

الشُّعْرُ



الشِّعْرُ

Poetry

مَتَى يَبْلُغُ الْبُنْيَانُ يَوْمًا كَمَالَهُ
إِذَا كُنْتَ تَبْنِيهِ وَغَيْرِكَ يَهْدِمُ

When will an edifice
Attain its completion
If you are building it
While someone else
Is pulling it down?



شَرْحُ الْمُفْرَدَاتِ

بُنْيَانٌ building, structure.

كَمَلَّ كُمُولًا (a-u), to be complete.

كَمَالٌ completion. This is اسْمُ الْمَصْدَرِ.

هَدَمَ هَدْمًا (a-i), to pull down a building.

بَلَغَ بُلُوغًا (a-u), to reach.

* * *

إيضاحات نحوية

مَتَى يَبْلُغُ الْبُنْيَانُ يَوْمًا كَمَالَهُ

الْبُنْيَانُ is فاعِل of the verb يَبْلُغُ.

يَوْمًا is مفعول فيه.

كَمَالَهُ is مفعول به and it is مُضَاف.

... وَغَيْرُكَ يَهْدِمُ

وَغَيْرُكَ The *waaw* is وَاُو الْحَالِ.

غَيْرُكَ is مُبْتَدَأ.

يَهْدِمُ And the sentence following the *mubtada'* is its خَبَر, and therefore it is فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ.

الشعر

Poetry

وَمَا أَكْثَرَ الْإِخْوَانَ حِينَ تَعُدُّهُمْ
وَلَكِنَّهُمْ فِي النَّائِبَاتِ قَلِيلٌ

(الإمام الشافعي - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)

How numerous friends are
When you count them,
But in times of adversity
And calamity
They are few.



شَرْحُ الْمَفْرَدَاتِ

The plural **إِخْوَانٍ** is mostly used to mean friends whereas **إِخْوَةٌ** is used to mean brothers.

النَّائِبَةُ, misfortune, calamity, adversity,

pl. **نَوَائِبُ** and **نَائِبَاتٌ**.

* * *

إيضاحاتٌ نحويَّةٌ

مَا أَكْثَرَ الإِخْوَانَ

مَا أَكْثَرَ is فِعْلُ التَّعَجُّبِ .

الإِخْوَانَ is its مَفْعُولٌ بِهِ .

مَا أَكْثَرَ The *hamzah* in the فِعْلُ التَّعَجُّبِ is هَمْزَةُ التَّعْدِيَةِ .

So أَكْثَرَ means, 'to make something numerous'.

أَجْمَلَ means, 'to make something beautiful'.

مَا As for مَا, grammarians differ as to what type of مَا it is, and it is best to adopt the opinion of those who hold that it is interrogative.

So the original meaning of :

مَا أَجْمَلَ النُّجُومَ! is:

'What has made the stars so beautiful?'

And this مَا is the مُبْتَدَأُ.

And the verbal sentence following it
(أَجْمَلَ النُّجُومَ), is its خَبَرٌ.

أَكْثَرَ الْإِخْوَانَ

So the verbal sentence is خَبَرٌ.

حِينَ تَعُدُّهُمْ

حِينَ is مَفْعُولٌ فِيهِ.

تَعُدُّهُمْ

And the sentence تَعُدُّهُمْ is *muDaaf ilayhi*,
and so it is فِي مَحَلِّ جَرٍّ.

وَلَكِنَّهُمْ فِي النَّائِبَاتِ قَلِيلٌ

قَلِيلٌ

It is قَلِيلٌ with *tanwiin*, but in poetry the *tanwiin* of the final noun may be omitted.

On the contrary, a diptote may receive *tanwiin*. And this is done for reasons of prosody.



الشعرُ

Poetry

أَعَزُّ مَكَانٍ فِي الدُّنْيَا سَرَجُ سَابِحٍ
وَأَخَيْرُ جَلِيسٍ فِي الزَّمَانِ كِتَابُ

(الْمُتَنَّبِيُّ)

The most honoured place in the world
Is the saddle of a galloping steed,
And the best companion to sit with
Is a book.



شَرْحُ الْمَفْرَدَاتِ

عَزِيزٌ, respected, honourable.

أَعَزُّ is the اسْمُ التَّفْضِيلِ.

دُنَا (with تَنْوِينٌ) is the plural of دُنِيَا .

السَّرَجُ, saddle, *pl* سُرُوجٌ .

أَسْرَجَ الْفَرَسَ إِسْرَاجًا (iv), to saddle a horse.

سَبَحَ سَبَاحَةً (a-a), to swim.

سَبَحَ الْفَرَسُ, to gallop.

سَابِحٌ, a galloping steed.

إيضاحات نحوية

أَعَزُّ مَكَانٍ فِي الدُّنْيَا

The plural of فَعْلَى (feminine of أَفْعَلُ) is فَعْلٌ as :

كُبْرٌ pl. of كُبْرَى as in the following *ayah*

﴿إِنَّهَا لِأَحَدَى الْكُبْرَى﴾

[المُدَّثَّرُ 35]

It is indeed one of the greatest (signs).

عُلَى pl. of عُلْيَا as in the following *ayah* :

﴿فَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَى﴾

[طه 75]

For those are the most exalted degrees.

دُنْيَا pl. of دُنْيَا.

وَخَيْرُ جَلِيسٍ

جَلِيسٍ

'a companion who sits with you',
pl جُلَسَاءُ .

Some nouns on the pattern of فَعِيلٌ signify companionship, e.g.:

أَكِيلٌ, a companion in eating.

شَرِيبٌ, a companion in drinking.

ضَجِيعٌ, a bedfellow.

Note this expression:

بِئْسَ الضَّجِيعُ الْجُوعُ

What an evil bedfellow hunger is!

About the Couplet



Abu l-Tayyib al-Mutanabbii (915–965 CE) was one of the greatest poets of Arabic.

In this couplet he extols the qualities of a horseman as a chivalrous warrior.

Admin.'s note : For a related lesson, please see Questions & Answers:

Q 37: 'The Word *ad-dunaa* with Rules of *Sarf*'

الْمَنَايَا رَصَدٌ

(1)

طَافَ يَبْغِي نَجْوَةً
مِنْ هَلَكَ فَهَلَكُ

(2)

وَالْمَنَايَا رَصَدٌ
لَلْفَتَى حَيْثُ سَلَكَ

(3)

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ حَسَنٍ
لَفَتَى لَمْ يَكُ لَكَ

(4)

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ
حِينَ تَلْقَى أَجَلَكَ

(5)

طَالَمَا قَدْ نَلْتِ فِي
غَيْرِ كَدٍّ أَمَلِكِ

(6)

إِنَّ أَمْرًا فَادِحًا
عَنْ جَوَابِي شَعَلِكِ

(7)

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي سَاعَةً
صَبْرَهُ عَنْكَ مَلِكِ

(8)

لَيْتَ نَفْسِي قُدِّمَتْ
لِلْمَنَائِيَا بِدَلِّكَ

* * *

(1)

طَافَ يَبْغِي نَجْوَةً
مِنْ هَلَكَ فَهَلَكُ

He travelled around seeking a place of safety
but met with his death.

(2)

وَالْمَنَائِيَا رَصَدُ
لِلْفَتَى حَيْثُ سَلَكَ

The agents of death are lying in ambush
waiting for the young man wherever he goes.

(3)

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ حَسَنٍ
لَفَتِي لَمْ يَكُ لَكَ

What excellent qualities found
in a young man were not yours?

(4)

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ
حِينَ تَلْقَى أَجَلَكَ

Every thing perishes when you meet
your appointed time.

(5)

طَالَمَا قَدْ نَلْتِ فِي
غَيْرِ كَدٍّ أَمَلَكِ

On many an occasion you achieved what you
hoped to achieve without much ado.

(6)

إِنَّ أَمْرًا فَادِحًا
عَنْ جَوَابِي شَغَلَكَ

A grave matter seems to have engaged you
and prevented you from replying to me.

(7)

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي سَاعَةً
صَبْرَهُ عَنْكَ مَلَكٌ

How I wish my heart could for a moment
patiently bear your loss.

(8)

لَيْتَ نَفْسِي قُدِّمَتْ
لِلْمَنَايَا بِدَلِّكَ

How I wish my life were presented to death
instead of you.

شَرْحُ الْمُفْرَدَاتِ

- طَافَ طَوَافًا (a-u), to go round, to travel around.

Note that going round the *Ka'bah* in *Hajj* and *'umrah* is called الطَّوَّافُ.

- بَغِيَ بَغْيًا (a-i), to seek, to seek to attain.

Note that in Sa'uudi Arabian dialect 'What do you want?' is: أَيَشُ تَبْغِي؟ .

Note that the two words أَيُّ شَيْءٍ have been telescoped into أَيَشُ.

- نَجَوَةٌ, an elevated place where one takes refuge to escape flood and other dangers.
- هَلَكَ هَلَاكًا (a-i), to perish, to die.
- الْمَنِيَّةُ, death, *pl.* مَنَايَا.
- رَصَدَ رَصْدًا (a-u), to watch, to observe, to lie in wait.

