned.

3) Namely, at Ṭihfa. Bekrī 452, Yāqūt III, 519.

before al-Aḥṭal or after him, do not believe him. Then he said: Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā' also used to prefer him (to the other two); I have heard him say: If al-Aḥṭal had lived but one single day in the Jāhiliya, I would not give any poet, *jāhili* or *islāmi*, the precedence over him¹). Said al-Aṣma'ī: I once recited to Abū 'Amr 5 ibn al-'Alā' a certain poem, and he said: No one of the Islamic poets could equal this, not even al-Aḥṭal.

Said Abū Ḥātim: I also asked him about al-Aghlab, whether he was a *fahl*, among the *rajaz* poets; and he said: He is not a *fahl* nor even successful, and his verse wearies me. And on another 10 occasion he said to me: I only hand down from al-Aghlab two poems and a half. I said: What do you mean by the 'half'? He replied: I know two poems of his, and I used to hand down half of the one which rhymes in *qāf* — for they have lengthened it. And he continued: His children were wont to add to his poems, 15 until they spoiled them. Said Abū Ḥātim: Ishāq ibn al-'Abbās²) asked from him a *rajaz* verse of al-Aghlab, and he sought from me³) I loaned him he brought forth about twenty (poems). (fol. 5) I said: Did you not declare that you knew only two and a half? He answered me: Yes, but I have sorted those 20 which I know, and so far as they are not his, they belong at least to others who are classically valid and trustworthy. Said Abū Ḥātim: No other man could recite so many *rajaz* verses as al-Aṣma'ī. I once heard a man of Najrān who had travelled about in the regions of Khorasān question him, saying: Such-a-one in 25 Rai told me that you could recite twelve thousand *rajaz* poems. Yes, he answered, there are fourteen thousand *rajaz* poems which I hold in my memory. I was amazed at this, but he said to me: Most of them are short. I said: Deliver them, verse by verse, fourteen thousand verses. But he answered: Only the poetry of 30 al-Aghlab makes the task too tiresome for me. (Said Ḥalaf: One of the sons of al-Aghlab was a man who was trustworthy in the matter of tradition and narrative, but lied about his father's poetry.)

I proceeded: What of Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭā'ī?

Ḥātim, he answered, is only counted as "noble" (يَعَدُّ بِكَرْمٍ); 35 he did not say that he was a *fahl*.

And Mu'aqqir al-Bāriqī, the *ḥalīf* of the Banī Numair?

If he had completed five or six *qaṣīda*'s, he would have been a *fahl*. Then he added: The two tribes least productive of poetry seem to have been Kalb and Saibān. 40

Abū Du'aib of Huḍail?

Fahl.

Sā'ida ibn Ju'ayya⁴)?

1) The same in Agh. VII, 172, 8.

2) The governor of Baṣra.

3) The text is defective here.

4) This well known poet does not receive mention in Agh., if the Index is to be trusted.

If he had composed five *qaṣīda*'s like the one which we have, he would have been a *fahl*.

And al-Muhalhil?

No *fahl*; but if he had produced other poems like that one
5 of his:

O night of ours in Dū Juṣam, turn to daylight!

he would have been the foremost *fahl* of them all. Besides, the most of his poetry is merely attributed to him.

Abū Du'ād?

10 Excellent¹⁾. (He did not say that he was a *fahl*.)

Ar-Rā'ī?

Not a *fahl*.

Ibn Muqbil?

Not a *fahl*.

15 Said Abū Ḥātim: I also asked al-Aṣma'ī which of the two was the greater poet, ar-Rā'ī or Ibn Muqbil. He replied: How near to each other they stand! But, I objected, this answer does not satisfy us. Thereupon he said: The verse of ar-Rā'ī was more like that of the old and primitive poets.

20 Ibn Aḥmar (fol. 4) al-Bāhili?

Not a *fahl*; yet, though inferior to those, he stands at the head of his own division. And (he said) in my opinion (ج) (س) (ل) Mālik ibn Ḥarīm al-Hamdānī is of the *fuḥūl*. If Ta'laba ibn Ṣu'air al-Māzinī had written five poems like his *qaṣīda*, he would have
25 been a *fahl*.

