



## Notes on the poetry of Sûl and Shumûl

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*Notes on the poetry of Sûl and Shumûl*

Ibrahim Akel

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Critical approaches to the poetry of the *Thousand and One Nights* can be found, *inter alia*, in studies by William Alexander Clouston (1881), Josef Horovitz (1915), [1] Jamel Eddine Bencheikh (1991), Muhammad Lutfî al-Yûsufî (1992), Walîd Munîr (1994), Hâdî Hasan Hammûdî (1998), Muhsin-Jâsim al-Mûsawî (2000), Kadhîm Jihad Hassan (2004), Geert Jan van Gelder (2004), Wolfhart Heinrichs (2007), Hâmid Muhammad Mursî (2007) and Ahmad Matlûb (2013). Other researchers have simply tried to compile a general or themed anthology of the poetry, for example Jean Humbert (1819), [2] ‘Abd al-Şâhib al-‘Uqâbî (1984), Imîl Nâşîf (1998), Qâsim Mukhlif al-Kurdî (2002), Husayn Şabrî Muhammad Rizq (2003) and Samîr Basyûnî (2010). Timotei Cipariu’s (1805–1887) “indexes of verses quoted in the *Arabian Nights* (identifying the authors)” also deserve mention. They cover a manuscript conserved at the Biblioteca Academiei Române [3] and poems from the *Nights* contained in a manuscript conserved at the library of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage of the Sultanate of Oman (fol. 224a–231b), which was copied out in 1280/1863 by Khalfân Ibn ‘Alî Ibn Khanfûr Ibn Muslim al-Nawfalî.

Translators for their part have generally considered these poems to be “mostly of the kind that they might be omitted without disturbing the course of the prose texts, and, therefore, have been later added to them”. [4] For this reason, “several European translators of the *Nights* have decided to omit the poetry from their translations, either because they judged it to be boring or because it was difficult to translate”. [5]

While this idea might appear sensible in some stories, it becomes a nonsense in others, for example in *Sûl and Shumûl*. [6] The reason for this is simple: the poems were written especially for this story. Thus, according to Chauvin, following Seybold, the original part of the tale – the search for the fiancée in all the convents – “indeed has no purpose other than to serve as a framework for numerous poems” (Chauvin, VII: 112).

The poetry is well integrated into the events, providing the accompaniment to almost every stage of the hero's adventures. Nearly every character utters verse. Even from a purely quantitative point of view, this poetry represents more than one third of the volume of *L*, *C* and *I* as well as of the shared passages – the original part – of *T*. This can be seen in the tables below:

Statistics	AYASOFYA	INDIA OFFICE	CAIRO
Words	(I)	(L)	(C)
Total	7,478	8,676	10,524
Prose	4,895	5,329	6,674
Poetry	2,583	3,347	3,850

Statistics	RIYAD	TÜBINGEN	TÜBINGEN	TÜBINGEN
Words	(K)	[shared passages]	[additional passages] (fols. 3a; 10a–15b; 23a–56b)	(T) [whole text]
Total	9,988	12,578	12,146	24,724
Prose	7,904	8,190	10,592	18,782
Poetry	2,084	4,388	1,554	5,942

The *Thousand and One Nights* (Calcutta II edition) contain 1,250 pieces of poetry (plus two poems from the *Mawâliyâ*). These poems are written in 12 of the 16 principal metres: *Tawîl*, *Basît*, *Kâmil*, *Wâfir*, *Sarî'*, *Khafîf*, *Mutaqârib*, *Rajaz*, *Ramal*, *Munsarih*, *Mujtathth* and *Madîd*. The five manuscripts of *Sûl and Shumûl* together contain 121 poems. The poems in the Tübingen (*T*) manuscript are written in nine metres, with the addition of *Hazaj* but without *Mutaqârib*, *Munsarih*, *Mujtathth* and *Madîd*. The poems in the second group of manuscripts (*L*, *C*, *I*) are written in only five metres, *Basît*, *Khafîf*, *Tawîl*, *Wâfir* and *Kâmil*, as the tables below show:

الطويل	البسيط	مخلع البسيط	الكامل	مجزوء الكامل	الوافر	مجزوء الوافر	السريع	الخفيف	مجزوء الخفيف	المتكافئ	الرجز	مجزوء الرجز	الرملي	مجزوء الرمل	المنسرح	المجتث	المديد	الهاج
309	281	16	251	29	128	1	46	58	3	37	20	5	19	11	16	16	4	-
29	38	1	10	-	14	-	3	23	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	2

