



Literary Reception in Al-Āmedī's Al-Muwāzanah

Dr. Mansoor Mrissi AlHARTHY

Taif University KSA

I/ Introduction

This article focuses on one of al-Āmedī's best-known works, *Al-Muwāzanah*, to analyse his critical method. It has four key aims. Firstly, it will identify the principles underpinning al-Āmedī's method and to determine the extent to which he systematically applied these principles. This will provide an insight into the explicit and implicit reading strategies of expert readers in the fourth century AH. Secondly, it will discuss the impact of the method employed in *Al-Muwāzanah* on Arabic critical studies in order to determine the extent to which the literary critics who came after al-Āmedī have been influenced by his critical judgments. Thirdly, the intention is to examine how al-Āmedī dealt with the key cultural debate of his day between two opposing worldviews, namely tradition versus modernity. These are voiced in his work by viewpoints expressed by the admirers of the modernist poet Abū Tammām and his rival traditionalist poet al-Buḥturī. Finally, the paper will aim to reveal al-Āmedī's horizon of expectations by focusing on the elements in his work which relate to literary reception and exploring how he understood this concept.

Al-Āmedī's *Al-Muwāzanah* is one of the most important books in the history of Arabic literary criticism and it clearly reflects the evolution of the readers' critical consciousness during the Abbasid era. Moreover, the book was a response to the debate amongst Abbasid readers concerning the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī who were the most famous poets during that period. This cultural debate has been dealt with in detail previously in Paper Four.



The focus in this paper is on examining the critical tools which al-Āmedī's used in *Al-Muwāzanah* to judge the respective merits of these two poets.

It is important to note that many studies have focused on the methodology which al-Āmedī employed in *Al-Muwāzanah* and on his ideas, since he is regarded as one of the most important literary scholars of the Abbasid era. However, the emphasis here in this study of literary reception in Classical Arabic literature is on the use of *Al-Muwāzanah* as a case study which not only gives us detailed insight into al-Āmedī as an expert critical reader of Classical Arabic literature in the late fourth century AH but also allows us to explore the extent to which literary reception is influenced by changes in theoretical, political, and social factors.

Al-Āmedī's Methodology in Al-Muwāzanah

Explicit method

Al-Muwāzanah was published in three volumes. The first of these begins with a brief introduction in which al-Āmedī describes his methodology. In the first part al-Āmedī described the critical debate taking place at the time he was writing in the Abbasid era between readers concerning the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī, outlining the point of view of each group. In the second part, al-Āmedī focused on what he refers to as *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* (plagiarism) in the poetry of Abū Tammām and the mistakes which al-Āmedī had identified in his work. Then, the critic discusses at length the specific examples of *al-'akhtā'* (errors) in Abū Tammām's poetic imagery, focusing on metaphors and similes. He also draws the reader's attention to what he considers to be appropriate metaphors in the poet's work. The other major focus in this second part of *Al-Muwāzanah* is al-Āmedī's analysis of the rhetorical deficiencies which he finds in Abū Tammām's poetry such as stylistic mistakes, uncommon usage of words and motifs, the poor quality of the rhetorical devices and the errors in rhyming.



In the third part of his work, al-Āmedī moves to critiquing al-Buḥturī's poetry and he identifies *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* and analyses the mistakes committed by the poet in terms of the vocabulary which he uses, ambiguity of meaning and his rhyming. Al-Āmedī concludes the third part of end of *Al-Muwāzanah* by highlighting the positive features of the work of each of the poets. He also compares in considerable depth the use of the opening lines in their respective poems.

In *Al-Muwāzanah*, al-Āmedī was seeking to present to readers a new critical method founded on comparison at the level of word with word, motif with motif and verse with verse which also took into account the main subject of the poems.

It is important to note that al-Āmedī's work can be divided into two sections. He firstly describes his own theoretical methodology, outlines the Classical and the modern method of critiquing Arabic poetry and also describes the Abbasid literary scene and the conflict between the supporters of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī. Secondly, he applies the methodology he has established to his comparative textual analysis of the poets' work. This comparison focuses on two specific *aghrād* (themes) which are eulogy and elegy. His approach which follows the conventions of the time involves dividing each poem which is to be analysed into three main sections: the opening lines, the main body of the poem and the conclusion.

Al-Āmedī adopts a methodology which is based on a detailed comparison between two poets (Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī), two types of readers and two literary schools. Al-Āmedī announces his aim and the method which he intends to apply in order to facilitate this comparative analysis at the start of his work:

As for myself, I will not express any preference for one poet over the other, but I will weigh *qaṣīdāh* against *qaṣīdāh*, when they agree in meter and rhyme, and motif against motif; then I will state which poet is better in this *qaṣīdāh* and this



motif. At that time you may judge for yourself on the basis of the totality of each poet's work, when you are thoroughly acquainted with their good and bad points. (1961: 05/1)

It is important to note here that al-Āmedī is claiming to be objective in his appraisal of the work of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī and emphasises that the critic's role is to allow readers to make their own judgement about the relative merits of these poets. This is because readers' opinions about poetry vary and their preferred schools of poetry differ (ibid: 05/1). Al-Āmedī states that his methodology consists of comparing the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī by analysing their work poem by poem, if they are of the same metrical foot and rhyme, and motif to motif. Then he will leave the final judgment of which is the greater poem and the better technique to readers themselves on the basis of the evidence he have provided.

In the introduction to *Al-Muwāzanah*, al-Āmedī summarises opinions about the work of Abū Tammām and al- Buḥturī held by recipients on opposing sides at the time he is writing:

I found that most of the transmitters of the poetry of the moderns that I witnessed and saw claim that Abū Tammām's best poetry is better than the best poetry of others like him, whereas his worst is really: it therefore varies in quality and lacks uniformity. They [literary scholars] claim that al-Buḥturī's poetry is well-cast and beautifully embroidered, that there is nothing that is of poor quality in it: it is therefore uniform and all of a kind. (cited in Stetkevych, 1991: 50)

Al-Āmedī here focuses on the critical debate between the supporters of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī concerning who was the better poet. Al-Āmedī reports claims by his contemporaries that Abū Tammām's poetry lacks consistency, a key criterion of quality used by expert readers at the time. In contrast, al-Buḥturī's poetry is of a consistently high standard in terms of both form and in his appropriate use of



rhetorical devices. Thus, when this critical criterion is used to rank the work of the poets, Abū Tammām's poetry which lacks uniformity is classed as inferior.

It is already clear in this passage that al-Āmedī's claims to objectivity can be challenged. He claims that he will not express any personal preference for one poet over the other but here instead uses the subterfuge of reproducing the opinions of transmitters who clearly support al-Buḥturī.