How about Ka'b ibn Ju'ail?

I think that he (ك) (ب) (ع) is of the *fuḥūl*, but do not feel certain of it.

What do you say of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq and al-Aḥṭal?

30 These, if they belonged to the Jāhiliya, would have a distinguished place (in this ranking); but since they belong to Islām, I will say nothing about them.

Said Abū Ḥātim: I had often heard him prefer Jarīr to al-Farazdaq; so I said to him, on the day when 'Iṣām ibn al-Faiḍ
35 came to see him: I wish to ask you about something, and if 'Iṣām had already heard it from you, I would not ask. I have heard you prefer Jarīr to al-Farazdaq, more than once; what will you say now about the two, and about al-Aḥṭal? So he reflected for a moment, and then recited a verse from his (al-Aḥṭal's) *qaṣīda*:

40 Verily I have made the night's journey of no weakling,

On a she-camel emaciated of cheek and thin of flank.

Then he recited about ten verses more, and said: If any one tells you that any man on earth ever produced the equal of this, either

1) صالح.

Fahl.

Al-Ḥarīṭ ibn Ḥilliza?

Fahl.

'Amr ibn Kultūm?

No *fahl*.

Al-Musayyab ibn 'Alas? 5

Fahl.

How about 'Adī ibn Zaid; is he a *fahl*?

Neither stallion nor mare!

(Said Abū Ḥātim: The only reason why I asked him was 10 because I had heard Ibn Munādīr¹⁾ say that no poet should be ranked higher than 'Adī.)

What of Ḥassān ibn Tābit?

He is a *fahl*.

Qais ibn al-Ḥaṭīm? 15

Fahl.

The two named al-Muraqqiṣ?

Each of the two is a *fahl*.

And Ibn Qamī'a?

Fahl. (This was Qamī'a [ibn Darīḥ]²⁾ ibn Sa'd ibn Mālik, 20 and his *kunya* was Abū Yazīd³⁾).

And Abū Zubaid?⁴⁾

He is no *fahl*.

Aš-Šammāḥ?

Fahl. (And al-Aṣma'ī added: I have talked with a man who 25 had seem the grave of aš-Šammāḥ in Armenia.)

How about Muzarrīd, his brother?

He was not inferior to aš-Šammāḥ, yet he injured his poetry by introducing too much satire.

Now al-Aṣma'ī had told me, before this, that the men of Kūfa 30 were wont to place al-A'šā in the very first rank of poets⁵⁾; also. Ḥalaf⁶⁾ was accustomed to say that no poet should be ranked above him. (Said Abū Ḥātim: This was because he composed poetry in every sort of meter, and used every variety of rhyme.)

I proceeded: What of 'Urwa ibn al-Ward? 35

He answered: He was a noble poet (شاعر كريم), but not a *fahl*.

How about al-Ḥuwaidira?

1) Muḥammad ibn Munādīr (often Manādīr), Agh. XVII, 9 ff.

2) Agh. XVI, 163.

3) There was another Ibn Qamī'a of some note, namely he who killed Mus'ab ibn 'Umsir at the battle of Uḥud, mistaking him for the Prophet Muḥammad (Hiš. 566 f., Agh. XIV, 19). This Qamī'a was of the Laṭī tribe.

4) Ḥarmala ibn al-Mundir aṭ-Ta'ī.

5) Apparently, the original context of this passage is to be found above, where al-A'šā was mentioned; see also the note on the text.

6) Cf. Agh. VIII, 78, where al-A'šā is under discussion, and Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar refuses to decide the question of superiority.

They are compelled to have the sharp bit of the bridle put on,
As if it were put on the trunk of a palm that is stripped of
its bark¹).

(You say: I constrained him (*rāwadtuhū*) to this or that, meaning
5 the same as *hāwaltuhū*, and one may say also *aradtuhu*. Here he
is describing the neck of the animal)

. . . . and he [*i. e.* an-Nābigha *al-Ja'dī*] was most excellent in
describing horses²). Thereupon he recited:

10 Holding firm the sutures of the skull, or he had been ready to
neigh³).

He also excelled in that *qaṣīda* of his in which he says:

Those 'generous gifts' of yours — not even two cups of milk,
Which were made gray with water, and at last turned to urine.

