

Love, Death, Fame
Glossary of Arabic Vocabulary

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§1.1 “Crafted”: *ṭirā*, lit. “to occur” (e.g., a thought); it may also mean “to know” as in “he is a mute, he doesn’t speak, (as reported by) those who know him” (*ablām, mā yarmis, illī yṭarūnah, illī y’arfūnah*),¹ lit. “its structure (*binyān*) gives expression to what is on my mind.” “Inner urge”: *‘inwān mā bī*, lit. “expression of my inner life” (CA *‘unwān* “title; epitome; sign”); it occurs twice in a poem by Rumayzān bin Ghashshām:

She comes to me as the paragon of fatal attraction [lit. her effect on the
love I feel for her]

yijimī ‘alā ‘inwān mā fī fa‘āyilih;

and, with a request for a cure of his agonies:

Be conscious of telltale signs about my state [i.e., lovesickness]
and don’t waste your efforts on anyone else’s afflictions,

*fa-kun ‘arīfin ‘inwān mā bī walā tikun
nfū‘ik fīmā qad ‘anā l-ghēr ‘āyilih;*

and:

Since that time, Jabr, my mind shows
its troubles: its symptoms are not hidden from you,

*w-min ‘igb dhā yā-Jabr ‘inwān khāṭirī
m’annā walā yighbā ‘alēk i’tilāmahā.²*

§1.2 The printed editions read *darb* (“way, path”) for *dhirb*, but all MSS give the latter, which also fits better in this context. Here *dhirb* has the general meaning of “sharp, chiseled to a sharp shape,” and it may refer to a “mountainous out-cropping” (*madhrūb* pl. *midhārīb*).³

§1.3 See for a fuller description §6.3n. “Buffeted”: *tilib ar-riḥ* “the wind stirs the sands,”⁴ as in the verse of al-Shanfarā: *wa-yawmin min al-Shi’rā yalūbu*

1 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 209.

2 Sawayan, *al-Shi’r al-nabaṭī*, 464, 476.

3 Al-‘Ubūdī, *Wajh al-arḍ*, 152.

4 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī ibn Zāhir*, 123

*luwābuhu*¹ (CA *lawb*, *lūb*, “the circling movement of thirsty camels around water that is out of reach”). In the poem’s prelude or in scenes of clouds and rain, the winds often blow from different directions at the same time. In the Emirati dialect *jīm* is often replaced by *yā*’, hence here *al-fjūj* (CA *fajj* pl. *fujūj*, *min kull fajjin wa-ṣawbin* “from all directions”) has become *al-fyūy*. It may also mean “desert; wide, empty tracts of land; wide, easy roads.”

- §1.5 The rhyme word, *rābī*, was explained to me as “calm, quiet” (*anīs*, *hādī*), corresponding to the verb *ribā* “to grow up, be accustomed to live in a certain place” (CA *rabā*, *yarbū*).
- §1.7 “Days of dalliance”: lit. “time of youthful behavior (*tiṣābī*).” Whenever the word ‘*aṣr* occurs with the meaning of “time, period,” it is followed by “dalliance, playful love,” §§1.38, 2.7, 17.24. A graybeard who “continues to cavort like a callow youth” is censored for his *taṣābī*, his inexcusable dissipation.² But here *tiṣābī* does not mean “silly, foolish, youthful conduct” of an older person, but is used as a synonym for CA *ṣabā*, “he indulged in amorous dalliance.”³
- §1.8 “Gardens of delight”: Lit. “the glory, beauty, goodness of youth” (CA *bahiyy* “beautiful, splendid, magnificent, shining”; *bahā* “to possess beauty, goodness”; *tabāhaw* “they vied for superiority in beauty, in glorying, excellence”).
- §1.9 “Offend”: In ghazal poetry *sharhah* conveys the notion of “reproach, slight anger caused by hurt feelings.” The verb *sharah* means “to be desirous, ambitious, avid; to look askance, be annoyed at” (CA *shariha* “to be vehemently desirous, very greedy”).
- §1.11 “Bitter thrusts”: *ṣrūf an-nāyibāt*, similar in meaning to Rumayzān’s line: “Don’t complain about the blows of fate or mishaps” (*lā tishtikī nōb al-khṭūb aw ḥādith*);⁴ and *al-ḥādithāt*, see §11.18n; for *ṣarf*, *ṣrūf* “acts of fate”: §§4.40, 6.16, 10.64n.