الطويل	البسيط	مخلع البسيط	الكامل	الوافر	السريع	الخفيف	الرجز	الرملي	الهاج	Tout	Bahr / Metre
6	16	-	4	2	-	11	-	-	-	39	AYASOFYA (I)
8	23	-	2	4	-	12	-	-	-	49	INDIA OFFICE (L)
8	18	-	3	5	-	16	-	-	-	50	CAIRO (C)
5	7	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	16	RIYAD (K)
19	18	1	4	8	3	10	2	1	2	68	TÜBINGEN (T)

Below is a concordance table for the *Sûl* and *Shumûl* poems, followed by a few remarks about these poems:

N°	Qâfiya / Rime	Bahr / Metre	Number of verses	Who says / Poet	AYASOFYA (I)	INDIA OFFICE (L)	CAIRO (C)	RIYAD (K)	TÜBINGEN (T)
1	نظر	[Basît]	1	al-Shumûl's father				1	
2	الوجنات	Khafîf	17	al-Sûl	1-3 ; 4 ; 6 ; 8 ; 10-13 ; 15-17	1-2 ; 5 ; 8 ; 11-13 ; 15	1-3 ; 5 ; 4 ; 6-16	1 ; 3-5 ; 8-9 ; 11-12	
2	-	-	-	al-Sûl				1-2 ; 4 ; 6-8 ; 10-12 ; 12* ; 13-14 ; 14* ; 15-17	
3	مشغول	Kâmil	17	al-Sûl	2-15	1-3 ; 5 ; 8-10 ; 16-17	2-5 ; 7-15		
4	عطبول	Kâmil	7	al-Sûl	1-4	3-7 (in continuity with the previous one)	1-4 ; 7		
5	الائتسامي	Khafîf	8	al-Sûl	1-7		1-8		
6	بصري	Basît	14	al-Sûl (I,	1 ; 3-14	1-2 ; 6-7 ; 11 ;	1 ; 4-5 ; 7-		

				L) ; al-Shumûl (C)		13-14	10 ; 12-13		
7	دمي	Tawîl	13	al-Shumûl (L) ; al-Sûl (I, C)	1 ; 3-13	1-5 ; 8 ; 13-12	1 ; 3-5 ; 7 ; 10-13		
8	الفراق	Khafîf	6		1-6				
9	التلاقى	Wâfir	7	al-Sûl				1-7	
10	بدا	[Tawîl]	8	al-Shumûl				1-8	
11	الحمام	Wâfir	4	al-Sûl				1-4	
12	اكتب	Tawîl	2	al-Sûl				1-2	
13	الانجما	Kâmil	10	al-Sûl				1-10	
14	كبيدي	Basît See N° 16	12	al-Sûl		1 ; 5-7 ; 2 ; 8-9 ; 11-12		1-5 ; 7-10 ; 12	
15	بعدي	Tawîl	8	al-Sûl			1-8		
16	جسدي	Basît See N° 14	16	al-Shumûl (K) ; al-Sûl (I, L, C)	4-6 ; 8-9 ; 12-16	1 ; 8 ; 14 ; 16	4-10 ; 12-16	1-3 ; 9-12	
17	جسدي	Basît	9	al-Shumûl	1-2 ; 4-7	1-3 ; 6-8	1-2 ; 6 ; 9	= N° 16 : 1-2 ; 11	
18	امري	Tawîl	18	al-Sûl	1-3 ; 5-6 ; 8-	10-13 ; 15-16	1-2 ; 5 ; 7-	1-4 ; 6 ; 8 ;	