15 (Said Abū Ḥātim) I asked: What was his intent in that, for this
line enters into the verse of another poet⁴). He replied: When
Sawwār [ibn Aufā] ibn al-Ḥayā' al-Quṣairī said: 'We have among
us him who searched for his foot⁵), him who made Ḥājib his
captive, and those who gave the milk to drink', an-Nābigha there-
20 upon composed the verse: (fol. 3)

Those generous gifts of yours — not even two cups of milk.

Said al-Aṣma'ī: If this *qaṣīda* had only been written by the
older Nābigha, it would have reached the utmost bound of merit.

I then asked him: How about al-A'šā, the A'šā of the Banī
25 Qais ibn Ta'laba?

He replied: He is not a *fahl*⁶).

And 'Alqama ibn 'Abada?

1) See Krenkow, loc. cit., p. 870.

2) On the lacuna here, see the note on the text.

3) It is perhaps useless to attempt to translate without knowing the con-
text. On the شُرُورِ of a horse, see Ibn Sīda's *Kitāb al-Muḥaṣṣaṣ* VI, 138,
and on أَرَاكُ لَيْبِزْرًا see Jamhara, 147, lines 4f.

4) See Brockelmann, loc. cit., p. 118, where the story of the verse is
told, and the original author is said to have been Abū 's-Ṣalt ibn ar-Rabī'a
at-Taqaḥfi.

5) Namely Ḥubāš ibn Qais, whose foot was cut off in the battle of the
Yarmūk, while he was showing great valor; see especially Belāduri 137, where
the verse is given:

وَمَنَا ابْنُ عَتَابٍ وَنَاشِدُ رَجُلِهِ وَمَنَا اَنْدَى اَدَى اَلِى الْحَتَى حَاجِبًا

The Ḥājib who was made captive was Ḥājib ibn Zurāra. The story of his
capture by Mālik ibn Salama (known as Dū 'r-Ruqaiba) is told in Agh. X, 42f.

6) This judgment is all the more remarkable in view of the high esteem
in which Abū 'Amr held al-A'šā (Agh. VIII, 78, etc.). On the probable dis-
arrangement of the Ms. at this point, see below.

the comparison of the two¹⁾ He answered: No; Abū 'Amr²⁾, when some one asked him, in my hearing: Was an-Nābigha, or Zuhair, the greater poet? replied: Zuhair was not worthy to be an-Nābigha's hireling. He (al-Aṣma'ī) added: Aus ibn Ḥajar was a greater poet than Zuhair, but an-Nābigha took away from him 5 some of his glory³⁾. Aus composed this:

With an army for which you see the field too strait,
in a poem of his; but an-Nābigha followed it with some lines of
his own, bringing its conceit, and something besides, into a single
half-verse: (fol. 2) 10

An army, for which the field becomes too strait,
Leaving the ridges behind as though they were plains⁴⁾.

Abū Ḥātim also reported from al-Aṣma'ī the following: A ṣaiḥ of the people of Najd said that Ṭufail al-Ghanawī used to be called *Muḥabbir*⁵⁾, in the pre-Islamic time, because of the beauty 15 of his verse. And in my own opinion, said al-Aṣma'ī, in some of his poetry he surpassed Imrulqais; al-Aṣma'ī says it. Then he added: And yet Ṭufail borrowed something from Imrulqais; moreover, it is said that much of the poetry of Imrulqais belonged to certain beggars⁶⁾ who attached themselves to him; also, 'Amr ibn 20 Qamī'a went in his company to the Byzantine court⁷⁾. Mu'awiya ibn Abū Sufyān used to say: Summon for me Ṭufail, for his verse is more like that of the ancient poets than is the verse of Zuhair, and he is a *fahl*⁸⁾. Al-Aṣma'ī proceeded: It is a wonder that an-Nābigha never gave any description of a mare except in the 25 one verse:

With her nostrils yellow from [the blossoms of] the *jarjār* plant.