1 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 267.

2 Arazi, “al-*Shayb* wa ‘l-*shabāb*,” *EL*2.

3 Lane, *An Arabic–English Lexicon*, s.v. *ṣ-b-w*.

4 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 432, and 366 on the word *khṭūb*

- §1.12 “**She rode away forever**”: lit. “the camels carried her far away,” *tināyat bah rkābah* (CA *na’ā fulān ‘annī* “So-and-so went far away from me”), see §§5.65, 8.65.
- §1.13 “**I was hunted down**”: lit. “until he saw the pursuing enemy closing in on him”: *aṭ-ṭalab* “camel riders pursuing raiders (in order to retrieve their robbed animals)”; *lahūg* “catching up,” *lihig* “to catch up; to come to the rescue; to ride in order to overtake, e.g., raiders driving away robbed camels” (CA *lahiqa* “to catch up, overtake”). In this line the first person is replaced by the third person: *ḥitannah*, a contraction of CA *ḥattā annah*, “until he”). “**Driven out**”: *fī mirā* for *majrā*, “the place of.” “The owl is mentioned not only on account of the white color but also as an evil omen, a warning of impending disaster and sadness”;¹ see also §4.12.
- §1.15 “**Weighed down with**”: *bilit*, “I became afflicted by”; as in §16.7, the passive first-person singular form of *balā* is used, CA *bulitu*.
- §1.16 “**I cried in despair**”: *‘izētih* lit. “I besieged him, appealed to one’s kinship”; *‘izwah* “shout to one’s kin in battle, battle-cry” (CA *‘izwah* “the assertion of a relationship, i.e., of a son to a father”); *yā ‘izwiti* “my kinsman, my friend, save me!”² In the Emirati dialect *ribī’* means “friend”;³ *ribī’ ikhwāk* “a friend as close to you as your brother.”⁴
- §1.17 “**In the lurch**”: lit. “without support”: *mīthāb*, *thūbah* means “help, assistance, aid, succor (in trouble)”; “come to my succor”: *i’mil thawābin w-anjidni*.⁵
- §1.18 “**Fine**”: lit. “it will be, happen as you request.” *tamm* (in final position *tam* without doubling of the consonant): “If a Bedouin is asked for something, and he says ‘*tamm*,’ it is considered a promise from which he cannot retreat.”⁶ In this case the promise cannot be fulfilled. “A fight, violent quarrel”: *hōshah*; *hāsh*,

1 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir: Baḥṭh tawḥiqī fī shi’rih wa-sīratih al-shakhṣiyyah*, 90.

2 Ḥanṣal, *Mu’jam al-alfāz al-‘ammīyyah fī dawlat al-Imārāt al-‘Arabiyyah al-Muttaḥidah*, 455.

3 Ḥanṣal, *Mu’jam*, 271–72.

4 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 92.

5 Ḥanṣal, *Mu’jam*, 137; al-Maṭrūshī, *al-Laḥjah al-Imārātiyyah*, 88.

6 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 92; Kurpershoek, *The Story of a Desert Knight*, 158, para. 055.

yihūsh “to fight, tussle” (CA *tahāwasha* “to become intermingled in a *mêlée*”); *yirmik fī l-hūshāt man lā yhāwish* “you get embroiled in a fight by someone who makes himself scarce when the fighting starts,”¹

§1.19 “What to do with you”: lit. “what counsel, advice” *kēf al-shōr fīk* (CA *shāwar* “to take counsel, consult”; *shūrā* “counsel, advice”).

§1.21 “Redeem”: *fidā* (CA *fadā* “to redeem, ransom”). In poetry it usually occurs in expressions such as “I would give my life for So-and-So,” or “I would give So-and-So’s life for,” to convey the notion that someone or something is very dear to the person who makes the statement.