					12 ; 15-16 ; 18		10 ; 15-18	10 ; 12 ; 14-16 ; 18	
19	نيراني	[Basît]	11	al-Sûl				1-11	
20	بنيران	[Basît]	13	al-Shumûl			1-13	1-13	
21	يراني	Tawîl	17	al-Sûl				1-17	
22	سهراني	Basît (1-2), Tawîl (3-4), Kâmil (5)	5	al-Shumûl		1-5			
23	أشنب	Kâmil	7	al-Sûl	1-7	1-3 ; 5 ; 7			
24	وجدي	Tawîl	15	al-Sûl	1-6 ; 8 ; 14-15	1-8 ; 14-15		1-5 ; 8-15	
25	الهملان	Kâmil	13	al-Sûl				1-13	
26	المنرار	Khafîf	9	al-Sûl	1-4 ; 8	1-2 ; 8	1-2 ; 4-9		
27	النار	Khafîf	3	al-Sûl	1-3		1-3		
28	مدرار	Khafîf	3	al-Sûl	1-3 [= N° 26 : 1-2, 4]				
29	بدلا	Basît	9	al-Sûl	1 ; 4 ; 7-8	1-4 ; 8-9	1 ; 4 ; 7-8	1 ; 4-9	
30	الكمال	Khafîf	33	al-Sûl	1 ; 4 ; 3 ; 6-	1-2 ; 6-7 ; 13 ;	1 ; 3-4 ; 6-7 ;	1 ; 3 ; 5-	

					7 ; 12 ; 15 ; 21 ; 18 ; 25- 26 ; 30	10 ; 15 ; 20-24 ; 27-37	9 ; 11-12 ; 14-22 ; 24- 25 ; 27 ; 29 ; 31-33	10 ; 15 ; 18 ; 20- 25 ; 27-33	
31	كثير	[Tawil]	3	The narrator	1-3				
32	البناتي	Wâfir	8	Hamâma			1-8		
33	مصيب	Khafif	11	al-Sûl	1 ; 5 ; 9-11	1-2 ; 5-10	1-7 ; 10		
34	كفاني	Khafif	19	al-Sûl		1-6 ; 8-10 ; 14 ; 17-19	1 ; 3-4 ; 6-7 ; 9-16		
35	غرامي	[Khafif]	12	al-Sûl		1 ; 3 ; 11 ; 4-5	1-2 ; 4 ; 6-12		
36	بانسجاسي	Wâfir	7	al-Sûl's father (C) ; al-Shumûl's mother (L)		1-5	1-7		
37	كالسحابي	[Khafif]	4	al-Sûl's mother (L)			1-4		
38	الأذان	Khafif	12	al-Sûl	1 ; 6 ; 8-10 ; 12	1-12	1-6 ; 8-12		
39	السور	Basît	9	al-Sûl	1-4 ; 7-9	1 ; 3 ; 2 ; 4-8	1-8		See N° 50
40	كنز	Tawil	14	al-Sûl					1-14
41	مسلم	Tawil	14	al-Sûl					1-14

41b is	هما	Tawîl	6	A monk					1-6
42	مدراس	Basît	3	An old woman					1-3
43	راهب	Hazaj	7	al-Sûl					1-7
44	الصاحب	Hazaj	7	A monk					1-7
45	العذاب	Wâfir	6	al-Sûl					1-6
46	ثاوي	Tawîl	10	al-Sûl					1-10
47	هتون	Sarî	6	al-Sûl					1-6
48	يكون	Sarî	7	A monk					1-7
49	المنام	Khaffif	8	al-Sûl					1-8
50	الضرر	Basît See N° 39	13	al-Sûl					1-13
51	البشر	Basît See N° 52, N° 88	9	A monk	1 ; 4 ; 6 ; 9	1 ; 4 ; 6 ; 9	1 ; 4 ; 6 ; 8-9		2-7 ; 9
52	بشر	Basît See N° 51	4	A monk	1-4				



53	بهرم	Tawil	7	al-Sûl					1-7
54	عذولي	[M. al-Basît]	5	al-Sûl					1-5
55	يتلفني	Ramal	6	al-Sûl					1-6
56	تخفيني	Basît	4	al-Sûl	1-4				
57	عيني	Basît	2	A monk	1-2				
58	نكد	Basît	8	al-Sûl	1-5 ; 7-8	2-4 ; 6 ; 8	2-4 ; 6		
59	صمد	Basît	8	A monk	1 ; 7*-8* ; 5*	1 ; 6 ; 5 ; 8	1 ; 5		1-7
60	شائي	Rajaz	6	al-Sûl					1-6
61	كفاني	Rajaz See N° 98	5	A monk					1-5
62	باخبار / الأمصار	Khafif	36	al-Sûl	2 ; 4 ; 6-7 ; 12-13 ; 15 ; 23 ; 27-28 ; 31	1 ; 6-7 ; 12 ; 19 ; 21-22 ; 27 ;	2 ; 4 ; 6-7 ; 12 ; 21-22 ; 27 ; 28		2-12 ; 14 ; 16-18 ; 20 ; 22 ; 24-26 ; 28-36
63	تخفيني	Basît	10	al-Sûl		1* et 4* ; 5 ; 9- 10	1 ; 5-6 ; 9		1-5 ; 7-9
64	ينادينني	Basît	6	A monk		1 ; 4 ; 6	1 ; 4 ; 6		1-6
65	دائي	Khafif	7	al-Sûl					1-7
66	حشائي	Khafif	5	A monk					1-5