Indeed, an-Nābigha, Aus, and Zuhair were not wont to give fine descriptions of horses; but Ṭufail, on the contrary, reached the almost bound of excellence in this characterization, and he was a 30 *fahl*. Then he recited these lines of his:

1) See note on the text. 2) Abū 'Amr ibn al-'Alā', † 154/770.

3) Cf. Brockelmann, *Nöldeke-Festschrift*, p. 117 above.

4) That is, they were trampled flat by the multitude of the army.

5) Literally, one who adorns. See especially Goldziher's discussion of the uses of this term, *Abhandlungen*, I, 129—131.

6) "Poor devils", *صعاليك*.

7) Agh. XVI, 163, 166 above, and elsewhere.

8) The question of al-Aṣma'ī's dating of the poet Ṭufail (see Krenkow, *JRAS.* 1907, pp. 815, 820) is here settled. The *original* meaning of the statements quoted by Krenkow from Agh. XIV, 88 must have been simply this, that Ṭufail was older than Nābigha *Ja'dī* (with whom he is all the time being compared), and the foremost (أقدم) of the poets of Qais 'Ailān.

Translation.

Al-Aṣma'ī's Ranking of the Earliest Arabian Poets.

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Duraid al-Azdī reports the following from Abu Ḥātim Sahl ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Utmān
5 as-Sijzī. Said Abū Ḥātim: On more than one occasion I heard al-Aṣma'ī 'Abd al-Malik ibn Qurāib pronounce an-Nābigha of Dubyān superior to the other pre-Mohammedan poets. I myself also asked him — and it was the last question that I put to him, only a short time before his death — Who stands first among the *Fuḥūl*?
10 He replied: an-Nābigha of Dubyān; but added: In my opinion, no one ever equalled the verses of Imrulqais:

Their good fortune guarded them through their kinsfolk —
It is on the less fortunate that vengeance falls!

Said Abū Ḥātim: When he saw that I was writing down what
15 he said, he reflected for a moment and then proceeded: No, the first of them all in excellence is Imrulqais; his were the highest honor and the precedence, and they all drew upon his poetry and followed his canons; I could almost say that he gave an-Nābigha of Dubyān his place among the *fuḥūl*. Then I asked (said Abū
20 Ḥātim): What is the meaning of the term *fahl*?¹⁾ He replied: It means that one has a marked superiority over his fellows, like the superiority of a thoroughbred stallion over the mere colts; and he added: it is the same thing which is meant by the verse of Jarīr:

25 The young offspring of the milch-camel, when he is fastened
with the yoke-robe,
Can not withstand the fierce attack of the seasoned and mighty
ones²⁾.

Said Abū Ḥātim: Some one asked him, Who of all men is
30 the greatest poet? He answered, an-Nābigha. The other continued: Do you give no one the precedence over him? He replied: No, nor were the men of learning in poetry whom I have known accustomed to prefer any one to him. But, I said, there has been some difference of opinion in regard to Zuhair ibn Abū Sulmā and

1) Of course such a slightly different use of the term as that illustrated by the title *Alqama al-Fahl* (on its origin, see Agh. XXI, 173) would suggest

itself; cf. also the definition given in the *Lisān*: فُحُولُ الشُّعْرَاءِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ غَلِبُوا بِالْهَجَاءِ مَنْ هَاجَاهُمْ مِثْلَ جَرِيرٍ وَالْفَرَزْدَقِ وَاشْبَاعِهِمَا وَكَذَلِكَ كَلَّ مِنْ عَارِضٍ شَاعِرًا فَغَلِبَ عَلَيْهِ.

2) More exactly: the *ibn labūn* is a camel entering upon his third year; the *būzil* (plur. *buzul*) is eight or nine years old.

in a passage which is not found in our text of the work, though it might perhaps have stood there originally. I print in square brackets the portion which is wanting in the Landberg manuscript.