- The **اسْمُ الْفَاعِلِ** is **رَاصِدٌ** (one who lies in wait), and its plural is **رَاصِدٌ** like **خَدَمٌ** plural of **خَادِمٌ**.

But **رَاصِدٌ** is used both as singular and plural.

The word occurs in the Glorious Qur'aan. See Q72:9, 27. See also Q9:5,107.

- **الْمَرْصَدُ**, astronomical observatory.
- **الْمَرْصَادُ**, ambush.

Allaah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** says in surat al-Fajr:

[الفجر 14] **﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمُرْصَادِ﴾**

Your Lord is indeed ever on the watch.

And in surat al-Naba' He says:

[النبا 21] **﴿إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا﴾**

Hell shall indeed be an ambush.

- سَلَكَ سُلُوكًا (a-u), to follow (a path), to travel.
- آجَالٌ, appointed time, *pl* أَجَالٌ.
- لَقِيَ لِقَاءً (i-a), to meet.
- طَالَمَا, often, many a time.

It is the verb طَالَ with مَا الْكَافَّةُ which prevents it from seeking a فَاعِلٌ.

- نَالَ نَيْلًا وَمَنَالًا (i-a), to obtain, to attain, to achieve.
- أَمَلَ أَمَلًا (a-u), to hope.
- كَدَّ يَكْدُ كَدًّا (a-u), to work hard, to toil.
- أَمْرٌ فَادِحٌ, a grave and serious matter.
- شَغَلَ شُغْلًا (a-a), to occupy, to preoccupy, to engage.

Note the following expressions:

شَغَلَنِي الْإِخْتِبَارُ أُسْبُوعَيْنِ.

The examination kept me occupied (busy) for two weeks.

شَغَلْتَنَا عَنْكَ شَوَاغِلٌ .

Many problems occupied our attention, and kept us away from you.

Speaking about the Bedouins who absented themselves from the Battle of the Trench, Allaah سبحانه وتعالى says:

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا ﴿١١﴾

فَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لَنَا يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ... ﴿١١﴾

[الفتح (48) 11]

Those of the Bedouins who lagged behind will tell you, 'Our possessions and our families kept us busy, so ask forgiveness for us.' They speak with their tongues what is not in their hearts...

- صَبْرًا (a-i), to have patience, to endure grief patiently.
- مَلِكًا مَلِكًا، وَمُلْكًا (a-i), to possess.
- قَدَّمَ تَقْدِيمًا (ii), to present.

إيضاحات نحوية

(1)

طَافَ يَبْغِي نَجْوَةً
مِنْ هَلَاكِ فَهَلَكٍ

طَافَ | The **ضَمِيرٌ مُسْتَتِرٌ** in the verb **طَافَ** refers to her son, **السُّلَيْكُ** who was killed while on a journey.

طَافَ يَبْغِي نَجْوَةً

يَبْغِي | Here the verbal sentence **يَبْغِي** is **حَالٌ**, and so it is **فِي مَحَلِّ نَصْبٍ**.

نَجْوَةً | is **مَفْعُولٌ بِهِ** of the verb **يَبْغِي**.

مِنْ هَلَاكِ فَهَلَكٍ

فَهَلَكٍ | is for **فَهَلَكٍ**. The vowel of the last letter in every second hemistich has been omitted for reasons of prosody.

(2)

وَالْمَنَائِبَا رَصَدُ
لَلْفَتَى حَيْثُ سَلَكَ

حَيْثُ The word حَيْثُ is *Zarf makaan*.

It is مَبْنِيٌّ عَلَى الضَّمِّ فِي مَحَلِّ نَصْبٍ.

سَلَكَ The sentence is *muDaaf ilayhi*, and so it is فِي مَحَلِّ جَرٍّ.

(3)

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ حَسَنٍ
لَفَتَى لَمْ يَكُ لَكَ

أَيُّ Here أَيُّ is مُبْتَدَأٌ and it is مُضَافٌ.

شَيْءٍ is مُضَافٌ إِلَيْهِ .

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ حَسَنٍ لِفَتَى...

حَسَنٍ لِفَتَى and the *shibh jumlah* لِفَتَى are both نَعْتٌ of شَيْءٍ.

أَيُّ شَيْءٍ... لَمْ يَكُ لَكَ

لَمْ يَكُ لَكَ The verbal sentence is the خَبَرٌ of أَيُّ.

لَمْ يَكُ

Note that the نُونٌ of كَانَ may be omitted in the following four *majzuum* forms:

يَكُ → يَكُنْ

تَكُ → تَكُنْ

أَكُ → أَكُنْ

نَكُ → نَكُنْ

This omission is optional.

Here is an example of this omission in the
Glorious Qur'aan:

﴿قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ﴾

﴿وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا﴾ [مریم (19), 20]

She (Maryam عَلَيْهِهَا السَّلَامُ) said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?'

(4)

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ
حِينَ تَلْقَى أَجَلَكَ

حِينَ is ظَرْفُ زَمَانٍ.

تَلْقَى أَجَلَكَ

The sentence is *muDaaf ilayhi*, and therefore,
في مَحَلِّ جَرٍّ.

أَجَلَكَ

is مَفْعُولٌ بِهِ of تَلْقَى.

(6)

إِنَّ أَمْرًا فَادِحًا
عَنْ جَوَابِي شَغَلَكَ

The normal sequence of words is as follows:

إِنَّ أَمْرًا فَادِحًا شَغَلَكَ عَنْ جَوَابِي.

(7)

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي سَاعَةً
صَبْرَهُ عَنْكَ مَلَكٌ

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي

لَيْتَ is a sister of إِنَّ denoting التَّمَنِّي which is a wish to attain what is either impossible or unlikely, e.g.:

لَيْتَنِي طِفْلٌ.

How I wish I were a child. (impossible)

قالَ الْفَقِيرُ : لَيْتَنِي غَنِيٌّ.

The poor man said, 'How I wish I were rich.' (unlikely)

See [Madinah Book 3, lesson 21](#).

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي سَاعَةً صَبْرَهُ عَنْكَ مَلِكٌ

The normal sequence of words is :

لَيْتَ قَلْبِي مَلِكٌ صَبْرَهُ عَنْكَ سَاعَةً.

Here **قَلْبِي** (ي) is **اسْمُ لَيْتَ**.

مَلِكٌ The verbal sentence is **خَبَرُ لَيْتَ**.

صَبْرَهُ (ه) The word **صَبْرَ** is the **مَفْعُولٌ بِهِ** of **مَلِكٌ**.

سَاعَةً And **سَاعَةً** (for a moment) is its **مَفْعُولٌ فِيهِ**.

◆ About the Elegy

This elegy (الرثاء) is by the pre-Islamic poetess al-Sulakah (السُّلَكَةُ) who mourns the death of her son al-Sulayk (السُّلَيْكُ).

This Sulayk belonged to a group of vagabond poets known as الصَّعَالِيكُ (singular, صُعْلُوكٌ).



الشعرُ

Poetry

قَدْ يُدْرِكُ الشَّرْفَ الْفَتَى وَرَدَاؤُهُ
خَلَقٌ، وَجَيْبُ قَمِيصِهِ مَرْقُوعٌ

(ابنُ هَرَمَةَ)

A young man may achieve
Pre-eminence in life
Even though his cloak
May be in tatters,
And the bosom opening
Of his shirt
May have on it patches.



شَرْحُ الْمُفْرَدَاتِ

- أَذْرَكَ إِذْرَاكًا (iv), to reach, to attain.
- رِدَاءٌ is an outer garment like a cloak or a robe.

Its plural is أَرْدِيَةٌ.

- خَلَقَ الثَّوْبُ خُلُوقَةً (u-u), to become old and worn out.

خَلَقَ, worn out.

- جَيْبٌ in modern Arabic means 'a pocket'. But in classical Arabic it means 'bosom opening'. In the Glorious Qur'aan it is used in this sense:

﴿وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ﴾

(النمل 12)

Thrust your hand in the **bosom opening** of your robe and it will come forth shining but unhurt.

- رَقَعَ الثَّوْبَ رَقْعًا (a-a), to mend a dress with a patch.

إيضاحات نحوية

قَدْ يُدْرِكُ الشَّرْفَ الْفَتَى

قَدْ used with the مُضَارِع signifies:

a) الشَّكُّ وَالِاحْتِمَالُ : Doubt or possibility, e.g.:

قَدْ يَنْزِلُ الْمَطْرُ الْيَوْمَ

It **might** rain today.

b) التَّقْلِيلُ : rarity or paucity, e.g.:

قَدْ يَنْجَحُ الطَّالِبُ الْكَسْلَانُ

A lazy student **may sometimes** pass.