67	/ الدمن / السحري بيني	Basît	12	al-Sûl		2-4 ; 11	1 ; 3-4 ; 12		1 ; 3-10
68	غصني	Basît See N° 67	4	al-Sûl		1-4			
69	/ أظفني اشجاني	Basît	9	A monk		1 ; 4 ; 8-9	1 ; 4 ; 6 ; 8		1-5 ; 7-8
70	البلد	Basît	4	A monk		1-4			
71	يعانيها	Basît	1	al-Sûl					1
72	السنبسي	Kâmil	9	A poet : Hammâd					1-9
73	بأدمعي	Tawîl	7	al-Sûl					1-7
74	ألف	Tawîl	7	al-Sûl					1-7
75	عائق	Tawîl	7	al-Sûl					1-7
76	التلاحم	Tawîl	6	Mâlik Ibn 'Awf					1-6
77	نوم	Tawîl	9	al-Sûl					1-9
78	مرامه	Tawîl	6	al-Sûl					1-6
79	العياني	Wâfir	9	al-Sûl					1-9
80	المقر	Wâfir	2	Mâlik Ibn					1-2

				'Awf					
81	أقرب	Tawîl	3	[Muhârib Ibn Harb]					1-3
82	العطب	Basît	6	Muhârib Ibn Harb					1-6
83	المطلب	Basît	7	al-Sûl					1-7
84	الأجسادى	Khaffîf	5	al-Sûl					1-5
85	اللهزمى	Kâmil	9	Hilâl [Ibn al-Nazzâl]					1-9
86	الحؤم	Kâmil	6	Muhârib Ibn Harb					1-6
87	عيوب	Khaffîf	20	al-Sûl					1-20
88	سلب / السحري / المطر / الستحب	Basît / See N° 90	17	al-Sûl	1-2 ; 5*	1-2 ; 4-6	1-6		1-2 ; 4-5 ; 7- 17
89	النسب	Basît	3	A monk		1-3			
90	النوب	Basît See N° 88	18	al-Sûl	1 ; 3-5 ; 18	1-2 ; 4 ; 8-10 ; 18	6-7 ; 10-18		
91	الكنب	Basît	9	al-Sûl		1-9			

92	الحجبي	Basît	20	A monk : Nabhân (T, L) ; al-Mutayyam (I, C)	7-12 ; 14 ; 16-18	6-7 ; 9-10 ; 12 ; 16-18	6-7 ; 9-14 ; 17 ; 16 ; 18 ; 20		1-6 ; 12-20
93	تلبيه تلها	Tawîl	12	al-Sûl	1-2 ; 6-8 ; 10-12	1 ; 3-6 ; 10-11	1-3 ; 5 ; 7 ; 9-11		5
94	السعد	Sarî*	6	The monk Nabhân					1-6
95	بائي	Khafîf	18	A monk : Nabhân		1-2 ; 10-12 ; 16-17	2 ; 9-13 ; 16-18		1-12 ; 14-17
96	اكحلي	Kâmil	11	A monk : Nabhân	1-3 ; 11		1-2 ; 4-6 ; 8 ; 10 ; 9		1-2 ; 4-10
97	اطنبا	Tawîl	6	A monk : Nabhân			1-6		
98	اشجاني	Basît	6	al-Sûl (I, C) ; The monk Nabhân (L)	1 ; 3-6	1-4	1-4		See N° 61
99	تكتب	Tawîl	5	A monk : Nabhân		1-5			