اخبرني محمد بن الحسن بن دريد قال حدثنا ابو حاتم قال سألت
5 الاصمعي عن اعشى همدان فقال هو من الفحول وهو اسلامي كثير
الشعر ثم قال نبي العجب من ابن داب حين يزعم ان اعشى
همدان قال

مَنْ دَعَا نِي غَزِيلِي اَرْبَحَ اللهُ تِجَارَتَهُ

ثم قال سبحانه الله أمثل هذا يجوز على الاعشى ان يجزمه اسم
10 الله عز وجل ويرفع تجارته وهو نصب ثم قال لي خلف الاحمر
والله لقد طمع ابن داب في الخلافة حين ضن ان هذا يقبل منه
وان له من لحد مثل ان يجوز مثل هذا ثم قال ومع ذلك ايضا
ان قوله * من دعا لي غزيلي * لا يجوز انما هو * من دعا لغزيلي *
Ibn Duraid reports from Abū Ḥatim: I

asked al-Aṣma'ī about A'sā Hamdān, and he said: He is one of 15
the *fuḥūl*, though of Islām, and the author of much poetry. [He
(al-Aṣma'ī) continued: One can only wonder at Ibn Da'b when he
asserts that A'sā Hamdān was the author of this:

*Man da'a li ghuzayyili Arabah allah tijaratuh*¹⁾.

God forbid that this sort of thing should be allowed to pass 20
as perpetrated by al-A'sā, that he should pronounce the word
"Allah" with the *sukān*, and put "*tijaratuh*" in the nominative
when it should be in the accusative! Thereupon Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar
said to me: Verily, Ibn Da'b must have been aspiring to the caliphate
when he imagined that this would be accepted from him, and that 25
his place was so high that such an assertion as this could pass.
Then he added: Moreover, even the first half-verse, *man da'a li
ghuzayyili*, is not permissible; it can only be, *man da'a li ghuzayyili*,
as one says, *man da'a liba'irin dallin*"²⁾].

In the text which follows, the Landberg manuscript is faith- 30
fully reproduced, except in a very few cases where good reason
for deviation is given in the notes at the foot of the page. The
vowel-pointing is usually that of the ms. itself.

1) That is: Whoever calls for me my little gazelle, may God make his trading profitable.

2) That is: Who summons (its owner) to a straying beast (which has been found); cf. *Lisān* XVIII, 285 (above), etc.

other words. His use of the designation *fursān* is another illustration of the fact that he is not concerned with the terminology of a thoroughgoing literary classification. He speaks of these Arab "knights" of old as we might speak of the knights of the middle 5 ages, or of the Troubadours. They were invested with an atmosphere of nobility and chivalry, and men like al-Aṣmaʿi spoke of them with an enthusiasm which was only in part based on approval of their poetical achievements. "Those who made predatory excursions *on foot*" form another class, a less distinguished group than 10 that of the "knights", numbering such men as Taʿabbata Ṣarran and aṣ-Šanfarā; and here again the classification was not primarily concerned with rank in the art of poetry. Thus it appears, for instance, that the two classes, *fahl* and *fursān*, are not mutually exclusive. Duraid ibn aṣ-Ṣimma is mentioned as belonging to both 15 groups (دريد بن الصمة من فحول القيسية), and the same possibility is implied in other passages.

It is obvious, from all this, that al-Aṣmaʿi's *fuḥūlat as-Šuʿaraʿ* could not serve as the basis for subsequent systematic essays on the rank of the poets. It was both too indefinite and too arbitrary, 20 besides seeming to put too many poets in the very foremost rank. It was not of any great use to later writers to have this unwieldy classification into *fahl* and no-*fahl*, where the opinions even of those best qualified to judge differed so widely, and the line between the two classes was often impossible to draw (as al-Aṣmaʿi himself 25 confesses over and over again). If there was to be any ranking at all, it must be something better than this. Of course every scholar who undertook a thoroughgoing criticism of the Arab poets would be influenced by these judgments, and would usually either quote or adopt them to some extent; in a few cases, however, the 30 estimate was too obviously one-sided to find general approval, as when the two lesser Aʿšās, of Hamdān and Bāhila, are classed among the *fuḥūl*, while the great Aʿšā is left out. The importance of the compilation is simply that of the "table talk" of a noted scholar, on a subject in which he was rightly regarded as a high 35 authority. We may all be grateful to Abū Ḥātim for having followed his master about with a note-book.