§1.22 “I play fair”: *ṣāfēt fīk*, lit. “I tried to humor you, convince you of my sincerity,” in a turn of phrase that is often used by Ibn Zāhir and other poets of his era, e.g., al-Shu‘aybī in his poem known as “poem of cloves” (*al-qurunfuliyyah*) in praise of the poet and prince Barakāt al-Sharīf al-Musha‘shā‘ī, uses it for the poet-lover’s courtship of love and beauty in his youthful days, and the futility of such overtures at a ripper age:

To many flat-bellied, soft-skinned beauties,
 I made overtures in my halcyon days [...]
 there was no end to their pleasantries and cruelties to me,
 while I served them in obedience and they served me;
 until old age flecked my temples with gray:
 they ignored me, and gray is there to stay;
 now they do not deem me worthy of a glance,
 even if I were an angel, the bringer of revelation

wa-kharāyidīn khimṣ al-bṭūn nawā‘im
ṣāfēthinn ayyām ḥaḥḥī migbilī; [...]
yā-tūl mā ṣāfannanī w-jifannanī
w-khadamtihinn ‘alā r-riḍā wa-khdamna lī
wa-l-yōm mā yaṣkhinn lī b-naḥrah
law kint malkin bi-n-nbuwwah mirsalī.²

1 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 720.

2 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 379.

“**Play fast and loose**”: lit. “you are fickle, changeable, tricky”; *gālab* “to change one’s fortunes for the worse” (said of *al-dunya*, “world, destiny”). This treachery also shows in the color of the hair: “Her black tresses have turned gray” (*bi-l-mishīb igtalab*).¹

- §1.24 “**Maybe**”: *rabbat* (CA *rubbamā*), also §3.33, §16.28; it occurs in other poems of the period, e.g., “How many wretches with wicked intentions” (*fa-rabbat makrūhin timannā lih ar-riḍā*) [...] “and many who were thought reliable and life-affirming,” (*wa-rabbat māmūnin timannā ḥayātih*).²
- §1.27 This and the preceding verse warn against the unpredictability of fate. Often the point is introduced by the interrogatory and exclamatory particle *kam* (“how many, how often!”). No less than fourteen verses are introduced with *wa-kam* in sixty-four verses of boastful outcry by Rumayzān in the antithetic constructions also employed by Ibn Zāhir.³
- §1.28 “**On all fours**”: ‘*alā zim’ēh*, explained as “on his knuckles, the upper part of the fingers,” also Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 94 (CA *zama’ah* “hair on the backside of the hooves, feet of an animal”; *arnab zamū’* “a hare running on the backside of its feet”).
- §1.29 A common conceit of the era’s poetry, with its emphasis on the propagation of wisdom distilled from everyday experience. Senility and decrepitude are mentioned in similar terms in §§5.67, 6.18, 8.68, 12.6, 12, 17.28.
- §1.30 “**Decrepit**”: the verb ‘*āyā*, *y’āyī* derives from CA ‘*ayiya* “to be incapable, lack strength, fall ill”; and *bi-lā m’ābī* (from the verb ‘*ābā*) was explained as “to show no interest, to be indifferent, give no response”; however, the more current expression is *shāyib w-’āyib* “gray-haired and infirm.”⁴
- §1.31 “**Pregnant**”: lit. “hidden in the vault (of time)” *al-jānihāt*; and the Jabrid poet al-Nābighah ibn Ghannām: “He is like a falling star cleaving the vault of dark

1 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 6.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 317.

3 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 425.

4 Holes, *Dialect, Culture, and Society in Eastern Arabia*, 3:250.

night” (*bih ka-n-najm fī jinḥ az-ḡalām*)¹ (CA *janaḥa* n. *junūḥ* said of the night and darkness, “to approach”; *jāniḥah* pl. *jawāniḥ* “ribs of the breast”).

§1.32 “Red-hot iron legs”: *maṭbā* pl. *miṭābī* explained to me as “iron kept in a fire, such as the legs of a kettle”; *maṭbā* “bread oven” and *ṭūbī* “a black sheet of metal on which a loaf is baked”; *ṭābī* “cooking vessel, frying pan.”²

§1.40 “Lithe”: *niḥīl*, lit. “lean, spare”; it is used with the general meaning of “beautiful, svelte,” as in Jabr al-Sayyār’s line: “She is my pick among the svelte temptresses” (*w-akhtarḥā min al-ghāwiyyāt niḥīlah*).³