Al-Āmedī adds some further points in his introduction in order to clarify his methodology:

I found, too, that they [transmitters] contend over which poet's poetry is more abundant, the amount of their excellent poetry, and their *badī'*, and that they do not agree on which is the better poet, just as they do not agree on who is the best of the *Jāhili* poets or the Islamic poets, or the Moderns. The reason for this disagreement is that those who prefer al-Buḥturī do so because their predilection is for sweetness of expression, beautiful transitions, proper placement of words, correctness of expression, ease of comprehension, and clarity of meaning that they attribute to him these are the secretaries and the desert Arabs, the naturally gifted poets and the rhetoricians. Those who prefer Abū Tammām do so because of their predilection for the abstruseness and subtlety of meaning that they attribute to him and the great amount of his work that requires elucidation, commentary, and deduction these are the conceptualists (*ahl al-ma'ānī*), the poets of artifice, and those that tend toward subtlety and philosophical speech. (ibid: 50)

Al-Āmedī does not neglect readers in his study, and here identifies specific groups supporting each of the poets and summarises what he sees as being the points of disagreement between them. Thus, al-Āmedī begins by presenting the points of contention in this literary debate in the Abbasid era and addressing the reasons for this debate between these readers. Al-Āmedī refers to the criteria used by each set of



readers in evaluating the two poets. These include the quantity of their literary output and a comparison of the ratio of their good work to their bad work. He argues that this disagreement amongst these readers concerning which poet is the greater is the result of not having a common critical methodology. This means readers cannot make judgements concerning the relative merits of other schools of poets, whether these are pre-Islamic poets, poets of the Islamic age or later poets.

Al-Āmedī identifies the criteria used by readers on each side of the debate. If the reader prefers clarity of discourse, well-moulded form, and correctly worded expression which does not grate on the ear, he will of necessity judge al-Buḥturī's poetry as superior. On the other hand, if readers prefer elaborately crafted, far-fetched metaphors, arcane motifs, and ambiguity that are only understood by in-depth analysis, deliberation and discernment, they will consider Abū Tammām the greater genius. Here al-Āmedī identifies the two prevailing literary worldviews of the period, namely: the traditionalists and the *ahl al-ma'ānī* (the modernists).

In addition, on the basis of these worldviews, al-Āmedī categorises two styles of poetry: *maṭbū'* (the naturally gifted style) and *maṣnū'* (the artful style). He notes:

Al-Buḥturī is like a desert Arab in his poetry and is naturally gifted (*maṭbū'*); he follows the method of the Ancients and does not depart from the accepted conventions of poetry (*'amūd al-Shi'r*); he avoids complication, abhorrent expressions, and uncouth speech. Thus, he deserves to be compared to Ashja' al-Sulamī, Manṣour [al-Namarī], Abū Ya'qūb al-Makfūf [al-Karīmī] and naturally gifted poets like them, rather than to Abū Tammām. As for Abū Tammām, he is, to the contrary, extremely constrained, a poet of artifice; he uses loathsome expressions and images, his poetry does not resemble that of the Ancients and is not in their manner, on account of his far-fetched metaphors and derived images. He is thus more rightfully included in the



sphere of Muslim ibn al-Walīd and those that followed him, and is more like him than like al-Buḥturī. However, I have not found anyone

who links him to Muslim, for he falls below Muslim's level because of the soundness of Muslim's poetry, its well-cast form, the correctness of its images, and its many embellishments, innovations (*badī'*), and inventions. (ibid: 50)

Al-Āmedī here classifies al-Buḥturī as a poet of Arabian quality, natural, in the same tradition as early poets, who does not violate the tradition of the familiar Arabic poem. He believes that al-Buḥturī avoids sophistication, unacceptable and outré usage in favour of purity of expression. Thus, al-Buḥturī is more deserving of being compared to the traditionalist poets. On the other hand, al-Āmedī classifies Abū Tammām as an artful poet whose elaborately crafted style stretches the meaning of words in his poetry. Moreover, because his poetry is not in the tradition of the early poets due to the amount of far-fetched metaphors and invented meanings, Abū Tammām should be compared with Muslim ibn al-Walīd and those using the same poetic method. This comparison requires a critical method; thus, al-Āmedī applied the standards of '*amūd al-shi'r*' as the main method in his critical theory.

Implicit method

Although al-Āmedī explicitly presents his methodology at the start of his work, he is also employing an implicit method which he mentions only in passing, namely, '*amūd al-shi'r*'. In his article, Ajami tracked the development of the concept of '*amūd al-shi'r*' from its origins in al-Āmedī until it was formally articulated by al-Marzūqī (d.421/1030). Ajami claims that:

Al-Āmedī established a definite interrelationship between natural poetry and the Bedouin tradition, between the style of the early poets which incorporated that tradition and the formal '*amūd al-shi'r*'. It is evident from al-Āmedī's categorization of the two poets and the two styles they represented that he



considered the natural poets as those of 'amūd al-shi'r, and the artificial poets, Abū Tammām in particular, as falling outside the mainstream of 'amūd al-shi'r. (1981: 35)

Al-Āmedī's critical consciousness was formed by the concept of 'amūd al-shi'r although he does not explicitly declare this in *Al-Muwāzanah*. In al-Āmedī's understanding, 'amūd al-shi'r refers to the conventions of Classical Arabic poetry and in his viewpoint, this consists of four elements: (1) eloquence and soundness of phraseology, (2) correctness of meaning, (3) accuracy of description and (4) rejection of excessive use of *badī'* (rhetorical devices) such as similes and metaphors (1961: 4/1). 'Amūd al-shi'r thus emphasises clarity of meaning and expression in order to ensure that ambiguity is avoided since this will prevent the reader from understanding the poetic text. It is important to note that al-Āmedī's attempts to apply the use of 'amūd al-shi'r create some difficulties in relation to his stated methodology. Firstly, 'amūd al-shi'r was not presented in a fully systematic manner until the beginning of the fifth century AH as noted above; thus, prior to that it cannot be considered to have been a clear and complete concept. This indicates that al-Āmedī interpreted 'amūd al-shi'r on the basis of his own understanding as an expert reader and his personal preferences. Evidence for this can be found in the fact that al-Āmedī argues that using rhetorical devices is an important element of modern style whereas 'Abdul'azīz al-Jurjānī later classified these as a stylistic feature of Classical Arabic poetry. Al-Jurjānī claims that:

This *badī'* and *isti'ārah* are founded in the *qaṣīdah* of the Arabs and occurred in verse after verse without design or intention. When poetry reached the Moderns and they saw the strangeness and beauty that occurred in these verses and the elegance and grace that distinguished them from their sisters, they took it upon themselves to imitate them, and this they called *badī'*. It may be well done or badly done, or be blameworthy, moderate or excessive. (cited in Stetkevych, 1991: 95)



Al-Jurjānī here argues that rhetorical devices such as metaphor, simile, and antithesis all occurred in Classical Arabic poetry and were employed moderately by the traditionalists. However, the modern poets used the same rhetorical devices but employed them excessively. Thus, critical understanding of the differences between natural and artful poetry changed after al-Āmedī as Ajami states:

These rhetorical devices, which were basic elements of the New Style, and which were among the most prominent characteristics of artificial (*ṣan'ah*) poetry, appear to be, in al-Jurjānī's exposition of the traditional Arabic literary concept, the demarcation line between *'amūd al-shi'r* and whatever lay outside the mainstream. An interesting sidelight to a study of al-Jurjānī's presentation of *'amūd al-shi'r* is his unacknowledged debt to the critic al-Āmedī. What al-Āmedī unsystematically enumerated as negative qualities of Abū Tammām's poetry was reversed by al-Jurjānī and formulated into his six-article version of *'amūd al-shi'r*. (1981: 41)

Al-Ghadhāmī claims that the Arab poetry found before al-Āmedī's period took many forms and thus cannot be limited to the principles of *'amūd al-shi'r* as they are set out in *Al-Muwāzanah*. He argues that *'amūd al-shi'r* is a product of al-Āmedī's own cultural context and he notes that as a concept it can be seen to have shifted over the course of time, the evidence for this being found in works by other literary scholars who came after al-Āmedī such as al-Marzūqī (1994: 45-53).