100	النعم	Basît	6	al-Sûl					1-6
101	تلقائي	Basît	7	al-Sûl	1 ; 3 ; 7	1 ; 3-7	1 ; 3 ; 6-7		1-6
102	عمرى	Tawîl	1	[al-Sûl]					1
103	أطيار	Basît	3	The narrator					1-3
104	المقيم	Tawîl	20	al-Sûl	1-2 ; 4 ; 19	2 ; 4-7 ; 9-11 ; 13-14 ; 16-17 ; 19-20	1-2 ; 4-7 ; 9-17 ; 19-20		1-9 ; 11 ; 13-14 ; 16-19
105	أنجى	Tawîl	9	Le roi		4-7	4 ; 8-9		1-4 ; 8-9
106	دهاني	Khafîf	9	al-Sûl		1 ; 3 ; 6 ; 7*8* ; 9	1-8		1-4 ; 7-8
107	التيسيرى	Khafîf	8	al-Sûl			1-2 ; 4-8		1-3
108	الرسول	Wâfir	13	al-Sûl		4-6 ; 8-9 ; 11-12	4-6 ; 13		1-3 ; 5-7 ; 9-10
109	يدوم	Wâfir	7	al-Sûl	1-7				
110	المغيب	Wâfir	3	al-Nahhâda	1-3				
111	الاحسانى	Khafîf	22	al-Sûl	1-3 ; 16 ; 18 ; 22	1-2 ; 4 ; 8-12 ; 15 ; 21	1 ; 4-8 ; 11-17 ; 20-21		16-21
112	اركانى	Khafîf	4	al-Sûl		1-4	1-4		
113	عذابى	Tawîl	10	al-Sûl					1-10
114	عذابى	Tawîl	10	al-Shumûl					1-10
115	الودادى	Wâfir	10	al-Sûl					1-10

116	الشدادى	Wâfir	11	al-Shumûl					1-11
117	ثيرى	Tawîl	11	al-Nahhâda		1 ; 3-4 ; 10	1 ; 3-4 ; 10		1-2 ; 4-11
118	المغيب	Wâfir	5	al-Nahhâda		1 ; 3-4 ; 2	1 ; 4 ; 2		1-2 ; 4-5
119	يستطيل	Wâfir	6	al-Sûl		1-4	1-2		1-2 ; 5-6
120	همرى	Basît See N° 88	8	al-Sûl's mother					1-8
121	اصطبرى	Basît	11	A monk					1-11

The poems were written especially to illustrate this story and it is only in the longest version, *T*, that one can read verses that are also found elsewhere. Poem no. 71 contains a single verse that can be attributed to a known poet, al-Ablah al-Baghdâdî (d.1183).[7] This verse, which is found only in *T*, is also the only one that can be identified in the editions of the *Thousand and One Nights* (Night 874, Bûlâq 2: 425; Calcutta 4: 287). Other poetic links can be found between the *Nights* and the version of *Sûl and Shumûl* given in *T*. For example, the first stanza of verse no. 10 (poem no. 113) is found in *The Story of Hasan of Basra* (Night 802 Bûlâq 2: 326; Calcutta 4: 76).[8] It is worth pointing out here that there are notable similarities between the two stories.

In the episode of long epic adventures – which is absent from the other manuscripts – the *T* manuscript also contains relatively lengthy poems, such as poem no. 80, which can be attributed to Muhammad Ibn Zinjî al-Baghdâdî (d.334/945).[9] However, slight variants of the two verses are found anonymously in a later work dating from the early fourteenth century. It is this later version that one reads in the *T* manuscript. The epic episode also contains a poem (no. 87) by none other than ‘Antara Ibn Shaddâd.[10]

However, the *T* manuscript contains considerable poetic lacunae. Poem no. 81, uttered by “Muhârib Ibn Harb”, is a response to the poem by Hilâl’s wife, which is missing from the manuscript.

The *K* manuscript also contains lacunae as well as disruptions to the poems’ order. There is a lacuna between verses no. 2 and no. 3 of poem no. 9 (a folio is missing between fol. 40 and fol. 41). Furthermore, verses no. 20–25 in poem no. 30 are written in the margin (fol. 63b) and verses no. 27–28 are also written in the margin. In this version, poem no. 2 is repeated in two different places and with differing degrees of variation: at the start (fols. 18b–19a) and slightly further on (fols. 48b–49b). This poem is found at the beginning of *C* (pp. 3–4) and a little later on in *I* (fol. 143b) and *L* (fols. 228b–229a).