§1.43 A woman’s litter chair is always carried by a male camel: “The women of the nomads ride in their litters on the male camels, because, it is said, these are stronger and more tractable than the female, which are ridden by the men”;⁴ though this camel carries the caravan’s heaviest load, it still outpaces the other camels, as in the verse of the pre-Islamic poet Bishr ibn ‘Amr:

Do you see the camels carrying the litter chairs, driven
at a pace that leaves the other camels behind?

hal tarā ḡuʿunan tuḥdā muqaffiyatan
lahā tawālin wa-ḥādin ghayru masbūgī

where it is explained that *ḡaʿīnah* pl. *ḡuʿūn*, *ḡaʿāʿin*, in time came to be used as a general term for camels of a caravan, whether they carried the ladies’ litter chairs or not.⁵ Here the stud camel carrying the litter chair is *abū fiṭrēn*: *fiṭr* is the age at which a camel’s eyetooth emerges; as explained to me, it is divided in the first and second *fiṭr* (*auwal fiṭr*, *thānī fiṭr*, *thālith fiṭr*) respectively at the age of seven to eight years, and eight to nine.⁶ This camel has completed both years (*abū fiṭrēn*) and therefore might be about nine years old. At this mature

1 Sawayan, *Shiʿr*, 288.

2 Thānī, *Ibn Ḥāhir*, 96; Ḥanḡal, *Muʿjam*, 412.

3 Sawayan, *Shiʿr*, 462.

4 Lyall, *al-Mufaḡḡaliyyāt*, 1:789, 2:338.

5 Lyall, *al-Mufaḡḡaliyyāt*, 1:553, 2:217; see also Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 191n47, 211n179, 242n417.

6 Ḥanḡal, *Muʿjam*, 71, 507.

age the hairs at the backside of the neck, *'ilbā* pl. *ālābī*, acquire a darker hue, as if dyed with this color, *maṣbūgh*;¹ see also §14:14.

- §1.44 “**Won’t be rushed**”: lit. “not in a hurry” *'yūl* (for *'jūl*, CA *'ajil*). “**Decked out**”: *mwābī* “the person who puts the trappings and loads on the camel.”²
- §1.45 “**Aflutter**”: *tuwāma* “to sway back and forth” (from CA *awma'a* “to make signs with the hand or head”). “**Shoulders of locusts**”: probably the jumping legs are meant; *dābī*, *dibā* “young locusts whose wings are just growing.”
- §1.46 “**Trimnings and rugs**”: *rgūm* pl. of *ragm*, see next note and the note to §12:24-25; (CA *raqm* “striped, figured, decorated cloth, garment”). “**Wave**”: *hāf*, *yihīf* “to wave” (said of a garment that makes a wide fit)³ (CA *hayf* “a strong, hot wind”); *ghāf*, *tighīf* “to incline, sway left and right”⁴ (CA *ghāf* “to strut, walk with a proud, swaying gait”; *taghayyaf* “to incline sideways; to bend left and right,” said of the branches of a tree”). *Hdāb* pl. of *hadab* “eyelashes; tassels ornamenting the *mīrakah*, the cushion on the camel’s shoulder blades.”⁵ *Razm*, *rzām* “a camel’s grumbling sound, groaning.”
- §1.47 “**Handiwork**”: *rgūm* s. *ragm*, “colorful markings on a halter or a camel’s girths”⁶ (CA *raqm* “a striped sort of cloth, garment, figured with round forms; variegated, striped, marked cloth,”⁷);

they decked out the camel’s back with colorful patterned rugs
until it looked like red-hued early dates hanging down from a tall
palm tree’s crown

rafa'na 'alayhi r-raqma ḥattā ka'annahu
saḥūqun tadallā min jawānibihā al-busrū;⁸

1 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 98.

2 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī ibn Zāhir*, 131.

3 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 100.

4 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 100.

5 Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, 353.

6 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash'ār qadimah wa-abyāt yatimah*, 313.