The second difficulty which the use of *'amūd al-shi'r* poses for al-Āmedī is that this term was already linked to al-Buḥturī who was the first poet to use it. In response to a question about a critical comparison between his own poetry and that of Abū Tammām, al-Buḥturī answered: "Abū Tammām delved more deeply for meanings, but I am more observant of *'amūd al-shi'r*" (Al-Ḥārthī, 1996: 12). This suggests that al-Āmedī could not achieve objectivity by applying the norms of *'amūd al-shi'r* because these would automatically highlight the negative qualities of Abū Tammām's poetry.



Responses to al-Āmedī's methodology

Lack of consistency

Many contemporary critics have identified al-Āmedī's *Al-Muwāzanah* as one of the first works to devise a theoretical framework and apply this to the analysis of Arabic poetry. Mandūr (1948) identifies al-Āmedī as a good example of a literary critic who devised a methodology for evaluating poetry using theoretical principles and then tested this by applying it to study the poetic aesthetics of a particular literary school or poet. Al-Rubay'ī (1968) claims that al-Āmedī was an expert reader of Classical Arabic poetry and a unique critic who attempted to apply his own critical method in order to analyse the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī. He also claims that al-Āmedī used his personal poetic taste in addition to *'amūd al-shi'r*. In addition, al-Rubay'ī argues that since al-Āmedī critical standards were based on a clear objective method, his results can be considered impartial (1968: 56).

Mūfī (1985) attributes the lack of consistency in al-Āmedī's methodology to the fact that he opted to compare poems which were similar in meter and rhyme. At a later stage of the work, al-Āmedī realized that this method was not appropriate since there are many motifs within every poem making it difficult to compare these on a one-by-one basis (1961:5/1). Al-Āmedī adopted a methodology which consisted of three elements: firstly, comparing whether two verses agreed or not in meaning; secondly, comparing two poetic texts with a similar *gharad* (theme) whether they agreed in meaning or not; and thirdly, comparing between two poems with similar themes whether or not they shared the same meter or rhyme (ibid:429/1). Sallūm (1987) agrees with Mūfī that al-Āmedī chose the wrong approach at the beginning of his book due to the fact that his comparative method was not clear in his mind.

Moreover, one of the key reasons for the lack of methodological consistency is that Arabic poetry developed rapidly in the Abbasid era, while literary criticism developed more slowly.



Thus, the standards long held by critics became invalid leaving them unable to understand and analyse new literary texts ('Abbās, 1993 :44). Al-Hārthī confirms that al-Āmedī's method did not take into consideration the shift in the Arab reader's worldview which occurred in the Abbasid era (1996: 158).

In fact, the shift in the reader's worldview played a significant role in Classical Arabic criticism leading to the acknowledgement by critics of different types of readers and authors who were looking for new reading strategies for interpreting the literary text.

On the other hand, Stetkevych, one of the contemporary critics who has focused on *al-Muwāzanah* claims that:

It is precisely al-Āmedī's failure to compare whole *qaṣidāhs* that proved to be the major failing of *al-Muwāzanah*, and indeed of Classical Arabic literary criticism in general. One wonders whether such a comparison based on agreement of rhyme and meter is even feasible. It appears that al-Āmedī himself realized in the end that it was not and ultimately abandoned even his plan to match verses and sections of poems according to meter, let alone whole *qaṣidāhs*. (1991: 51)



Lack of objectivity

The lack of objectivity in al-Āmedī's application of his methodology has been noted by many modern critics. Despite the importance of al-Āmedī's formulation of certain concepts of *'amūd al-shi'r*, this did not lead him to reach neutral judgments since his method was based essentially on his personal taste and his literary knowledge. According to al-Āmedī he was not seeking to establish a specific literary reception theory or to suggest a new reading strategy for readers.

Ḍayf (1965) maintained that al-Āmedī was not a neutral critic but was biased towards al-Buḥturī and the traditional poetry school. Ḍayf also notes that al-Āmedī tends to focus on al-Buḥturī's positive points, devoting little attention to his faults. Conversely, when he discusses Abū Tammām he focuses excessively on his *al-'akhtā'* (errors) and *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* (plagiarism). In his study on the history of Arabic criticism, whilst agreeing that *Al-Muwāzanah* is a remarkable literary work in its own context, Sallūm also criticises al-Āmedī for being clearly biased in his readings of the work of al-Buḥturī and Abū Tammām towards the former (1987: 211).

In his book *Naqd Al-Muwāzanah bayn Alṭā'iyayn*, Ṣāliḥ (1987) makes several observations about al-Āmedī's methodology, noting firstly his agreement with many of the critics mentioned above that al-Āmedī was not a neutral critic since al-Buḥturī was a great poet who deserved to be compared with the greatest traditional poets whilst Abū Tammām was only a minor poet within his own modernist school. Indeed, by mentioning this idea at the start of *Al-Muwāzanah*, al-Āmedī alerts readers to his preference for al-Buḥturī. Second, Ṣāliḥ claims that al-Āmedī was biased in his judgment that 30 percent of Abū Tammām's mistakes were very distinct examples whilst another 40 percent of the mistakes rejected by al-Āmedī would have been acceptable to some readers (1987: 222). Thus, al-Āmedī's reading should be viewed



as a personal viewpoint rather than critical ideas which were founded on the consistent application of a particular literary method. Šāliḥ believes that al-Āmedī was not a neutral reader because he used his own understanding of *'amūd al-shi'r* in his critical work which led him to consistently favour the traditional school of poetry in his thoughts and impressions. 'Abbās also notes that *Al-Muwāzanah* is considered by many researchers to be the peak of Arabic critical studies in Abbasid literary criticism. However, he considers that despite al-Āmedī's promise of neutrality, his application of his methodology led him to be a defender of the traditional style and he showed a clear bias toward al-Buḥturī's work (1993:150). Further evidence of the imbalance in the treatment of the two poets by al-Āmedī was found by Khilbās who calculated that in *Al-Muwāzanah* there is six times more positive coverage of al-Buḥturī work than of that of Abū Tammām (1989: 114). For example, al-Āmedī identified two types of reader but chose to ignore those readers who believed that Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī were on a par. Al-Āmedī's attitude towards these readers raises two points; firstly, he ignored them because he did not agree with their opinion, arguing that "many people put these two poets in one class and are of the opinion that they are alike; nevertheless, they differ" (1961: 04/1). Thus, he was not a neutral critic and as a witness of that period he did not describe the literary scene accurately. Secondly, al-Āmedī ignored these readers because of they were not in the mainstream and he believed that it was not important to consider them. However, al-Āmedī should have included the opinions of all types of readers in order to be a neutral critic.