In this poem (no. 2, verse no. 8), the author uses an expression that we have already seen in Ibn al-Rûmî (d.283/896): “*Bint sab‘-in wa arba‘-in wa thalâth-in*” (a young girl of fourteen:  $7 + 4 + 3 = 14$ ).[11] This expression is repeated again in *L* and *C* (poem no. 3, verse no. 5). Only *L* offers a different reading, “*Bint khams-in wa arba‘-in wa thalâth-in*” (a young girl of twelve:  $5 + 4 + 3 = 12$ ), which indicates that the version given in this manuscript seems the most altered.

In the *L* manuscript, poem no. 4 is a continuation of poem no. 3, whereas the two poems are independent of one another in the other versions. Moreover, a change of metre can be observed here in this poem, and likewise in poem no. 22 (verses 1–2 are in *Basît*, verses 3–4 in *Tawîl* and verse 5 in *Kâmil*).

The repetition of poem no. 2 is not a unique case. Another, more striking example is

found in *I*, where poem no. 28 is simply a slightly modified repetition of poem no. 26. The two poems are separated by a third poem in the same metre and with the same rhyme scheme (poem no. 27).

It should be noted that many of the poems in *L* are preceded by a phrase such as “*aflaha man yuṣallî ‘alâ al-Rasûl*” (he who prays for the prophet will win). This can be seen as a trace of orality.[12] At the start of this manuscript, there is a reference to other sweethearts such as Bishr and Hind and Jamîl and Fitna: (*L*, fol. 255a).[13]

ثم انهم اجتمعوا يوماً من بعض الايام يتناشدون الاشعار مثل المحبين ومثل هند وبشر وما جرى لهم فقالت الشمول للشمول  
يا بن عم انشدني شيئاً من شعرك واذكرني فيه كما ذكر جميل بنت عمه فتنة

Sûl and Shumûl are invoked alongside Bishr and Hind and other couples in a work dating from the seventeenth century. However, the couple is not mentioned in the *Fihrist* by Ibn Ishâq al-Nadîm (tenth century), and nor are Bishr and Hind.[14]

Another metaphorical expression is repeated several times throughout the five manuscripts: “*abîtu ar‘â nujûm al-layl*”[15] (I spend the night gazing at the stars): poem no. 6, verse no. 7 (*I, L, C*); poem no. 10, verse no. 2 (*K*); poem no. 19, verse no. 2 (*K*); poem no. 20, verse no. 2 (*C, K*); and poem no. 41, verse no. 7 (*T*). *C* is clearly in harmony with both *K* and *I* and *L*, which signifies that this version has apparently maintained an accurate reading. But one must also be prudent, for this manuscript has been subject to a few relatively significant rectifications. For example, there is a change in the rhyme scheme in poem. 88 (verse no. 1: *râ’*; verses nos. 2–6: *bâ’*). The rhyme scheme in *T* and *L* is *bâ’* and in *I* it is *râ’*. A second variation in the rhyme scheme can be seen in poem no. 67, where the rhyme scheme in *T* and *L* is *nûn*, but *râ’* in *C*. Other rectifications, however, are not well founded: for example, poem no. 16 is recited by al-Shumûl in *K* and by al-Sûl in *I, L* and *C*. As a consequence, in verse no. 4 the scribe who copied *I* has written “*in tuhjabî*” (if they take you from me), while the scribe who copied *C* has written “*in yahjubûnî*” (if they take me from you).[16] The *K* version contains another similar poem, but this time recited by al-Sûl. Yet the scribe has written “*in tuhjabyn*” (if they take you from me) (poem no. 14, verse no. 1) [See also poem no. 10, verse no. 3]. All notion of separation is absent from the *L* version, which contains both poems (no. 14 and no. 16).

Other notable variations – some of which could be attributed to mistakes or “corrections” by the scribe – include the transformation of some of the characters’ names, such as, for

example, the name of the “poet” monk: al-Mutayyam [Ibn] Nabhân (Tayhân) Ibn al-Sharîd (al-Sarîr / al-Mundhir) al-‘Âmirî (al-Nabhânî), in poem no. 92.