التَّقْلِيلُ is the meaning of *qad* in the couplet we are studying:

قَدْ يُدْرِكُ الشَّرْفَ الْفَتَى

A young man **may** achieve
Pre-eminence in life

قَدْ يُدْرِكُ الشَّرْفَ الْفَتَى

الشَّرْفَ The word الشَّرْفَ is the *maf'uul bihi* of the verb يُدْرِكُ

الْفَتَى is its *faa'il*, so it is *marfuu*", but its *عَلَامَةٌ* الرَّفْعِ is *مُقَدَّرَةٌ* (latent) because it is *اسْم* مَقْصُور (a *maqSuur* noun).

... وَرِدَاؤُهُ خَلَقَ،

وَرِدَاؤُهُ The *waaw* is وَاَوُ الْحَالِ.

... وَجَيْبُ قَمِيصِهِ مَرْقُوعٌ

وَجَيْبُ قَمِيصِهِ And here the *waaw* is وَاَوُ الْعَطْفِ .

About the Poet



أَبْنُ هَرْمَةَ lived in Madinah.

He was born in 70 AH and died after 150 AH.

Linguists regard him as the last poet in terms of linguistic purity and correctness.



نص شعري

Poetry text



في مدخل الحمراء

This beautiful poem is by the Syrian poet Nizaar Qabbaani (1923-1998). In this poem the poet describes his real - or imaginary - visit to al-Hamraa', and through his conversation with his Spanish guide, he tries to muse on the tragic history of Muslim Spain.

From an Islaamic point of view, Nizaar's poems have many objectionable materials. But fortunately, this poem does not have any such material.

I am presenting the poem with its English translation.

In the light of the readers' comments and questions, I shall write the lexical and grammatical notes

إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ

abdur rahim



فِي مَدْخَلِ الْحَمْرَاءِ

فِي مَدْخَلِ الْحَمْرَاءِ كَانَ لِقَاؤُنَا
مَا أَطْيَبَ اللَّقْيَا بِلا مِيعَادِي

*At the entrance of al-Hamraa was our meeting.
How sweet is a meeting without an appointment!*

هَلْ أَنْتِ إِسْبَانِيَّةٌ؟ سَاءَلْتُهَا
قَالَتْ: وَفِي غَرْنَاطَةَ مِيلَادِي

*'Are you Spanish?', I asked her.
'Yes', she said, 'And in Granada was my birth.'*

غَرْنَاطَةَ! وَصَحَتْ قُرُونٌ سَبْعَةٌ
فِي تَيْنِكَ الْعَيْنَيْنِ... بَعْدَ رُقَادِي

Granada!

*Seven centuries woke up in those eyes
after a long sleep.*

وَأُمِّيَّةٌ .. رَايَاتُهَا مَرْفُوعَةٌ
وَجِيَادُهَا مَوْصُولَةٌ بِجِيَادِي

*And the Omayyads!
Their flags flying high,
and their steeds closely following one another.*

مَا أَغْرَبَ التَّارِيخَ .. كَيْفَ أَعَادَنِي
لِحَفِيدَةٍ سَمْرَاءَ .. مِنْ أَحْفَادِي

*How strange is History!
How it brought me back (to meet)
a brown skinned granddaughter
among my grandchildren.*

وَجَهَ دِمَشْقِي .. رَأَيْتُ خِلَالَهُ
أَجْفَانَ بَلْقِيسٍ .. وَجِيدَ سُعَادِي

*A damascene face.
In it, I could catch a glimpse
of the eyelids of a Bilqiis,
and the neck of a Su'aad!*

ورَأَيْتُ مَنْزِلَنَا الْقَدِيمَ .. وَحُجْرَةً
كَانَتْ بِهَا أُمِّي تَمُدُّ وَسَادِي

*I could see our ancient house
and a room where my mother
used to stretch out my pillow.*

وَدِمَشْقُ .. أَيْنَ تَكُونُ؟ قُلْتُ : تَرَيْنَهَا
فِي شَعْرِكَ الْمُنْسَابِ نَهْرٍ سَوَادِي

'Damascus? Where could it be?' (she asked.)

*'You could see it in your long flowing hair
- a river of darkness', I said.*

فِي وَجْهِكَ الْعَرَبِيِّ، فِي الشَّعْرِ الَّذِي
مَا زَالَ مُخْتَزِنًا شُمُوسَ بِلَادِي

*'In your Arabian face,
in your mouth (and teeth)
Which have preserved to this day
the suns of my land.'*

فِي طِيبِ «جَنَّاتِ الْعَرِيفِ» وَمَائِهَا
فِي الْفُلِّ ، فِي الرَّيْحَانِ ، فِي الْكَبَّادِي

' *In the perfumes of Jannat al-"arif (Generalife)*

And in its water

- In the jasmine,

In the sweet basil,

In the citrus plants.

سَارَتْ مَعِي وَالشَّعْرُ يَلْهَثُ خَلْفَهَا
كَسَنَابِلِ تُرِكَتْ بِغَيْرِ حَصَادِي

*She walked with me with her tresses panting
And gasping behind her like the ears of corn
left unharvested.*

يَتَأَلَّقُ الْقُرْطُ الطَّوِيلُ بِجِيدِهَا
مِثْلَ الشُّمُوعِ بَلِيلَةَ الْمِيلَادِي

*Her long earring shining along her neck
Like the candle lights on the Christmas eve.*

وَمَشَيْتُ مِثْلَ الطِّفْلِ خَلْفَ دَلِيلَتِي
وَوَرَائِي التَّارِيخُ .. كَوْمٌ رَمَادِي

*I walked like a child behind my guide;
And behind me History - a heap of ashes.*

الزَّخْرَفَاتُ أَكَادُ أَسْمَعُ نَبْضَهَا
وَالزَّرَكَشَاتُ عَلَى السُّقُوفِ تُنَادِي

*I could almost hear the pulse
of the decorative designs,
And the embroidery at the ceiling
calling (me).*

قَالَتْ: هُنَا **الْحَمْرَاءُ** زَهْوٌ جُدُودِنَا
فَأَقْرَأْ عَلَى جُدْرَانِهَا أَمْجَادِي

*'Here is the Alhambra,
a pride of my forefathers', she said.
'Read on its walls my glories.'*

أَمْجَادُهَا! وَمَسَحْتُ جُرْحًا نَازِفًا
وَمَسَحْتُ جُرْحًا ثَانِيًا بِفُؤَادِي

'Her glories!' (I exclaimed)
wiping a bleeding wound,
and another in my heart.

يَا لَيْتَ وَارِثِي الْجَمِيلَةَ أَدْرَكَتْ
أَنَّ الَّذِينَ عَنْتَهُمْ أَجْدَادِي

How I wish my pretty heiress
knew that those whom she meant
are really my forefathers.

عَانَقْتُ فِيهَا عِنْدَمَا وَدَّعْتُهَا
رَجُلًا يُسَمَّى «طَارِقَ بَنِ زِيَادِي»

While bidding her farewell,
I embraced in her person
a man called Taariq ibn Ziyaad.

نزار قباني

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

العروض

PROSODY



What is Prosody?

As we are studying a **قصيدة** following the classical pattern, I would like to introduce my readers to Arabic prosody which is the science dealing with the patterns of sounds and rhythms in poetry.

In Arabic it is called **العروض**.

Syllables

In Arabic prosody, the meter is based on syllables.

A syllable is part of a word.

Syllables in Arabic are of two kinds:

1. A Short Syllable

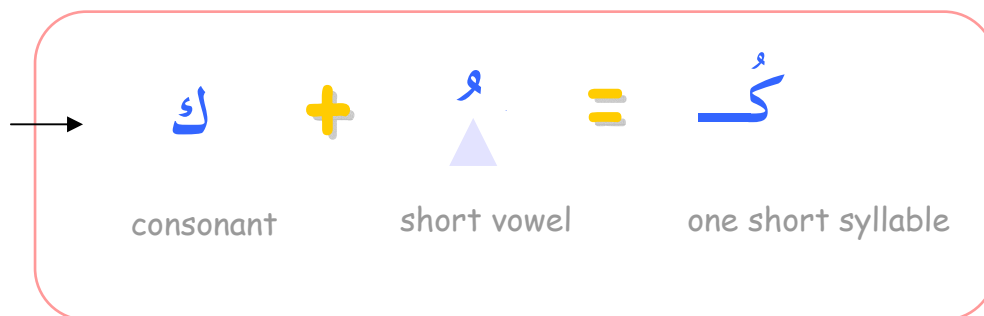
A short syllable is made up of a consonant followed by a short vowel,

e.g., كُتِبَ

which has three short syllables:

كُ تِبَ

ku ti ba



2. A Long Syllable

A long syllable has one of the two following patterns:

- A consonant followed by a long vowel,

e.g.: زَارُونِي

which has three long syllables:

زَا رُونِي

zaa ruu nii

ا و ي

long vowels

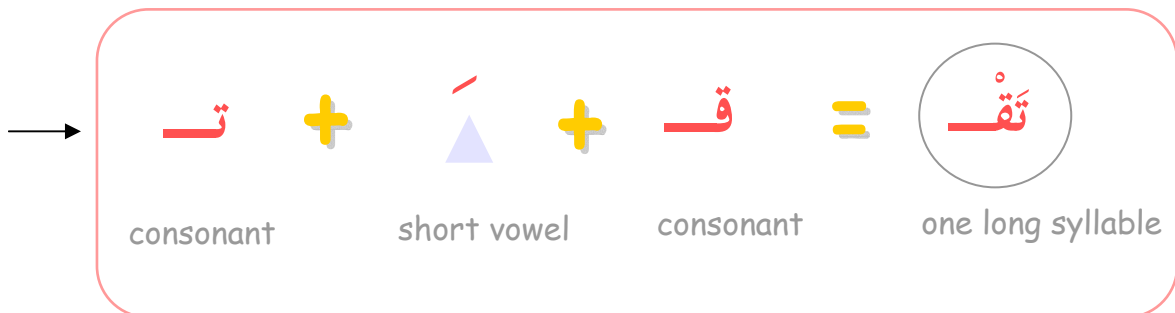
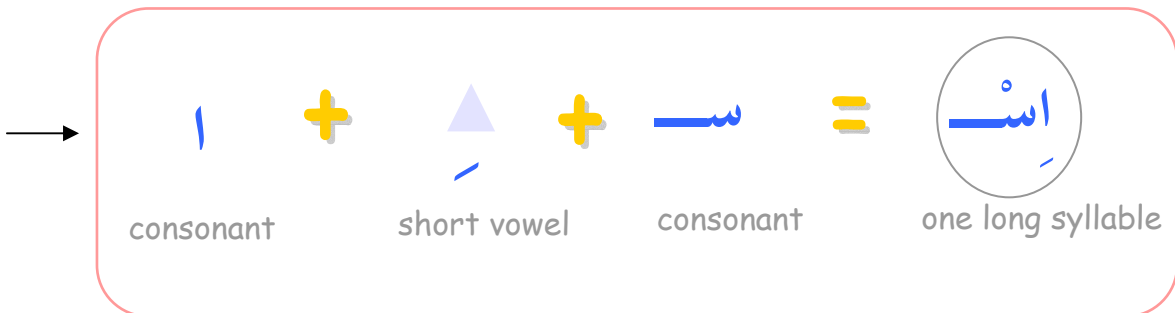
- A consonant followed by a short vowel followed by a consonant,

e.g.: اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ

which has four long syllables:

اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ

'is taq bal tum



I will use number **1** to represent a short syllable and number **2** to represent a long one.

NOTE that in determining the syllables, we take into consideration only letters which are actually pronounced discarding letters which are written but not pronounced.

Conversely, we take into consideration letters which are not written, but pronounced.

So هَذَا has two long syllables (22).

هَ ا ذَا

2 2 ←

1: short syllable

2: long syllable

And ذَلِكَ has three syllables the first of which is long (211).

ذَا لِكَ

2 1 1 ←

Here is an example of dividing a sentence into its syllables:

﴿لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ﴾ الآية

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَ لَمْ يُولَدْ

2 2 2 1 2 1 2 ←

1: short syllable

2: long syllable

(= 2121222).

Sounds to Represent Syllables

Phonetically, we shall adopt *da* to represent a short syllable, and *dan* to represent a long one.

So:

كِتَابٌ

ki - taa - bun equals:

da dan dan.

da : short syllable

dan : long syllable

مُسْلِمٌ

mus - li - mun equals:

dan da dan.

مُسْلِمُونَ

mus - li - muu - na equals:

dan da dan da.

A Meter **الْبَحْرُ**

Classical Arabic prosody has sixteen meters. Each one of these meters is call a **بَحْرٌ**.

Each **بَحْرٌ** arranges the short and long syllables in a particular pattern creating a particular type of symphony emanating from the arrangement of the syllables.

The *qaṣīdah* we are studying is in Baḥr al-kāmil (**بَحْرُ الْكَامِلِ**). It uses the following foot: **مُتَفَاعِلُنْ** six times in a couplet.

Now let us examine the pattern of this foot:

It consists of five syllables:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

– three **short** syllables, and two **long**:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

The following is the pattern:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

Da da dan da dan

= 1 1 2 1 2.

1 *da* : short syllable

2 *dan* : long syllable

Here are some English words which follow this pattern:

Philosophical, philological, dear come to me

(دِي كَمْ تُ مِي).

The following Arabic words also conform to this pattern:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا، وَكَأَنَّهُ، بِمَدِينَةٍ، فَسَيَكْتَفِي.

Variants In Feet

Now, the feet in Arabic prosody have variants.

A very frequent variant of:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

mu-ta-fā-'i-lun is:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

mut-fā-'i-lun,

i.e., the first two short syllables merge to become one long syllable.

So the foot changes from:

mu-ta-fā-'i-lun to *mus-taf-'i-lun*

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ ← مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ

i.e., from *da da dan da dan*

to *dan dan da dan*.

The following two English words represent the phonetic patterns of these two feet:

philosophical → *historical*.

Also:

dear come to me (دِي كَم ت مِي)

do come to me (دُو كَم ت مِي).

الضَّرْبُ

One last point. The last element of the second hemistich – known as الضَّرْبُ - mostly has a special form. Here in baḥr al-kāmil also the الضَّرْبُ has many special forms. The one used in this قَصِيدَة is:

mu-ta-fā-‘il, i.e., the final *-un* has been omitted resulting in:

mu-ta-fā-‘il = *da da dan dan* = 1122.

The variation mentioned before may also effect this element resulting in:

dan dan dan instead of *da da dan dan*.

1 *da* : short syllable

2 *dan* : long syllable

This *dan dan dan* corresponds to the English words:

historic, Is this good?

Here are the full elements of *baḥr al-kāmil*:

Line one:

da da dan da dan, da da dan da dan, da da dan da dan.

Line two:

da da dan da dan, da da dan da dan, da da dan dan.

In all these elements, the initial *da da* may become *dan*.

The following English words very closely represent *baḥr al-kāmil*:

Dear come to me, dear come to me, dear come to me.

Dear come to me, dear come to me, dear come, come.

Divisions of this قصيدة

Now we will divide the قصيدة according to the feet:

(1) فِي مَدْخَلِ الْحَمْرَاءِ كَانَ لِقَاؤُنَا

فِي مَدْخَلِ = dan dan da dan

حَمْرَاءِ كَا = dan dan da dan

نَ لِقَاؤُنَا = da da dan da dan

مَا أَطِيبَ اللَّقْيَا بِلا مِيعَادِي

مَا أَطِيبَ = dan dan da dan

لُقْيَا بِلا = dan dan da dan

مِيعَادِي = dan dan dan

(2) هَلْ أَنْتِ إِسْبَانِيَّةٌ؟ سَاءَلْتُهَا

هَلْ أَنْتِ إِسْبَانِيَّةٌ = dan dan da dan

سَاءَلْتُهَا = dan dan da dan

سَاءَلْتُهَا = dan dan da dan

قَالَتْ: وَفِي غَرْنَاطَةٍ مِيلَادِي

قَا لَتْ وَ فِي = dan dan da dan

غَرْ نَا طَ تَنْ = dan dan da dan

مِي لَآ دِي = dan dan dan

(3) غَرْنَاطَةُ! وَصَحَتْ قُرُونٌ سَبْعَةٌ

غَرْ نَا طَ تَنْ = dan dan da dan

وَ صَ حَتْ قُ رُ وَ = da da dan da dan

تَنْ سَبْعَ تَنْ = dan dan da dan

فِي تَيْنِكَ الْعَيْنَيْنِ... بَعْدَ رُقَادِي

فِي تَيْ نِ كَلْ = dan dan da dan

عَيْ نِ بَعْ = dan dan da dan

دَ رُ قَا دِي = da da dan dan

(4) وَأُمِّيَّةٌ .. رَايَاتُهَا مَرْفُوعَةٌ

وَأُمِّيَّةٌ = da da dan da dan

رَايَاتُهَا = dan dan da dan

مَرْفُوعَةٌ = dan dan da dan

وَجِيَادُهَا مَوْصُولَةٌ بِجِيَادِي

وَجِيَادُهَا = da da dan da dan

مَوْصُولَةٌ = dan dan da dan

بِجِيَادِي = da da dan dan

(5) مَا أَغْرَبَ التَّارِيخَ .. كَيْفَ أَعَادَنِي

مَا أَغْرَبَ = dan dan da dan

تَّارِيخَ كَيْفَ = dan dan da dan

فَأَعَادَنِي = da da dan da dan

لِحَفِيدَةِ سَمْرَاءَ .. مِنْ أَحْفَادِي

لِحَفِيدَةِ سَمْرَاءَ = da da dan da dan

مِنْ أَحْفَادِي = dan dan da dan

لِحَفِيدَةِ سَمْرَاءَ = dan dan dan

(6) وَجْهَ دِمَشْقِيَّ .. رَأَيْتُ خِلَالَهُ

وَجْهَ دِمَشْقِيَّ = dan dan da dan

رَأَيْتُ خِلَالَهُ = dan dan da dan

وَجْهَ دِمَشْقِيَّ = da da dan da dan

أَجْفَانَ بَلْقَيْسٍ .. وَجِيدَ سُعَادِي

أَجْفَانَ بَلْقَيْسٍ = dan dan da dan

وَجِيدَ سُعَادِي = dan dan da dan

أَجْفَانَ بَلْقَيْسٍ = da da dan dan

(7) وَرَأَيْتُ مَنْزِلَنَا الْقَدِيمَ .. وَحُجْرَةً

وَ رَأَيْتُ مَنْزِلَنَا = da da dan da dan

زِلَ نَلْ قَ دِي = da da dan da dan

مَ وَ حُجْرَةً = da da dan da dan

كَانَتْ بِهَا أُمِّي تَمُدُّ وَسَادِي

كَانَتْ بِهَا = dan dan da dan

أُمِّي تَمُدُّ = dan dan da dan

دُ وَسَادِي = da da dan dan

(8) وَدَمَشَقُ .. أَيْنَ تَكُونُ؟ قُلْتُ : تَرَيْنَهَا

وَ دَمَشَقُ أَيْنَ = da da dan da dan

نَ تَكُونُ قُلْتُ = da da dan da dan

تُ تَرَيْنَهَا = da da dan da dan

فِي شَعْرِكَ الْمُنْسَابِ نَهْرٍ سَوَادِي

فِي شَعْرِكَ = dan dan da dan

مَنْ سَابَ نَهْرٌ = dan dan da dan

رَسَ وَادِي = da da dan dan

(9) فِي وَجْهِكَ الْعَرَبِيِّ، فِي الشَّعْرِ الَّذِي

فِي وَجْهِكَ = dan dan da dan

عَرَبِيٌّ = da da dan da dan

ثَغْرٌ رِوَالٌ ذِي = dan dan da dan

مَا زَالَ مُخْتَزِنًا شُمُوسَ بِلَادِي

مَا زَالَ مُخْتَزِنًا = dan dan da dan

تَزِنُ شُمُوسٌ = da da dan da dan

سَبَّ لَادِي = da da dan dan

(10) فِي طَيْبِ «جَنَّاتِ الْعَرِيفِ» وَمَائِهَا

فِي طَيْبِ جَنَّاتِ الْعَرِيفِ = dan dan da dan
 نَائِلُ عَرِيْفِي = dan dan da dan
 فَوَمَاءِهَا = da da dan da dan

فِي الْفُلِّ، فِي الرَّيْحَانِ، فِي الْكَبَّادِي

فُلُ فُلِّ لِفِرِّ = dan dan da dan
 رِيْحَانِ فُلِّ = dan dan da dan
 كَبَّادِي = dan dan dan

(11) سَارَتْ مَعِيَ وَالشَّعْرُ يَلْهَثُ خَلْفَهَا

سَارَتْ مَعِيَ = dan dan da dan
 وَشَّعْرُ رَيْلٍ = dan dan da dan
 هَتْ خَلْفَهَا = da da dan da dan

كَسَنَابِلِ تُرِكَتْ بِغَيْرِ حَصَادِي

ك س نَاب لِن = da da dan da dan
 ت ر كَت ب غِي = da da dan da dan
 ر ح صَا دِي = da da dan dan

(12)

يَتَأَلَّقُ الْقُرْطُ الطَّوِيلُ بِجِيدِهَا

ي ت أَل ل قُل = da da dan da dan
 قُر طُ ط وِي = dan dan da dan
 ل ب جِي دِهَا = da da dan da dan

مِثْلَ الشُّمُوعِ بَلِيلَةَ الْمِيلَادِي

مِث لَش شُ مُو = dan dan da dan
 ع ب لِي ل تِل = da da dan da dan
 مِي لَآ دِي = dan dan dan

(13) وَمَشَيْتُ مِثْلَ الطِّفْلِ خَلْفَ دَلِيَّتِي

وَمَشَيْتُ مِثْلَ = da da dan da dan

لَطُّ طِفْلٍ لَخْلُ = dan dan da dan

فَدَلِيَّتِي = da da dan da dan

وَوَرَّائِي التَّارِيخُ .. كَوْمَ رَمَادِي

وَوَرَّائِي = da da dan da dan

تَارِيخُ كَوْمَ = dan dan da dan

مُرَمَادِي = da da dan dan

(14) الزَّخْرَفَاتُ أَكَادُ أَسْمَعُ نَبْضَهَا

أَزْخَرَفَاتُ = dan dan da dan

تُأَكَادُ أَسْمَعُ = da da dan da dan

مَنْعُ نَبْضِهَا = da da dan da dan

وَالزَّرَكَشَاتُ عَلَى السُّقُوفِ تُنَادِي

وَزْ زَرْ كَشَا = dan dan da dan

تُعَ لَسْ سُ قُوقُ = da da dan da dan

فِ تِ نَادِي = da da dan dan

(15) قَالَتْ: هُنَا الحُمُرَاءُ زَهُوْ جُدُودِنَا

قَالَتْ هُنَا = dan dan da dan

حَمَ رَاءُ زَهُ = dan dan da dan

وُجُ دُودِنَا = da da dan da dan

فَأَقْرَأُ عَلَى جُدْرَانِهَا أَمْجَادِي

فَأَقْرَأُ عَ لَاءُ = dan dan da dan

جُدْرَانِهَا = dan dan da dan

أَمْ جَادِي = dan dan dan

(16) أَمْجَادُهَا! وَمَسَحَتْ جُرْحًا نَازِفًا

أَمْ جَا دُهَا = dan dan da dan

وَمَ سَحَتْ جُرْ = da da dan da dan

حَنْ نَازِفَنْ = dan dan da dan

وَمَسَحَتْ جُرْحًا ثَانِيًا بِفُؤَادِي

وَمَ سَحَتْ جُرْ = da da dan da dan

حَنْ ثَانِ يَنْ = dan dan da dan

بِ فُؤَادِي = da da dan dan

(17) يَا لَيْتَ وَارِثِي الْجَمِيلَةَ أَذْرَكَتْ

يَا لَيْتَ وَآ = dan dan da dan

رِثَ تَلْجَمِي = da da dan da dan

لَاقَدْرَكَتْ = da da dan da dan

أَنَّ الَّذِينَ عَنْتَهُمْ أَجْدَادِي

أَنَّ نَلْ لَ ذِي = dan dan da dan
 نَ عَ نَتَ هُ مُو = da da dan da dan
 أَجْ دَا دِي = dan dan dan

(18) عَانَقْتُ فِيهَا عِنْدَمَا وَدَّعْتُهَا

عَانَقْتُ فِي = dan dan da dan
 هَا عِنْدَمَا = dan dan da dan
 وَدَّعْتُهَا = dan dan da dan

رَجُلًا يُسَمَّى «طَارِقَ بَنَ زِيَادِي»

رَجُلًا كُنِي سَمَّ = da da dan da dan
 مَا طَارِقُ = dan dan da dan
 نَ زِيَادِي = da da dan dan

Note

Please note that in Arabic poetry:

- a مَمْنُوعٌ مِنَ الصَّرْفِ can be used as a *maṣrūf* noun as in غَرْنَاطَةٌ (originally غَرْنَاطَةٌ).
- A short vowel at the end of the line may be lengthened for metrical purpose as in مِيعَادٍ pronounced as مِيعَادِي.

Readings of this قصيدة

Pls note that in YouTube if you write in Arabic في مدخل الحمراء, you get a number of videos which have readings of the *qaṣīdah*, one of them in Nizār's voice.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A

Pre-Islamic Poetic Couplet



This couplet is by the famous pre-Islamic poet

طَرْفَةُ بْنُ الْعَبْدِ

Speaking about his tribe's generosity, he says:

نَحْنُ فِي الْمَشْتَاةِ نَدْعُو الْجَفَلَى
لَا تَرَى الْآدِبَ فِينَا يَنْتَقِرُ

The desert Arabs have two types of inviting people to attend a banquet. They are:

1.

الْجَفَلَى

This is inviting *all* the members of the tribe or the community to participate in the public dinner.

2.

النَّقْرَى

This is inviting selected members of the tribe or the community.



Lexical and Grammatical Notes

The verb is: اُنْتَقَرَا اُنْتَقَارًا (viii), to invite selected members of the tribe or community to the banquet.

سَتَا يَشْتُو سَتُوا, to spend the winter.

And مَشْتَاةٌ is winter camp.

أَدَبَ اَدْبًا (a-i), to arrange for a banquet.

And the one who makes such an arrangement is: آدِبٌ.

The banquet is مَادِبَةٌ and مَادِبَةٌ (with the *dāl* having *dammah* or *fathah*).

جَفَلَى in نَدْعُو الْجَفَلَى is مَفْعُولٌ مُطْلَقٌ.

The *taqdīr* is:

نَدْعُو دَعْوَةَ الْجَفَلَى.

يَنْتَقِرُ is for يَنْتَقِرُ.

The final vowel has been dropped for prosodic reason.

Translation of the Couplet

نَحْنُ فِي الْمَشْتَاءِ نَدْعُو الْجَفَلَى

Even in the winter camp,

We invite all the members of the tribe

To participate in the banquet.