Mandūr is one of the few literary critics to reject claims of al-Āmedī's lack of objectivity in *Al-Muwāzanah*, arguing that literary scholars are wrong about his preference for al-Buḥturī (1948: 96- 98). Like Mandūr, Ṭayārah (2003) argues that al-Āmedī should not be judged by contemporary standards of critical objectivity but by the extent to which he followed the accepted practices of his time:



Al-Āmedī read the work of both poets and carefully chose the motifs he used to make his comparison. He also analysed the poem by focusing on its key elements and following the accepted method at the time. In *Al-Muwāzanah*, al-Āmedī attempted to be fair and accurate in making his judgements.

It is clear from this passage that Ṭayārah does not see any defects in al-Āmedī's methodological approach to evaluating the poets' work on the basis of individual verses and decontextualising them, since he matched these motif by motif.

It is also important to mention that al-Āmedī's methodology has several distinctive features. One of its advantages is that al-Āmedī overtly presents his methodology and provides the aims of his study at the start of *Al-Muwāzanah*. This is unusual in the authoring style of Classical Arabic books. Second, al-Āmedī places significant emphasis on recording the responses of readers to literary texts in his presentation of the two opposing viewpoints of the traditionalists and the modernists. Thirdly, al-Āmedī highlights the concept of '*amūd al-shi'r*' as the main method besides his own personal taste in poetry. Thus, these elements are combined by al-Āmedī in his method which is intended to give readers the basis on which to distinguish between good and bad poetic style.

However, it would be difficult to make a meaningful comparison between two poetic schools by using a method which is based on decontextualised motifs from the work of two poets. This type of method forces the reader to focus on specific themes without looking at the whole oeuvre of each poet, since some poets could excel in some genres but not in others. Moreover, it is clear that al-Āmedī was not an objective reader as he claimed in his introduction and was usually biased towards al-Buḥturī who represented the Classical literary school as opposed to Abū Tammām who represented the modern literary school. Thus, his preference was not linked to al-Buḥturī's own merits as a poet. It is important to remember that al-Āmedī's rejection of modern forms must be understood in the context of the broader cultural debate



relating to *al-Shu'ūbiyyah*, as discussed previously in Paper Four. Thus, one of al-Āmedī's unstated aims was to protect the purity of Arabic poetry which was viewed by traditionalists as being under threat from foreign influences. In this respect, al-Āmedī's methodology serves to provide an insight into the worldview of the readers and literary scholars who were his contemporaries.

The Impact of *Al-Muwāzanah* on Arabic Criticism

This section will examine the impact of *Al-Muwāzanah's* methodology on Classical and modern Arabic criticism, discussing the reactions of these studies to al-Āmedī's evaluation of al-Buḥturī's poetry.

Classical Arabic Criticism and *Al-Muwāzanah*

Both al-Āmedī's method and his evaluation of the two poets in *Al-Muwāzanah* played an important role in Classical Arabic criticism. Some literary scholars adopted his viewpoints in their discussions of rhetorical texts whereas other studies realise that al-Āmedī showed a marked preference for the poems of al-Buḥturī. This section will briefly outline some of these critical responses following a chronological order.

With respect to the critical practices of Classical literary scholars, Kabbābah has highlighted how al-Āmedī's understanding of *'amūd al-shi'r* elucidated in *Al-Muwāzanah* had a profound influence not only on Arabic poetry but also literary criticism (1997: 86-88). However, in Kabbābah's opinion, the rigidity of this theory as applied by al-Āmedī had a long-lasting and negative impact on Classical critical thought, reflected in the readings of scholars such as Ibn al-'Athīr who used the theory of *'amūd al-shi'r* to engage with literary texts.

Al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī was influenced by *Al-Muwāzanah's* comparative method in his study about al-Mutanabbī and his opponents. Al-Jurjānī does not compare between two individual poets



as al-Āmedī did as he was interested in reevaluating al- Mutanabbī's work and the criticism of his opponents rather than establishing the superior qualities of one poet over another.

Al-Muwāzanah provoked a great deal of critical response. Al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā claims that there is evidence of deep-seated prejudice against the modern poets in *Al-Muwāzanah*, adding that al-Āmedī's approach is inappropriate for the new style of artful poetry (1954: 95/2). As al-Āmedī's works suggest (see introduction) he has a linguistic background but as al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā notes this new poetic style requires a wider understanding which exceeds the limits of syntax.

Al-Qayrawānī comments on al-Āmedī's clear preference for the poems of al-Buḥturī (1972: 76), their opening lines. He shares al-Āmedī's opinion about Abū Tammām's excessive use of complex metaphors in poems which requires an in- depth contextual analysis of this imagery and agrees that without this, attempting to interpret them leads to ambiguity (ibid: 94). On the other hand, al-Qayrawānī rejects some of the opinions expressed in *Al-Muwāzanah* concerning Abū Tammām's poems and offers his own re-reading of some specific examples.

Al-Jurjānī's response to al-Āmedī's readings of Abū Tammām's poetry reflects the new view towards the use of rhetorical devices, since he highlights the aesthetic qualities of Abū Tammām's work which were largely ignored in *Al-Muwāzanah*. Al- Jurjānī is unconvinced by al-Āmedī's method, and the readings is produced which in his opinion did not engage deeply with these texts (1992: 160).⁵⁴

In his work *Sirru Al-Faṣāḥah*, al-Khafājī recognises the inherent bias of *Al- Muwāzanah*. He illustrates his opinion by detailed discussion of specific examples cited from al-Āmedī (1982: 85). Al-Khafājī believes that every expert reader should have his own set of aesthetics and method of engaging with literary texts, meaning that they have the ability to evaluate texts on



their own merits. Thus, he rejected some of al-Āmedī's critical views on the grounds that they lacked this necessary objectivity (ibid: 41).

Ibn al-'Athīr acknowledges al-Āmedī's importance within the history of Arabic rhetoric but notes his lack of understanding of the different types and uses of metaphor (1962: 135-36). Ibn al-'Athīr claims this confusion is apparent in many Classical literary studies which lack a common terminology and understanding of such rhetorical devices, leading to different readings and multiple viewpoints among Arab critics.