AYASOFYA (I)	INDIA OFFICE (L)	CAIRO (C)	TÜBINGEN (T)
(152a) : واسمى انا المتيم بن نيهان بن السريز العامري	(247b) : يا متيم فقل لي ما اسمك فقال : الزاهب اسمى نيهان (248b) : يا راهب نيهان : (284b, 249a) : يا متيم نيهان :	(27) : وكان اسمي انا المتيم ابن الشريد : العامري (27, 28) : يا متيم :	(110a) : من قبيلة يقال لها بنى النيهان وأنا : اسمى نيهان بن المنذر النيهاني (113b, 117b) : يا نيهاني :

The analysis of the convergences and divergences between the different versions of this tale does not allow us to identify a more coherent version that is closer than the others to the original source text. The four versions are indispensable in understanding the nature of the text and how it changed. The comparison of the poems has confirmed this hypothesis.



## References

- [1] According to Horovitz, “There are about 1420 poems or fragments of poetry in the 2nd Calcutta edition ... Of these a number of 170 repetitions must be deducted, so 1250 insertions of poetry remain. Horovitz has been able to prove that those insertions whose authors he could discover are to be dated from the 12th to the 14th centuries, i.e. from the Egyptian period of the history of the Nights.” Enno Littmann, “Alf laila wa-laila”, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1960, vol. I, p. 364.
- [2] Jean Humbert, *Anthologie arabe, ou Choix de poésies arabes inédites*, Paris, 1819, pp. 8–67, pp. 128–131 (notes p. 153, p. 157, p. 167, p. 169, p. 174, p. 192, p. 208, p. 216, p. 219, p. 236, p. 295).
- [3] See Geoffrey Roper (ed.), *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*, London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1993, vol. II, p. 656.
- [4] Enno Littmann, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 364.
- [5] See Peter France (ed.), *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 151; Geert Jan van Gelder, “Grand Arabian Nights” [Review of *The Arabian Nights: Tales of 1,001 Nights*, translated by Malcolm C. Lyons, with Ursula Lyons], in *The Times Literary Supplement* 21/01/2009.
- [6] See Ibrahim Akel and Aboubakr Chraïbi. “The Tale of Sûl and Shumûl.” In *Arabic Manuscripts of the “Thousand and One Nights”*. ed. by Aboubakr Chraïbi. Paris: espaces&signes, 2016, pp. 115-260.
- [7] al-Şafadî, *Kitâb al-Wâfî bil-wafayât*, ed. Ahmad al-Arnâ’ût and Turkî Muştafâ, Beirut: Dâr Ihyâ’ al-Turâth al-‘Arabî, 2000, vol. II, p. 176.
- [8] See Ibn Sa’îd, *al-Murqisât wa al-mutribât*, p. 24 (in a poem by Majnûn Laylâ).
- [9] al-Bustî (d.354/965), *Rawdat al-‘uqalâ’*, p. 304.  
See al-Wâtât (d.718/1318), *Ghurar al-khaşâ’iş al-wâdiha*, p. 306.
- [10] See *Dîwân ‘Antar*, ed., Khalîl al-Khûrî, Beirut: Matba‘at al-‘Âdâb, 1893, pp. 12–13.
- [11] *Dîwân Ibn al-Rûmî*, ed., Ahmad Hasan Basaj, Beirut: Dâr al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 3rd edition, 2003, vol. II, p. 506.

See al-Abshîhî, *al-Mustatraf fî kulli fannin mustazraf*, Beirut: Manshûrât Dâr Maktabat al-Hayât, 1992, vol. I, p. 379.

[12] In this respect, it may be interesting to compare the crossed-out text in fol. 236b with its transcription (fols. 250b–251a) (poem no. 35).

[13] See Ibn al-Bakkâ' al-Balkhî (d.1040/1630), *The Ghawânî al-Ashwâq fî Ma'ânî al-Ushshâsq: A Treatise on the Concept of Love in Classical and Medieval Arabic Heritage*, ed., George J. Kanazi (Codices Arabici Antiqui, 9), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008, pp. 5–7.

[14] See Ibn Ishâq al-Nadîm (d.380/990), *Fihrist*, ed. Ridâ Tajaddud, Teheran, 1971, p. 365.

[15] See Ibn Shâkir al-Kutubî (d.764/1363), *Fawât Wafayât*, ed., Ihsân 'Abbâs, Beirut: Dâr Şâdir, 1973, vol. II, p. 155.

[16] In C Sûl's father is called "al-Muhadhdhab" whereas in the other versions his name is "al-Khattâf" (*K* and *I*) or "Khattâb" (*L*). However, al-Sûl is the son of the elder in all the versions.

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