The text of the work, as we possess it in our unique manuscript, is in fairly good condition, though there are a few doubtful passages and one or two disturbing lacunae. So far as it is possible to 40 judge from internal evidence, the gaps are not extensive. It may be, moreover, that what we have is a somewhat abridged form of the original compilation; though this can only be called a possibility, not really made probable by the evidence. In one passage preserved in the *Aghānī* (V, 158), Ibn Duraid cites from Abū 45 Ḥātim, from al-Aṣmaʿi, an opinion which is given in the same words in our *فحول الشعراء*, and then continues the citation

the beginning of these "memoirs" is characteristic and significant. Abū Ḥātim had asked his master to name the foremost *fahl* of all the poets, and the answer had been, Nābigha Dubyānī. "But", says Abū Ḥātim, "when he saw that I was writing down what he said, he reflected for a moment, and then proceeded: No, the first 5 of them all is Imrulqais", etc. In one place, in speaking of the "knights" of the pre-Muhammadan time, he says that Ḥufāf, 'Antara, and az-Zibriqān were the best poets of the *fursān*; but on another occasion he names Duraid and Ḥufāf as the best of the group. There are several other patent examples of inconsistency. An 10 anecdote which he tells here of the poet Kutayyir really serves to illustrate the off-hand manner in which many of his own judgments were expressed. Some one asked of Kutayyir who was the greatest poet, and received the answer, al-Ḥuṭai'a. The questioner then waited for some time, until he thought it likely that the poet 15 would have forgotten the incident, and then asked the same question again; this time receiving the answer, Imrulqais. For a considerable part of the material here collected by Abū Ḥātim, we cannot be confident that it gives us what al-Aṣma'ī himself would have written down as his final estimate, in a serious attempt to rank the Arab 20 poets. We can hardly doubt, on the other hand, that al-Aṣma'ī has been faithfully reported by his pupil; the question of the substantial genuineness of the compilation can hardly arise.

The scientific value of the treatise, as a specimen of literary criticism, is small. It is quite plain that the great philologist had 25 not made any careful study of the criteria according to which poets were to be excluded from, or admitted to, his *fahl* class. It is also evident that he had no system of successive classes, in which he ranked those whom he would not reckon among the *fuhūl*. In speaking of the poets who fell below the highest rank, 30 he used a variety of complimentary terms, more or less at haphazard, and without showing any purpose of making even a rough classification. Goldziher, in his above-mentioned essay, seems to me to go too far when he says (Abhandl. I, 187): "Al-Aṣma'ī hat sogar einen neuen Terminus festgestellt, durch welchen er, gleichsam in schonender Weise, hochberühmte Dichter der Gāhiliyya aus der 35 Ordnung der eigentlichen Klassiker entfernt, ohne damit ihren Werth völlig herabzusetzen. Er nennt diese Dichter zweiter Ordnung:

karīm, edel". Goldziher then cites the cases of Ḥātim (انما يُعَدُّ) and 40 (شاعر كريم وليس بفاحل) and 'Urwa (بكرم ولم يُقَدَّ انه فحل) this, I think, reads into al-Aṣma'ī's words more than he intended. He had no thought of a definite *second class*, in which the term *karam* was used in the same way as *fuhūla*. It was only by accident that he employed the adjective *karīm* in these cases; on another day, speaking of the same poets, he might have chosen 45

at some length the work before us, the *نحولة الشعراء* of al-Aṣmaʿī, which he had been able to use while the manuscript was still in Landberg's possession. To his treatment of the subject the reader is accordingly referred. Again, Brockelmann in the *Nöldeke-Festschrift*, I, 109—125, has published a conspectus of one of the earliest and most important of the *fuḥūla* books, the *طبقات الشعراء* of Muḥammād ibn Sallām al-Jumāhī († 231), making use of all the surviving fragments of the work which he was able to collect. This is a systematic treatise on the ranking of the poets, and therefore altogether different from the compilation of Abū Ḥatīm, as will presently appear. Finally, we are promised a complete edition of this treatise of al-Jumāhī in the near future, by Professor Hell of Munich, who has found a manuscript containing it in the Khedivial Library in Cairo; see his announcement in the ZDMG. 64, p. 659, note.