Ṣāliḥ notes that many Classical literary scholars have described al-Āmedī as a reader who was biased against Abū Tammām's work. These include Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, 'Ali ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Aṣfahānī and ibn al-Nadīm (1987: 222). Although al-Ḥamawī does acknowledge that *Al-Muwāzanah* is one of the most important studies in Classical Arabic literature, he draws attention to the flaws in al-Āmedī's methodology. He comments on the lack of objectivity in his judgement, reflected in his unequal treatment of the poems of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī (1993: 131- 133).

In general, *Al-Muwāzanah* had a major impact on Classical Arabic literary criticism, and it was considered to offer an important set of criteria for evaluating literary works. Nevertheless, many critics acknowledged its shortcomings in terms of its lack of objectivity and provided their own new readings of Abū Tammām's poems which were more focused on their aesthetic aspects.

Modern Arabic Criticism and *Al-Muwāzanah*

Modern Arabic criticism has also paid considerable attention to *Al-Muwāzanah*, with many studies considering it to be a major achievement in Classical Arabic literary theory. Many modern critics have viewed *Al-Muwāzanah* as representing a paradigm shift in the critical



approach to literary texts. Al-Āmedī's explicit statement of his critical principles underpinning his reading of the poetry of al-Buḥturī and Abū Tammām represented the mind-set of a new era in which expert readers were unwilling to accept purely impressionistic criticism but demanded evidence from their peers of a reasoned interpretation, ideally framed within a recognisable methodology. In the opinion of Ḍayf this development in Arabic literary criticism was the inevitable result of socio-cultural changes during al-Āmedī's era (1954: 40).

In spite of the importance of *Al-Muwāzanah* in Classical Arabic criticism, Ḍayf recognised al-Āmedī's preference for al-Buḥturī which is clear from the start. Ḍayf also acknowledges the severe restrictions of al-Āmedī's comparative methodology imposed by its fragmentary approach (ibid: 80-82). However, in Ḍayf's opinion, the crucial importance of *Al-Muwāzanah* is that al-Āmedī's critical method, partially based on wholly subjective standards of personal preference, partially based on explicit objective criteria, reveals the prevailing critical approaches of the period and highlights the need for a new critical approach to a new type of poetry. Adunīs (2011) also viewed *Al-Muwāzanah* as a comparison between two theories of poetic creation: traditional theory as embodied in 'amūd al-shi'r and represented by the poetry of al-Buḥturī and modern theory embodied in Abū Tammām's style.

'Abbās later developed Ḍayf's idea concerning al-Āmedī's flawed comparative approach which decontextualised imagery, and his biased application of his methodology in *Al-Muwāzanah*, and agreed that this nonetheless marked the shift in Classical criticism from what 'Abbās referred to as *al-Naqd al-'Inṭibā'ī* (impressionistic criticism) to *al-Naqd al-Manhajī* (methodological criticism) (1993: 157).

Ḍayf argues that Classical Arab critics focused on individual verses without looking at the context and al-Āmedī's methodology provides an insight into how the linguistic scholars approached literary texts. He makes the case for taking a holistic view of all the poem's



elements since the decontextualisation of verses or images leads to superficial readings which focus on detail at the expense of meaning. Ḍayf showed that al-Āmedī applied the same Classical linguistic strategies in reading the poems and he did not look at the contexts of these verses (ibid: 87). Al-Qut̄ makes a number of similar points regarding al-Āmedī's inappropriate use of these linguistic strategies to read the work of Abū Tammām in a decontextualized fashion (1983: 16).

In his preface to his edition of *Al-Muwāzanah*, Muḥārib (1987) argues that there is evidence that al-Āmedī did attempt to carry out a more holistic comparison between two poems in the third part of his work (1961: 75). However, he acknowledges that this plays only a small role in *Al-Muwāzanah* in comparison to the much stronger impression created by his decontextualized approach which al-Āmedī uses to attempt to convince his readers about the flaws in the modern style of writing poetry.

As these critics have noted, using individual verses to compare between the two poets strongly affected al-Āmedī's reading and his final evaluation of the aesthetic aspects of the literary works in question. It could be argued that he chose to employ this methodology intentionally since as a supporter of the traditional school it served his implicit aim of criticising the modern style of Arabic poetry. Thus, by using this comparison between the individual verses al-Āmedī was able to represent the traditional school as the superior poetic style.

Al-Āmedī between two worldviews

Using an imaginary debate, al-Āmedī attempts to persuade the reader about the reasons which led him to prefer al-Buḥturī. In this debate, al-Āmedī presents and discusses a number of arguments put forward by the two opposing camps of the traditionalist, al-Buḥturī, and the modernist, Abū Tammām. This debate consists of twenty-four arguments which are divided into twelve arguments for each group. All these arguments revolve about six key literary issues



which are: *al-lafẓ wa al-ma'nā* (word and meaning), *'amūd al-shi'r, maṭbū' wa maṣnū'* (naturally gifted style vs. artful style), *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* (plagiarism), *al-'akhtā'* (errors) and *al-qadīm wa al-jadīd* (tradition vs. modernity). He chooses to focus on these literary elements, which were viewed as being of major importance during his period, using them as a set of supposedly objective criteria with which to evaluate the work of the two poets (Al-Rubay'ī, 1968: 57). Although al-Āmedī claims to be simply conveying the arguments put forward by each group, analysis of the text reveals that he is, in fact, far from being an impartial judge of evidence from both sides of the debate. Instead, he uses this as a pretext for presenting his own subjective critical opinions as a defender of the traditional school of Arabic poetry.

It can also be argued that in presenting the imaginary debate between the two opposing camps putting forward reasons why their poet's work is superior al-Āmedī provides an insight into the type of critical tools which Abbasid readers used to evaluate literary texts and to make critical judgments on their quality.

The debate method

Al-Āmedī identifies three types of recipients of the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī, namely, those who some prefer the former, those who believe in the superiority of the latter and a final group who believe that both poets are at the same level (1961: 04/1). As previously mentioned, al-Āmedī only chooses to review the arguments of the first two types. His choice is a significant one which can be directly linked to the prevailing literary debates of his day concerning the clash between the two main ideologies of traditionalism versus modernism.

Moreover, al-Āmedī's lack of objectivity is clearly reflected in how he chooses to present this argument. In all but two cases, al-Āmedī starts his argument by quoting an admirer of Abū



Tammām followed by the opposing view from the al-Buḥturī camp, but this cannot be accounted for because of the seniority of Abū Tammām. Rather, al-Āmedī uses this technique to persuade his readers about the merits of al-Buḥturī by ensuring that his admirers literally have the last word in the argument. In addition, he supplements these comments with his own observations which are usually favourable towards this poet.

Another example of this bias towards al-Buḥturī in the presentation of this debate can be found in the disparity between the coverage of the poets' respective followers' opinions which each man's work receives. Of the 49 pages in which al-Āmedī focuses on this issue, praise for Abū Tammām from his admirers covers a mere 15 pages, that for al-Buḥturī, 34 pages (Al-Āmedī, 1961).