7 Lane, *Lexicon*, 1139.

8 Dhū l-Rummah, *Diwān*, 570.

“the litter chair’s coverings ruddy like the upper sides of ripening dates”;¹ see also note to §12:24–25. “**Rebuffs**”: *ṣadd* is part of the standard vocabulary of ghazal.² “**Courting**”: *mābī* (for *mā abī*) “not refusing (her)”; here it is a negation of being “stubborn,” as in Dhū l-Iṣba’s verse:

I am stubborn twice over in my attachment [to ancestral values]

innī abiiyyun abiiyyun dhū muḥāfazatin;³

and in a line of Rumayzān:

I am ambitious and possessed of a stubborn mind

fa-lī himmatin ‘ālyā w-naḥsin abiiyyih.⁴

In more recent Bedouin usage this has been replaced by ‘*ayy* which has the same connotation (CA *abā* “to refuse”; *abiiyy* “scornful”; *ābin* “reserved, reluctant”).

- §1.50 “**Crane our necks**”: *n‘awwiy*, for CA *nu‘awwij* “we bend, curve, twist.”
- §1.51 “**Carried off**”: *tanāyat* (CA *tanā‘ā* “to move away, be away from one another, be at a distance be separated”).
- §1.52 “**She turned her back**”: *gaffū* (CA *qaffā*), in addition to the literal meaning of “to go away,” may have the connotation of “to give the cold shoulder,” similar to *ṣadd*.
- §1.53 “**Bites her tongue**”: *kitūm* “doing one’s utmost to keep silent about what is on one’s mind” (CA *katama*). It is also a praiseworthy trait in riding camels not to grumble when being loaded.
- §1.54 “**Well**”: *yiwāb* (*jiwāb*) pl. of *jābiyyah*, “a shallow pit in the earth in which water for camels is poured; well” (CA *jabā* “place where a well is dug”); *khattāf al-yiwāb*: “someone who makes a cursory visit, who takes his chances knowing that the well may or may not hold any water”; in the Emirati dialect *khiṭaf*

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 2:217.

2 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 192n53.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:323, 2:115.

4 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 420.

'*alā* means “to pay a casual visit to s.o.” *Mshāfiḡ* “anxious, keen, fearful” (CA *ashfaqa* “to be fearful, cautious”).

- §1.57 “Gullies”: *thāybat* (CA *thāb al-mā*’ “the water of a well returned, collected again”; *thā’ib* “returning water”; *mathāb* “place from which the water returns”); “a valley with a fast torrent, fed by side valleys.”¹
- §1.58 The wind, especially the east wind, *al-ṣabā*, “milking” the clouds for water is a stock image of Bedouin poetry, see also Hussein, Ali Ahmad, *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic poetry*, 226.
- §1.64 “Dies down”: *kābi* (CA *yakbū* “it becomes dull”).
- §1.65 “Bleak desolation”: *tibāb* (CA *tabba* “to perish, be destroyed”; *tabāb* “perdition, death, loss”; *tabbūb*, synonym of *mahlakah* “place of perdition, destruction, desert”).
- §1.66 Again, the poet may allude to his own youth. The word for “splendor” (*bahā*) has the same root and meaning as *bihiyyāt ash-shibāb*, “the splendid delights of youth,” in §1.8. “Forever”: *hī warāk*, lit. “it is behind you,” here with the meaning of “bygone, in your former life.”
- §2.1 Cf. the saying: “Your tongue is your horse” (*Isānik ḡṣānik*).² “Hauled up”: ‘*tād*, lit. “equipment (used at the well)”; “rope attached to the bucket, rope used to moor a ship, to tie up the udders of a camel or goat” (CA ‘*itād*).³ Composition and performance in oral culture are compared to hauling up water in buckets that are emptied into basins from where it flows into channels that irrigate the palm gardens.
- §2.3 “Devotees”: *rāmis*, lit. “speaker”; *narmis bhā* “we praise it”;⁴ *rimas* “to speak; to utter, recite verses.” In this context *yigūl*, “he says,” often means “to speak in verse,” and similarly *lā tarmis*: “she does not recite poetry.” According to

1 Abu Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 133.

2 Al-Juhaymān, *al-Amthāl al-sha’biyyah fī qalb al-jazīrah al-‘arabiyyah*, 6:273.

3 Ḥaṅṣal, *Mu’jam*, 445; Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 364.