As has just been said, the remarks on the poets made by al-Aṣmaʿī, and collected by Abū Ḥatīm as-Sijistānī under the title *Kitāb Fuḥūlat as-Šuʿarāʾ*, do not constitute anything like a systematic compilation. What we have is simply a catena of scattered sayings, of very uneven value, made on many different occasions, and thrown together without any plan of arrangement. Some of the judgments were given in answer to questions, while others (and these constitute the great majority) were the merest *obiter dicta*. The opinion expressed is in many cases confined to this one point, the fitness of the poet to bear the title *fahl*, that is, "thoroughbred male" (especially male camel), or "stallion", a truly Arabian way of picturing the embodiment of pure native blood, masculine force, and high spirit. The holder of this rank must have been, first of all, a poet of very noteworthy achievements; thus it is said of al-Ḥuwaidira, for example: "If he had produced five *qaṣīdas* like the one which we have, he would have been a *fahl*". But he must also have been a true representative of the genuine Arab stock at its best, embodying the qualities which were most characteristic of the free and vigorous life of the native clans, battling for their precarious existence on the edge of the desert. As Goldziher remarks (loc. cit., p. 135): "Nicht die dichterische Kraft allein macht den Menschen dieser Benennung würdig; diese bezieht sich vielmehr auch auf die Eigenschaften des ritterlichen Charakters". It is easy to see why the poets of the Islamic time were not easily given the title which seemed to belong by especial right to the primitive period and the Bedawī nobility. Al-Aṣmaʿī's estimates, both as to the *fuḥūla* quality and also on other matters concerning the old poets, while always interesting are frequently not convincing. Some are evidently the fruit of long deliberation; others are so carelessly made that we may suspect that al-Aṣmaʿī himself would have modified or even retracted them a few days later, when he was in another mood. One of the incidents narrated near

Al-Ašma'ī's Fuhūlat aš-Šu'arā'.

By

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A brief treatise, purporting to contain al-Ašma'ī's detailed estimate of the pre-Mohammedan poets, has been known to exist in a single manuscript in Damascus. The attention of occidental scholars was first called to it by H. Lammens, in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1894, II, p. 155. The manuscript was copied for Count 5 Landberg while he was in the East, and the copy, which is now in the library of Yale University, as number 49 of the Landberg Collection purchased in 1900, furnishes the text which is here published. The original manuscript, which is said to be about 10 two hundred years old, contains also the *Diwān* of Muḥammad ibn az-Zayyāt († 233), Ta'lab's *Qawā'id aš-Ši'r*, and the *Sajarat ad-Durr* of 'Abd al-Wāhid ibn 'Alī († 351).

The form of the *كُتُبُ فُحُولَةِ الشُّعْرَاءِ* is that of a loose series of personal reminiscences. The narrator is al-Ašma'ī's favorite pupil Abū Ḥātim Sahl ibn Muḥammad as-Sijistāni, who reports 15 from his master, verbatim, whatever he had heard him say — either of his own accord or in answer to questions, at various times — as to the relative merits of the ancient poets. Abū Ḥātim's narrative is transmitted, finally, through his own pupil, the renowned scholar Ibn Duraid, who is thus responsible for the redaction which 20 lies before us.

The whole subject of *fuhūla* literature has been treated so often that there is no need of general discussion here. Nöldeke, in his *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der alten Araber*, 1 ff., translated and commented upon the Introduction to a work of this 25 nature by Ibn Qutaiba; and much that is contained in that treatise may profitably be compared with this older compilation, unlike as the two are. Goldziher, in his *Abhandlungen zur arabischen Philologie* I, 122—174, has given us a characteristically thorough essay on "Alte und neue Poesie im Urteile der arabischen Kritiker", 30 in which he discusses the principal criteria on which the earliest Muhammadan critics based their estimates. Moreover, in pp. 134—143 he deals with the term *fahl* in particular, and characterizes