Originality of technique

Abū Tammām's admirers said:

Abū Tammām is the inventor of a poetic technique of which he is recognised leader. He has become so famous for these expressions such as "Abū Tammām's technique" and "Abū Tammām's style" have become commonplace. People followed his example and technique. This is an honour that al-Buḥturī did not enjoy. (ibid: 13/1) In response, al-Buḥturī's admirers answered:

It is not a matter of "inventing" a technique as you claim, nor was Abū Tammām the first one to use this. He imitated the technique used by Muslim ibn al-Walīd, followed his example and even did this to an excessive and exaggerated degree deviating from the recognized path and the familiar technique. Even Muslim is not the originator of this technique, nor did he pioneer it. He simply found those rhetorical devices known as *badī'*, that is, *isti'ārah* (metaphor), *ṭibāq* (antithesis) and *jinās* (paronomasia) scattered in the poetry of the early masters, so he used them more intentionally and frequently. These devices are in Allah's Book [the Qur'ān] itself. Allah says:



“and the head blazed with hoariness”,⁵⁶ and “and a sign for them is the night. We remove from it [the light of] day, so they are [left] in darkness”,⁵⁷ and he says: “and lower to them the wings of humility out of mercy”.⁵⁸ These are examples of *isti'ārah* [metaphorical language] which is one of the tropes of the Qur'ān. (ibid: 14/1) Here al-Āmedī attempts to prove that Abū Tammām was not the originator of the modern poetry technique which was founded on using *badī'* to a more excessive degree than the traditional method.

Moreover, ibn al-Mu'tazz claims that Bashshār, Abū Nuwās and Muslim ibn al-Walīd and those who imitated them are not the originators of *badī'* but this appeared so frequently in their poetry that they became closely associated with it during their time (1967: 15). Then Abū Tammām developed this technique and took it to extremes, producing work of uneven quality due to his excessive use of rhetorical devices. Moreover, ibn al-Mu'tazz adds that the pre-Islamic poets occasionally incorporated features of this kind in their poems but only sometimes, they did not consciously use it at all. When they used it sparingly in their discourse, *badī'* was well-received. According to ibn al-Mu'tazz, Abū Tammām's overuse of *badī'* can be compared to Ṣāliḥ ibn Abdul-Quddūs,⁵⁹ excessive recourse to epigrams (ibid: 16). Ṣāliḥ was a pioneering poet and if he had been less profligate in his use of these, he would have been a paragon of excellence in his field.

Al-Āmedī finishes this part of the debate with the following response from al-Buḥturī's admirers:

Thus your [Abū Tammām's supporters] claim that Abū Tammām's invention of this technique and his pioneering efforts is proof of his superiority has been dismissed. His excessive use of *badī'* is now one of his most serious defects. By contrast, al-Buḥturī never departed from the approved norms of tradition



despite his frequent use of metaphorical language, paronomasia and antithesis. In fact, what distinguishes his work from that of Abū Tammām is his clarity, his mellifluous words and the accuracy of his motifs, so that his poetry is acclaimed by all. His poems are recited with the same degree of admiration by transmitters of poetry of all ages and poetic preferences. This being the case, the one whose poetry achieves popular approval is more worthy of merit and of being considered superior. (1961: 18/1)

Here in this argument, al-Āmedī's bias towards al-Buḥturī is apparent, clearly representing his own personal opinion since he totally agrees with the idea that Abū Tammām was not the pioneer of the use of *badī'*. The fact that al-Āmedī ends this section of the debate with this claim from al-Buḥturī's admirers is intended to influence the opinion of his readers since the placing of this point emphasises it.

Ambiguity vs. clarity

One of the most important arguments in *Al-Muwāzanah* centres on the debate concerning ambiguity of the meaning in the poetry of Abū Tammām. Arabic literary scholars such as ibn al-'Athīr (1962) have argued that Abū Tammām's contemporaries found it difficult to understand his work not only as a result of his inclusion of philosophical ideas but also due to his excessive use of artful language. Abū Tammām's admirers claim that those reject his poetry do so because they do not have sufficient knowledge to grasp the subtlety of its meaning and are unable to respond to it. Only literary scholars and insightful recipients of poetry can do this. If his merits are recognised by these groups, he is undaunted by those who belittle him. However, al-Buḥturī's admirers claim that a number of literary scholars, such as Di'bil ibn 'Alī al-Khuzā'ī, ibn al-'Arābī and Ḥudhayfah ibn Muhammad who were experts in poetry and the language of the Arabs, heavily criticised Abū Tammām's poetry. For example, Di'bil attacked him by claiming one third of his poetry was poor, one third plagiarized,



and one third good. He also said: “Allah did not create him a poet. His poetry is closer to oration and prose than to poetry” (cited in Al- Āmedī, 1961: 19/1). Al-Āmedī also notes that Di‘bil did not include him in his book on poets. Moreover, ibn al-A‘rābī said: “If this is poetry, Arabic is a worthless language”, in relation to Abū Tammām’s work. According to Ḥudhayfah ibn Muhammad, Abū Tammām’s intention was to use *badī‘* but his metaphorical devices ended up being far-fetched (ibid: 20/1).

Al-Āmedī shows his support for al-Buḥturī’s admirers by carefully selecting the opinions of those literary scholars who were opposed to Abū Tammām’s technique and failing to include those with different viewpoints. Therefore, the admirers of Abū Tammām are deeply sceptical about the fairness of these literary scholars. They claim that Di‘bil is unacceptable and cannot be counted on, as he hated Abū Tammām and envied him. This is well-known about him. One poet’s invective against another is not valid. Ibn al-A‘rābī was highly unfair to him because of the strangeness of his [Abū Tammām’s] poetics and because his poetry confronted ibn al-A‘rābī with meanings he could not understand or grasp. If asked about any of these meanings he was too proud to say I don’t know. So, he resorted to invective against Abū Tammām. As proof of this, lines from Abū Tammām’s poetry were once recited to him without his knowing who had authored them. He admired them and ordered them to be written down. When he realized they were Abū Tammām’s lines he said: Tear that to shreds.(ibid: 22/1)

Here Abū Tammām’s admirers provide their own evidence to refute the opinions previously cited and to challenge the neutrality of these literary scholars. By doing this, they emphasise that their opinions as expert readers have been influenced by factors which are not wholly related to the literary qualities of the poet’s work.



Having considered the views of the literary scholars as expert readers, al-Āmedī then shifts the focus of the debate to another type of recipient: the Bedouin reader. A brief explanation is necessary here concerning al-Āmedī's reasons for referring to this specific category or reader here. In that period, the Bedouin were considered to represent the Arab readers who were untainted by the foreign influence which was then so prevalent in the cities. They were more interested in unadorned poetry composed by those who were naturally talented rather than the artful style and philosophical ideas of the modern school.