لَا تَرَى الْآدِبَ فِيْنَا يَنْتَقِرُ

You will not find any inviter amongst us

Inviting selected members of the tribe.

He mentions winter camp because winter season is marked by scarcity of food stuffs.

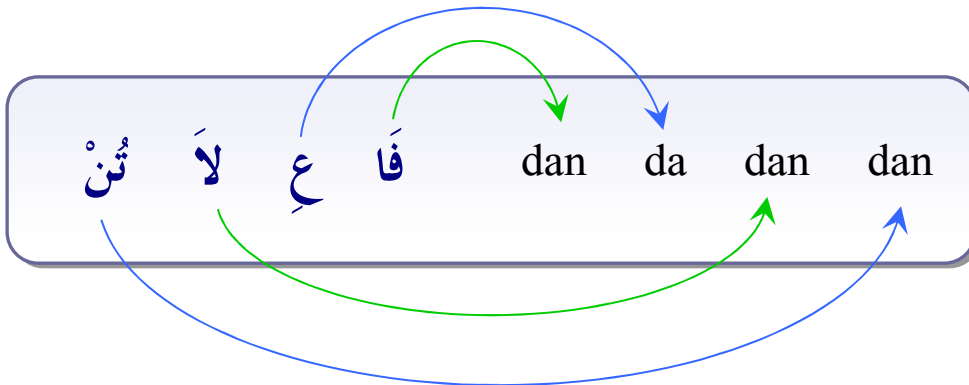
The *Bahr* of the Couplet

The *bahr* of this couplet is *bahr al-ramal* (بَحْرُ الرَّمْلِ).

It contains three feet which are:

فَاعِلَاتُنْ ١ فَاعِلَاتُنْ ٢ فَاعِلَاتُنْ ٣

١ فَاعِلَاتُنْ is phonetically: dan da dan dan:

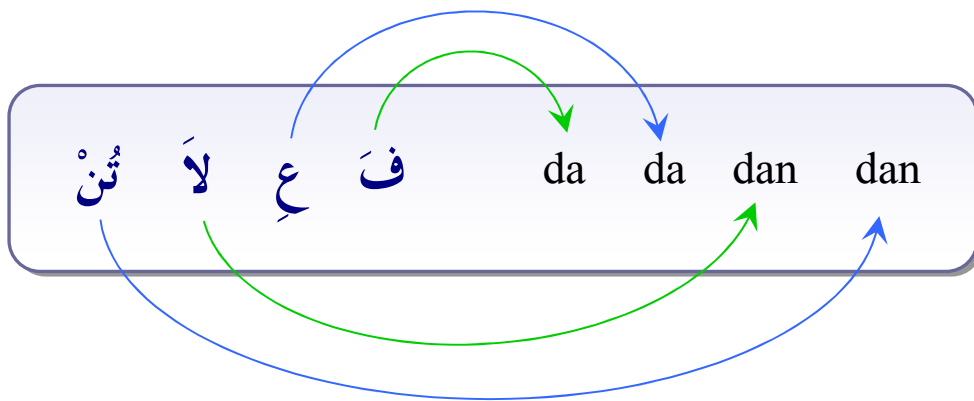


These syllables can be represented by the English sentence:

Come to London.

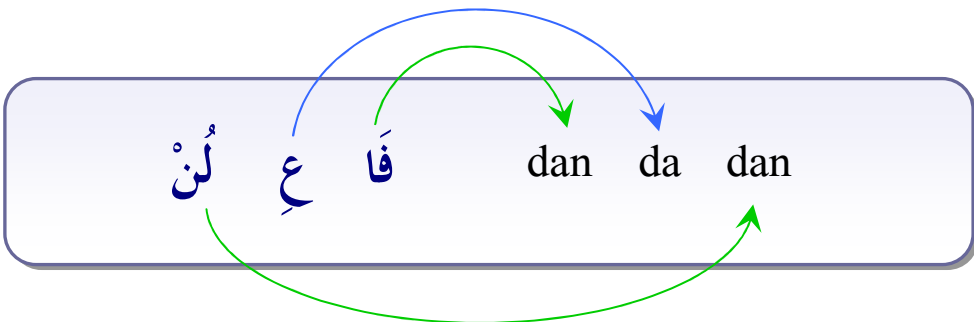
٢ فَاعِلَاتُنْ can be shortened to:

فَاعِلَاتُنْ, i.e.: da da dan dan:



These syllables can be represented by the English words:
any person.

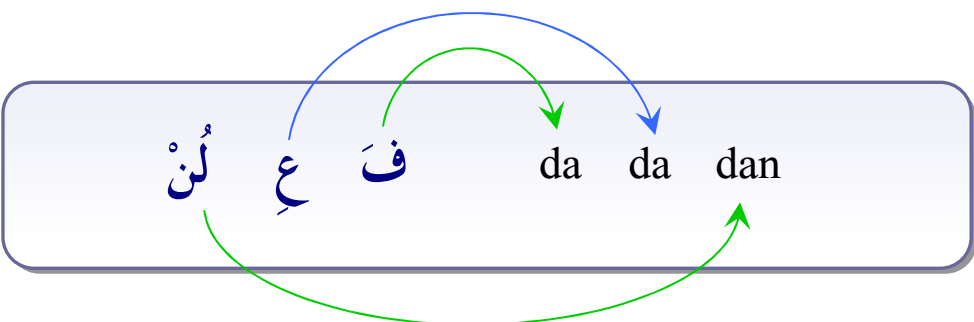
٣ فَاعِلُنْ is phonetically: dan da dan:



These syllables can be represented by the English sentence:
Come to me.

فَاعِلُنْ can be shortened to:

فَاعِلُنْ which is phonetically: da da dan:



These syllables can be represented by the English words:
any one.

Here is an anatomy of the couplet:

نَحْنُ فِي الْمَشْتَاةِ نَدْعُو الْجَفَلَى

نَحْ نُ فِلْ مَشْ : dan da dan dan = Come to London.

تَا ةِ نَدْ عُلْ : dan da dan dan = Come to London.

جَ فَ لَآ : da da dan = any one.

لَا تَرَى الْآدِبَ فِينَا يَنْتَقِرُ

لَا تَ رَلْ آ : dan da dan dan = Come to London.

دِ بَ فِي نَا : da da dan dan = any person.

يَنْ تَ قِرْ : dan da dan = come to me.


بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ


Three Couplets from pre-Islamic Poetry



Wisdom of Reading Pre-Islāmic Poetry

Pre-Islāmic poetry is mostly very difficult to understand. The difficulty lies in its unfamiliar diction. But we do find in them couplets which are easy.

Students of Arabic must familiarize themselves with some specimens of pre-Islāmic poetry because it represents the language which was prevalent at the time of the revelation of the Glorious Qur'ān. 

When ibn 'Abbās (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا) was asked regarding lexical and grammatical aspects of the Glorious Qur'ān, he would quote from pre-Islāmic poetry to prove his point. 

1. Couplets by الأَعْشَى

The following two couplets are by the great pre-Islāmic poet al-Aʿshā (الأَعْشَى). He died in 7 AH, but he did not accept Islām.

It was the convention of the pre-Islāmic poets to commence the *qaṣīdah* with a mention of the beloved. But this was only a convention, and mostly did not represent real life.

The following couplet is the beginning of his *qaṣīdah*:



وَدَّعْ هُرَيْرَةَ إِنَّ الرِّكْبَ مُرْتَحِلٌ
فَهَلْ تُطِيقُ وَدَاعاً أَيُّهَا الرَّجُلُ

Bid farewell to Hurayrah

For the caravan is about to set out.

But can you really say goodbye (to her), man?

Lexical and Grammatical Notes

هُرَيْرَةٌ is the name of the beloved.

(1) وَدَّعَ يُودِّعُ تَوَدِّعًا (ii), to bid goodbye, to say farewell.

Bāb فَعَّلَ has an *ism al-maṣḍar* on the pattern of فَعَالٌ, e.g.:

سَلَّمَ → سَلَامٌ

كَلَّمَ → كَلَامٌ

طَلَّقَ → طَلَاقٌ

وَدَّعَ → وِدَاعٌ

(Urdu speakers pronounce وِدَاعٌ with a *kasrah* which is wrong).

(2) رَكْبٌ, a group of people travelling together, a caravan.

رَكْبٌ is the plural of رَاكِبٌ (a rider).

It is on the pattern of فَعَّلَ. There are some other words also which have their plural on this pattern, e.g.:

صَحْبٌ plural of صَاحِبٌ (companion).

These words are part of اسمُ الْجَمْعِ which can be treated as singular or plural.

Note:

 ...إِنَّ الرَّكْبَ مُرْتَحِلٌ

where مُرْتَحِلٌ is masculine singular.

(3) رَحَلَ رَحِيلاً (a-a), to depart, to set out.

ارْتَحَلَ ارْتِحَالاً (viii) also has the same meaning.

رَحْلَةٌ means *journey*. This word occurs in the following *āyahs*:

 لِيَأْتِيَهُمْ قُرَيْشٌ ۖ إِيْلَافِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ .

In modern Arabic this word is used to mean 'flight' as in

رَقْمُ الرَّحْلَةِ 'flight number'.

أُلْغِيَتْ هَذِهِ الرَّحْلَةُ 'This flight has been cancelled'.




(4) أَطَاقَ الشَّيْءَ إِطَاقَةً (iv), to be able (to do).

طَاقَةٌ, strength (ability to do something).



2. Second Couplet by الأَعْشى

The following couplet is one of those in which the poet describes his beloved.


 كَأَنَّ مَشِيَّتَهَا مِنْ بَيْتِ جَارَتِهَا
 مَرُّ السَّحَابَةِ : لَا رَيْثٌ وَلَا عَجَلٌ

Her gait (while returning) from her neighbour's house

Is as if it is the passage of a piece of cloud:



Neither slow nor fast.


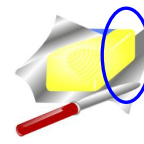
Lexical and Grammatical Notes

(1) **مَشِيَّةٌ** is **مَصْدَرُ الْهَيْئَةِ** which describes the mode of an action like **جَلْسَةٌ**, way of sitting.

(2) **سَحَابٌ** (cloud) is **اسْمُ الْجِنْسِ الْجَمْعِيِّ**, and a piece of cloud is **سَحَابَةٌ**.

Here are some more examples:

 ○ **جُبْنٌ** (cheese) → **جُبْنَةٌ** (a piece of cheese). 

 ○ **زُبْدٌ** (butter) → **زُبْدَةٌ** (a portion of butter). 

Note that in countable nouns, the addition of *tā' marbūṭah* to a **اسْمُ الْجِنْسِ الْجَمْعِيِّ** renders it singular,

e.g.: **تَمْرٌ** / **تَمْرَةٌ**,



and in uncountable nouns it signifies 'a piece of' or 'a portion of'.

(3) رَيْثٌ is the *maṣḍar* of رَاثَ يَرِيثُ, to be slow.

The form which is used more often is تَرِيثٌ (v).

(4) عَجَلَ يَعْجَلُ عَجَلًا، وَعَجَلَةٌ (i-a), to be in a hurry.

Here is a proverb in which both these words are used:

رُبَّ عَجَلَةٍ وَهَبَتْ رَيْثًا، i.e.:

Many a hasty step results in slow action.

It is like the English proverb: *Haste makes waste.*

Here is another proverb:

فِي التَّائِي السَّلَامَةُ وَفِي الْعَجَلَةِ النَّدَامَةُ.

There is safety in deliberation and regret in haste.

Here is an *āyah* with عَجَلَ :

﴿وَعَجَلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَى﴾. 

I have hastened to You, my Lord, that You might be well pleased.
(Q20:54).


(5) **مَشِيَّةٌ** is the *ism* of **كَأَنَّ**, and that is why it is *manṣūb*, and the *khabar* of **كَأَنَّ** is **مَرٌّ**.



3. Couplet by **لَبِيدٌ**

Here is a beautiful couplet by another pre-Islāmic poet **لَبِيدٌ** wherein the words **رَيْثٌ** and **عَجَلٌ** occur.

Labīd died in 41 AH after he became a Muslim:



إِنَّ تَقْوَى رَبِّنَا خَيْرُ نَفْلٍ
وَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ رَيْثِي وَالْعَجَلُ

Being conscience of our Lord is the best booty.

(This consciousness lies in the knowledge that) my actions
- whether slow or fast – take place only with Allāh's
permission.

Lexical and Grammatical Notes

نَفْلٌ, booty, spoils of war.

Its plural is أَنْفَالٌ which is the name of the 8th *sūrah*.



Baḥr of al-A‘shā's *Qaṣīdah*

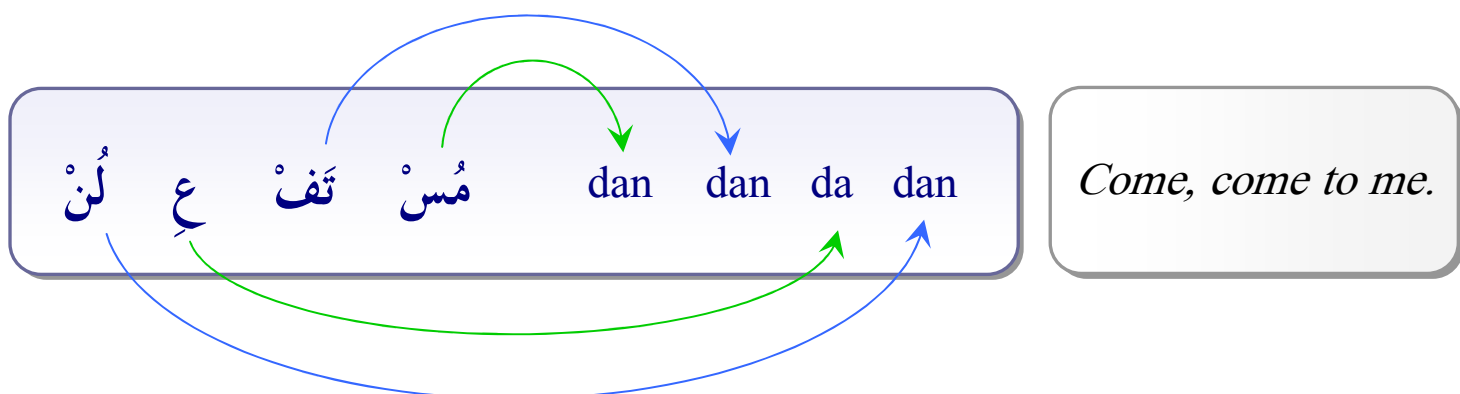
The *baḥr* of al-A‘shā's *qaṣīdah* is **الْبَسِيطُ**.

It has the following feet:

مُسْتَفْعَلُنْ ◊ فَاعِلُنْ ◊ مُسْتَفْعَلُنْ ◊ فَاعِلُنْ ◊ مُسْتَفْعَلُنْ ←

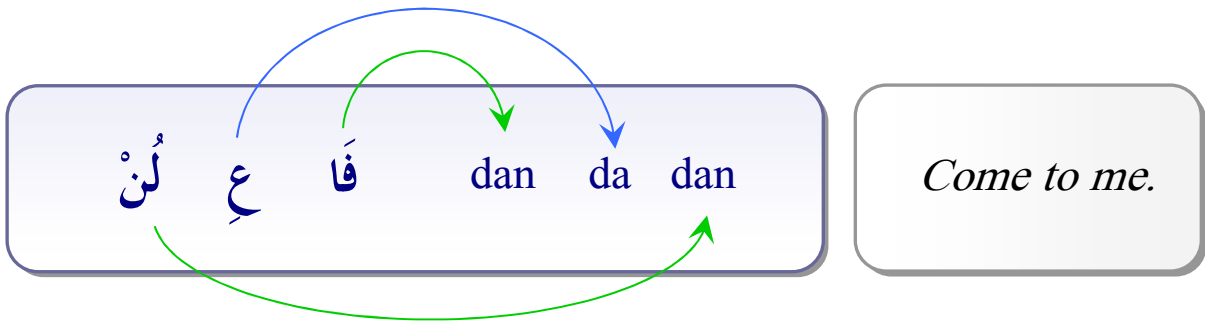
◊ مُسْتَفْعَلُنْ is phonetically: dan-dan-da-dan.

These syllables can be represented by the following English words: *Come, come to me*.



- ◆ **فَاعِلْنُ** is phonetically the same as above minus the initial *dan*.

So it is: dan-da-dan = *Come to me*.

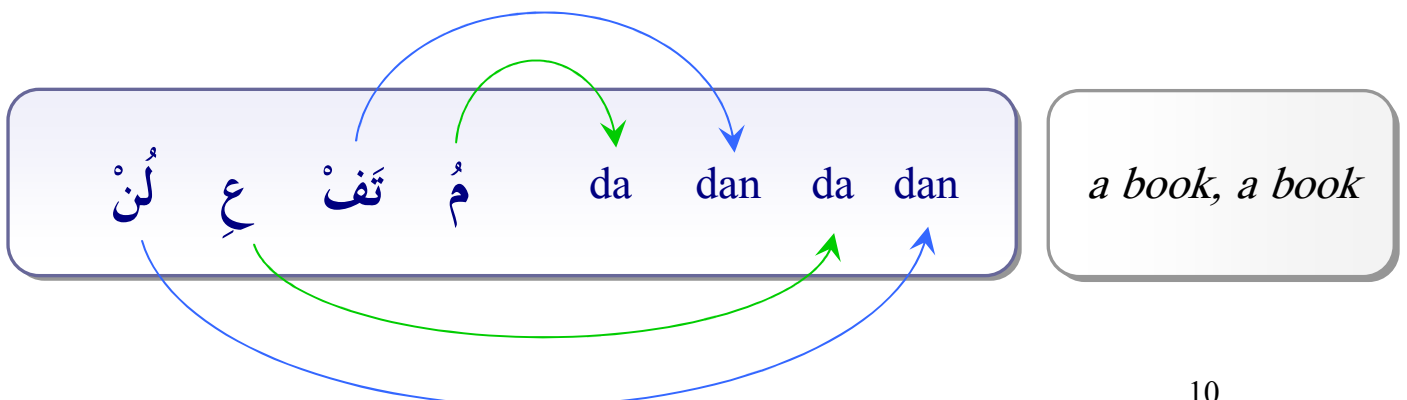


So, the phonetic content of this *baḥr* is:

Come, come to me, come to me; come, come to me, come to me.