With reference to the Bedouin readers, Abū Tammām's admirers claim that although they will not immediately grasp his poetry, since his language is sound, if the ideas which it contains are explained to them, they will come to savour it (ibid: 27/1). However, al-Buḥturī's group claim that These are your claims regarding the Bedouins presumed taking pleasure in Abū Tammām's poetry if they understand it. This can only be proved by directly testing your hypothesis. But you are unanimous anyway that Abū Tammām's poetry has its good and bad points. This consensus is shared by your allies and your adversaries alike. You're also unanimous that excellence is a characteristic of al-Buḥturī's poetry as a whole. He who excels without faults is better than he who sometimes excels and sometimes errs.(ibid: 27/1)

It is interesting to note here that in reality, al-Āmedī did not pay much attention to the arguments of Abū Tammām's admirers, instead shifting the focus to another idea which is unrelated to their point concerning Bedouin readers. This abrupt transition might be due to the fact that the cogency of their argument was irrefutable, and he attempts to minimize its impact using this technique.

Al-'Ilm bi Al-Shi'r (awareness of poetic tradition)



One of the arguments between the followers of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī concerns the impact of *al-ʿIlm bi al-Shiʿr* (literally, the knowledge of poetry) on the quality of the poetry. Abū Tammām's admirers claim that he was well-versed in knowledge of poetry and in performing his work. There is no doubt that the use of *al-ʿilm bi al-shiʿr* in his poems is more widespread than that found in al-Buḥturī's work. Thus, Abū Tammām's admirers believe that demonstrating knowledge of poetry is an important aspect of the poet's work.

However, the admirers of al-Buḥturī disagree, claiming that knowledge of poetry is not as important as poetic talent. They cite the example of Khalaf al-Aḥmar who they considered to be the most talented poet among the literary scholars but, even so, his knowledge of poetry did not qualify him to be a great poet (ibid: 25/1).

Therefore, they argue that excellence in poetry is not a consequence of the poet's knowledge of poetry but rather due to his innate talent. Hence it can be argued that from the perspective of al-Buḥturī's admirers, Abū Tammām's alleged superiority on the basis of *al-ʿIlm bi al-Shiʿr* does not count and al-Buḥturī becomes worthier of merit, if it is accepted that the poetry produced by literary scholars is inferior to that of poets.

In addition, al-Buḥturī's admirers claim that Abū Tammām intentionally showed off the breadth of his knowledge of poetic expression in Arabic by introducing many obscure words in his work. For his part, however, al-Buḥturī did not approve of such usage nor did he value it or find it scholarly. They remind readers that al-Buḥturī grew up in the desert of Manbij⁶⁰ and was thus exposed to pure Arabic and intentionally chose to omit obscure expressions from his poetry, except when a word occurred to



him spontaneously, in order to make it accessible to all readers (ibid: 26/1). Since, as previously noted, al-Āmedī's own critical evaluation was founded on the standards of *'amūd al-shi'r*, he considers natural poetic talent to be the main factor in determining the quality of poetry.

Al-Āmedī's Horizon of Expectations

This section aims to identify the literary reception standards which al-Āmedī used in *Al-Muwāzanah* and his horizon of expectations by considering the critical views underpinning his judgments about the work of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī respectively. As argued previously in Paper Two, knowing a reader's horizon of expectations plays a major role in understanding their reading methods. Moreover, this horizon of expectations seems to differ slightly from one culture to another and from one reader to another. Although, as previously noted, al-Āmedī discusses six issues in relation to the work of the two poets, he focuses in greater detail on three of these, namely, *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* (plagiarism), *al-'akhṭā'* (errors) and *al-ṣūrah al-shi'riyyah* (poetic imagery). Therefore, it is these issues which are examined in detail here.



Conclusion

This paper had four key aims as outlined in the introduction. The first of these was to identify the principles underlying the methodology proposed by al-Āmedī in *Al-Muwāzanah* in order to evaluate the extent to which he systematically applied this. It was argued that by examining the critic's approach to the poetry of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī insight would be provided into the explicit and implicit reading strategies of other expert readers in the fourth century AH. Analysis showed that although al-Āmedī presented his own explicit comparative framework at the start of *Al-Muwāzanah*, his application of this to evaluate the relative merits of the two poets' work was generally inconsistent and often flawed. It was established that one of the key shortcomings of al-Āmedī's approach was his evident lack of objectivity in his critical practice which bore the traces of several external influences.

First and foremost, there was the impact of the broader cultural context in which the introduction of foreign ideas and the emergence of *al-Shu'ūbiyyah* was perceived as a threat to the purity of the Arabic language. In addition, his critical attitudes were also shaped by the main literary debates of his day, in particular *al-ṭab' wa al-ṣṣan'ah* (natural talent versus artful style), and *al-qadīm wa al-jadīd* (tradition versus modernity). Consequently, al-Āmedī's choice of examples for discussion, the imbalance in the distribution of these, his critical readings, and ultimately his evaluation of the work of the modernist poet Abū Tammām all reflect his clear bias towards the Classical technique and natural talent of his rival, al-Buḥturī.

More interestingly, close reading of the text of *Al-Muwāzanah* made it possible to recover further information relating to the implicit criteria employed by al-Āmedī. These shed light on the literary norms and conventions which were generally applied during the period, suggesting that *'amūd al-shi'r* constituted the basis for Classical literary reception, even though this was not formalised until later. There is evidence that the principles of *'amūd al-*



shi' r made a significant contribution to the formation of al-Āmedī's horizon of expectations as an expert reader.

With respect to the second aim regarding the wider influence of *Al-Muwāzanah* on Arabic literary studies, it was argued that the impact of this work was two-fold. In terms of its immediate impact, al-Āmedī's comparative method served as a model for some Classical literary scholars who viewed this as an advance on the older form of impressionistic criticism which had previously been dominant. Beyond this, al-Āmedī's critical judgment on the work of the two poets continues to stimulate debate amongst critics to this day.

This paper also aimed to explore what al-Āmedī's presentation of the imaginary debate between the two opposing groups concerning the relative merits of Abū

Tammām and al-Buḥturī reveals about the type of critical tools which Abbasid readers used to evaluate literary texts and to make critical judgments on their quality. Analysis showed that although al-Āmedī's representation of the viewpoints of these two groups is clearly one-sided. Nonetheless in his attempts to give voice to their respective opinions, he reveals the set of criteria which he believed should be applied when judging the quality of a poet's work. These were precedence, originality, clarity, and awareness of poetic tradition.

Finally, the paper analysed al-Āmedī's use of three key critical tools which he applied when evaluating the work of Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī, namely *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah* (plagiarism), *al-'akḥṭā'* (errors) and *al-ṣūrah al-shi'riyyah* (poetic imagery). His reading and interpretation of the examples which he selected were used to reveal the critic's personal horizon of expectations and the extent to which this was shaped by the literary norms and conventions of his day.

With regards to the concept of *al-sariqāt al-shi'riyyah*, it is clear from al-Āmedī's responses to the work of the two poets that for Classical literary scholars there was a fine line between



what were judged to be acceptable and unacceptable levels and techniques of borrowing motifs from the work of other poets. In al-Āmedī's opinion, the ways in which an appropriated motif was incorporated into a composition and reworked by the poet determined whether it was a successful innovation or mere plagiarism.

The critic's treatment of *al-'akhṭā'* (errors) again provides a valuable insight into his ideological stance with respect to the need to maintain the purity of Arabic since all of the examples which he selected focus on Abū Tammām's inaccurate use of expression. Finally, the limitations of traditionalist poetic technique are reflected in al-Āmedī's division of *al-ṣūrah al-shi'riyyah* (poetic imagery) into either fitting or far-fetched metaphor. He advocated the former as the acceptable literary model for aspiring poets whilst rejecting the modernist use of *al-badī'*



Bibliography

- 1) Cantarino, V. 1975. *Arabic poetics in the golden age: selection of texts accompanied by a preliminary study*. Leiden: Brill.
- 2) Crone, P. 1986. *God's caliph: religious authority in the first centuries of Islam*. i. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 3) Culler, J.D. 1976. *Structuralist poetics: structuralism, linguistics and the study of literature*. Ithaca: Cornell U. P.
- 4) Eco, U. 1979. *The role of the reader : explorations in the semiotics of texts*. i. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 5) Erlich, V. 1965. *Russian formalism : history, doctrine*. 2nd rev. ed. The Hague: Mouton.
- 6) Faḍl, Ṣ. 1988. *Ishkālyyat al-manhaj fī al-naqd al-ḥadīth. Al-Muḥāḍrāt, Jeddah: Nadī Jeddah*. 1(9), p22.
- 7) Fakhreddine, H.J. 2011. Defining metapoiesis in the Abbāsīd age. *Journal of Arabic Literature*. 42(2-3), pp.205-235.
- 8) Frye, N. 1957. *Anatomy of criticism : four essays*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- 9) Gelder, G.J.H.v. 1982. *Beyond the line : classical Arabic literary critics on the coherence and unity of the poem*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- 10) Gharkān, R. 2004. *Muqawwimāt 'amūd al-shi'r al-uslubīyyah wa al-taṭbīq*. Damascus: Ittihād al-Kuttāb al-'Arab.
- 11) Haddārah, M. 1975. *Mushkilat al-sariqāt fī al-naqd al-'arabī, dirāsah taḥlīliyyah muqāranah*. Beirut: Al-Maktab al-Islāmī.
- 12) Ḥamdān, F.S. 1989. *Mafhūm Al-Khayāl wa wazifatuh fī Al-Naqd Al-Qadīm wa Al- Balāghah* Doctorate thesis, Um AL-Qura.
- 13) Ḥamīd, S. 2005. *Al-Naṣ wa tafā'ul al-mutalaqī fī al-khiṭāb al-'adabī 'ind al-Ma'arrī*. Damascus: Ittihād al-kuttāb al-'Arab.
- 14) Harris, E.E. 1973. *Salvation from despair : a reappraisal of Spinoza's philosophy*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- 15) Harris, R. 2001. *Saussure and his interpreters*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- 16) Hartman, G.H. 1970. *Beyond formalism: literary essays, 1958-1970*. London: Yale University Press.
- 17) Ḥasan, M.N. 2004. *Al-'Ibdā' wa al-talaqqī fī al-shi'r al-Jāhilī*. Unpublished Masters dissertation thesis, An-Najah National University.
- 18) Ḥassān, Ṣ. 1975. *Al-Tta'thīr al-'jnbī fī al-thaqāfah al-'arabiyyah bin al-māḍī wa al- ḥāḍir*. *The Journal of King Abdulaziz University*. 1(1), p40.
- 19) Hilāl, M.G. 1973. *Al-naqd al-adabī al-ḥadīth*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Thaqāfah ; Dār al- 'Awdah.
- 20) Hitti, P.K. 1958. *History of the Arabs : From the earliest times to the present*. 10th ed. ed. London: Macmillan.
- 21) Holdcroft, D. 1991. *Saussure : signs, system, and arbitrariness*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



- 22) Holub, R.C. 1984. *Reception theory : a critical introduction*. London: Methuen.
- Huart, C.m. 1903. *A history of Arabic literature*. London: William Heinemann.
- 23) Ḥumūd, K.M.M. 2007. *Muwāzanat al-Āmedī wa wasāʿat al-Jurjānī*. Beirut: ʿĀlam Al-Kutub.
- 24) Iser, W. 1974. *The implied reader : patterns of communication in prose fiction from Bunyan to Beckett*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- 25) Iser, W. 1980. *The act of reading : a theory of aesthetic response*. Baltimore ; London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- 26) Ismaʿīl, ʿA.-d. 1987. Qirāʿah fī Maʿnā Al-Maʿāʾind ʿAbdualqāhir Al-Jurjānī *Fuṣūl* 7(3), p10.
- 27) Jacobi, R. 1982. The camel-section of the panegyric ode. *Journal of Arabic Literature*. 13(1), pp.1-22.
- 28) Jaʿfar, Q.I. 1933. *Naqd al-nathr*. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub.
- 29) Jaʿfar, Q.I. 1978. *Naqd al-shiʿr*. al-Ṭabʿah 1. ed. Cairo: Maktabat al-Kullīyyāt al-Azhariyyah.
- 30) Jauss, H.R. 1982. *Toward an aesthetic of reception*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- 31) Kabbābah, W. 1997. *Al-Khuṣūmah bayna al-Ṭāʿiyayn wa ʿamūd al-shiʿr* Damascus: Ittihād al-Kuttāb al-ʿArab.
- 32) Khafājī, M.ʿ. 1958. *Ibn al-Muʿtazz wa-turāthuhu fī al-adab wa-al-naqd wa-al-bayān*. Cairo: Dār al-ʿAhd al-Jadīd.
- 33) Khaldūn, I. 1377. *Muqaddemat ibn Khaldūn*. Cairo: Al-Maktabah Al-Kobrā.
- 34) Khalūfah, A. 2007. ʿUfuq al-talaqqī al-naqdī ladā al-Āmedī: Al-Muwāzanah i. *namodhajan. Judhūr*. (11).
- 35) Khilbāṣ, I. 1989. *Al-Muwāzanah manhajan naqdiyyan qadīman wa ḥadīthan*. i. Unpublished Masters dissertation thesis, University of Baghdad.
- 36) Lambek, M. 1990. Certain knowledge, contestable authority - power and practice on the Islamic periphery. *American Ethnologist*. 17(1), pp.23-40.
- 37) Le Strange, G. 1972. *Baghadad during Abbasid Caliphate from contemporary Arabic and Persian Sources*. [S.l.]: Curzon Press.
- 38) Lemon, L.T. and Reis, M.J. 1965. *Russian formalist criticism : four essays*. Lincoln i. ; London: University of Nebraska Press.
- 39) Lyall, C.J. 1930. *Translations of Ancient Arabian poetry, chiefly Pre-Islamic, with an introduction and notes*. London: Williams & Norgate.