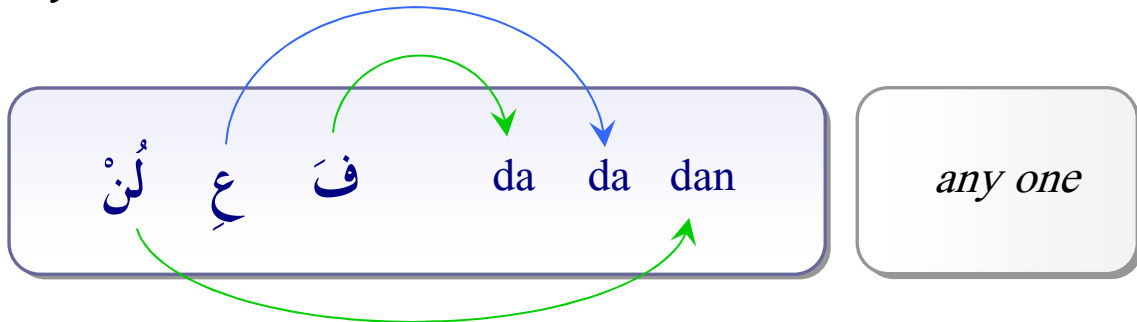
- ◆ **مُسْتَفْعِلْنُ** is shortened to **مُتَفْعِلْنُ** which is phonetically: da-dan-da-dan.

These syllables can be represented by the English words:
a book, a book.



- ◆ **فَاعِلُنْ** is shortened to **فَعِلُنْ** which is phonetically:
da-da-dan.

These syllables can be represented by the English word:
any one.



Anatomy of al-A'shā's *Qaṣīdah*

Here is an anatomy of al-A'shā's first couplet:

وَدَّعْ هُرَيْرَةَ إِنَّ الرِّكْبَ مُرْتَحِلٌ 

وَدَّ دَعِ هُ رَيِّ

dan-dan-da-dan = *Come, come to me.*

رَ ةَ اِنُّ

da-da-dan = *any one.*

نَرَكْ بَ مُرْ

dan-dan-da-dan = *Come, come to me.*

تَ حَ لُو

da-da-dan = *any one.*



فَهَلْ تُطِيقُ وَدَاعًا أَيُّهَا الرَّجُلُ

فَ هَلْ تَ طِي

da-dan-da-dan = *a book, a book.*

قُ وَ دَا

da-da-dan = *any one.*

عَنْ أَيِّ يُّ هَرْ

dan-dan-da-dan = *Come, come to me.*

رَ جُ لُو

da-da-dan = *any one.*



نَصُّ شِعْرِي

Poetry text

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ
إِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ السَّيْفَ أَمْضَى مِنَ الْعَصَا



Don't you think

That the value of the sword diminishes (is reduced)

If it is said

That a sword is sharper than a walking stick ?



Lexical & Grammatical Notes



أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ...

- نَقَصَ نَقْصًا، وَنُقِصَانًا (a-u), to diminish, to reduce; to be diminished, to be reduced.
- As you can see from the meaning that the verb is used both transitively, and intransitively.

In the Glorious Qur'aan it is used transitively as in the following *ayah*:

﴿وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ...﴾ 

And do not diminish the measure and the balance. (Q11:84).

- It may take two objects as in the following *ayah*:

﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُواكُمْ شَيْئًا﴾ 

Except those idolaters with whom you made a treaty, and they have not been deficient towards you in anything ...

(Q9:4).

But in the poetic line it is used intransitively in the sense of 'diminishes'.

- In: **أَنَّ السَّيْفَ يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ**, the verbal sentence **يَنْقُصُ قَدْرَهُ** is the *khabar* of **أَنَّ**, and therefore, it is **فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ**.



...إِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ السَّيْفَ أَمْضَى مِنَ الْعَصَا

- **أَمْضَى** is the *ism al-tafDiil* of **مَاضٍ** which is the *ism al-faa'il* of **مَضَى يَمْضِي مَضَاءً** (a-i).

One of the meanings of this verb is *to be very sharp*.

- Note that both **أَمْضَى** and **الْعَصَا** are *maqSuur* nouns, and therefore, the case-endings do not appear in them.
- **أَمْضَى** is *khabar* of **إِنَّ** and therefore, it is **مَرْفُوعٌ**, and **الْعَصَا** is **مَجْرُورٌ** because it is preceded by a **حَرْفُ جَرٍّ**.

This proverb warns us against comparing a thing with something not worthy of comparison.



نَصُّ شَعْرِيٍّ

Poetry text



دِمَشِقُ

لَوْلَا دِمَشِقُ لَمَا كَانَتْ طَلَيْطَلَةٌ
وَلَا زَهَتْ بِبَنِي الْعَبَّاسِ بَغْدَانُ

But for Damascus, there would not have been Toledo (in Spain)
Nor would have Baghdad shone so radiantly
with the line of ‘Abbās.

مَرَرْتُ بِالْمَسْجِدِ الْمَحْزُونِ أَسْأَلُهُ
هَلْ فِي الْمُصَلَّى أَوْ الْمِحْرَابِ مَرْوَانُ

I passed by the grief-stricken (Umayyad) Mosque
Asking it if there was Caliph Marwān in the prayer hall
or the *mihrāb*.

تَغَيَّرَ الْمَسْجِدُ الْمَحْزُونُ وَاخْتَلَفَتْ
عَلَى الْمَنَابِرِ أَحْرَارٌ وَعُبْدَانُ

The grief-stricken Mosque has changed,
And free men and slaves have alternately ascended its *minbars*.

فَلَا الْأَذَانَ أُذَانٌ فِي مَنَارَتِهِ
إِذَا تَعَالَى، وَلَا الْآذَانَ آذَانُ

The (present day) *adhān* rising from its minaret is not the same
as the *adhān* (of bygone days)
Nor are the ears (of the contemporary listeners)
the same as the ears (of yore).

وَالشُّعْرُ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ ذِكْرِي وَعَاطِفَةً
أَوْ حِكْمَةً فَهُوَ تَقْطِيعٌ وَأَوْزَانُ

And poetry as long as it is devoid of recollection and emotion
or wisdom – is no more than dissection of syllables
Or succession of metric feet.

أمير الشعراء أحمد شوقي (1868-1932)

الجامع الأموي، دمشق

The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus



I have been deeply moved by these couplets since a long time, and want to share them with the visitors of the website.



It is a long poem, but I have selected these couplets which are the most beautiful.

The poet mentions Toledo as representing Muslim Spain (al-Andalus).

Muslim Spain was ruled by the Ummayyads since 756 with the arrival of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān I (عبد الرحمن الداخل).

Lexical & Grammatical Notes



- زَهَا يَزْهُو زَهْوًا (a-u), to shine.
- Banu l-ʿAbbās: The Abbasids were descendants of al-ʿAbbās ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (رضي الله عنه).
- بَعْدَانُ is another form of بَعْدَادُ.
- مَرْوَانُ بْنُ الْحَكَمِ was the fourth Umayyad caliph.
- اخْتَلَفَ عَلَيْهِ (viii), to pass by.
- أَحْرَارٌ, free man, pl أَحْرَارٌ.
- عَبْدٌ, slave, pl عَبْدَانٌ، عَبْدَانٌ.
- عَوَاطِفٌ, emotion, pl عَوَاطِفٌ.



الْعَرُوضُ

بَعْضُ قَوَاعِدِهِ

The بَحْرُ of this قَصِيدَة is البَسِيطُ.

Its feet are:

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ فَاعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ فَاعِلُنْ

Which equals:

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ → فَاعِلُنْ → مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ → فَاعِلُنْ

dan dan da dan dan da dan // dan dan da dan / dan da dan //

Which corresponds to the English words:

Come, come to me; come to me.

Mutations:

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ may change to مُتَفْعِلُنْ which is:

da dan da dan.

It corresponds to the English words:

Nothing to you.

فَاعِلُنْ (dan da dan) may change to:

a) فَعْلُنْ : da da dan which corresponds to: *any thing*.

b) فَعْلَنْ : dan dan which corresponds to: *good book*.

This mutation occurs only at the end of the second line

«وَلَا زَهَتْ بِبِنِي الْعَبَّاسِ بَعْدَانُ»

as:

وَلَا زَهَتْ : da dan da dan.

بِبِنِي : da da dan.

عَبَّاسِ بَعْدَانُ : dan dan da dan.

دَانُو : dan dan.

* * *

In poetry a diptote may take *tanwīn* as طَلِيْطَلَةٌ,

and a triptote may lose its *tanwīn* as أَوْزَانُ.