4 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ār*, 1073.

legend the speech of Banū Hilāl was always in verse: “The *ruwāh* (transmitters) repeat time and again that Banī Hilāl spoke only in verse”;¹ *ramsah*: “to exchange verses in song in opposite lines of dancers, *razīf*.”² It may also mean “to argue,” as in §10:40; *rams* and *marmas* “speech”; *rammas* “to talk to s.o.”; *rammasnū* “he talked to me”; *shū ha-r-ramsah* “what are you telling me!” *il-man armas* “with whom should I speak?”³ The CA meaning of *rams* “private exchange of words in a soft tone,” occurs in the work of one of the earliest known Nabaṭī poets, Abū Ḥamzah al-‘Āmirī in his famous *hamziyyah*-poem:

We spent the night, and God’s mercy laid between us,
as we conversed in soft tones

bitnā w-bātat raḥmat allāh bēnnā
w-ḥadūthnā min bēnnā ramsā.⁴

§2.6 “**Wrecked**”: *jazz al-lēl minnī hawāyisih (hawājisih)*, lit. “the night cut off its time from me, (because of) the anxious thoughts it brought,” i.e., because of worries, my sleeping time was much reduced. The verb *jazz* (CA “to cut off, shear off”) is found in the MS text. The editions read *jazl al-lēl* (perhaps meaning “the abundance, greater part of the night”), but this is less convincing.

§2.7 “**Distant crests**”: *marājīh b’ād* (CA *marqā* pl. *marāqī* “a climb”).

§2.12 “**Flashes**”: lit. “flames in a fireplace”: *manājīl* s. *minjal*, explained as “place where a fire burns; fire poker”; *mingalah* “brazier.”

§2.13 “**Restores life**”: *i’tādhā*, as in the line of Rumayzān ibn Ghashshām:

A land of lush grazing, may
its green be restored by copious rains

dārin marābī’ an-njū’ la’allahā
yī’tādhā min ḥayyahā nazzālḥā.⁵

1 Lerrick, *Taghribat Banī Hilāl Al-Diyāghim: Variation in the Oral Epic Poetry of Najd*, 22.

2 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 518.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 281.

4 Sawayan, *Shī’r*, 268, 281.

5 Sawayan, *Shī’r*, 407.

See also §3:29.

- §3.2 “**Squirming**”: *nighūsh*; *naghash*, *yinghash* “to quiver, show signs of life”¹ (CA *tanaghashsha* “to shudder”).
- §3.3 “**Stray camels**,” *garāyif* pl. of *girīfah* (pronounced in Emirati dialect as *jirīfah*; the root is related to CA *qarīfa*, “to loath, feel disgusted,” i.e., the stray camel’s discomfort with the unfamiliar place), explained to me as “camel that has come from elsewhere,” Here *mahjūzah/mahyūzah* has the meaning of “kept separate,” *ma’zūlah*. “Homegrown stock”: *tilād*, explained by al-Aṣma’ī as “whatever has been born in their precinct and has its origins there, derived from *wilād*;² as in Ibn Sbayyil’s line: “fast and hardy camels, offspring of the purest breed” (*min sās ‘ērātīn ‘rābin tilādī*).³
- §3.4 “**Connoisseurs**”: *rimmās* pl. of *rammās*; in Emirati language *rimas* means “to speak, talk,” but it is also used specifically as “to recite poetry, to narrate stories, in social gatherings.”
- §3.5 “**If**”: *kūd*, indicates (epistemic) possibility; “perhaps, probably, by that time it will have become.”⁴
- §3.6 “**Chants**”: *nishād*; *nashshād* is a synonym for *shā’ir*, “poet,” from the verb *nishad* “to ask, inquire; to sing, compose a poem” (CA *anshada* “to recite a poem”).
- §3.8 “**Ailment**”: *zōd lē’ah/lī’ah* lit. “aggravated suffering” (CA *law’ah* “ardor of love, lovesickness, anguish, agony, suffering”), also §3.12 and §9:22, a common expression in early Nabaṭī poetry, e.g., Ibn Zayd:

He was left prostrate, deprived of all hope [lit. the cords of hope were
folded] in life,
so lovesick that he can’t even stand on his legs

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 3:142.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:172, 1:447.

3 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 55, 209n.165

4 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:467–68.

tirīhin tiwā ḥabl ar-rijā min ḥayātih
*min asbāb lē'āt ar-ridā ghēr gāyim.*¹

- §3.14 “No benefit”: *lā wālam* “it did not agree with”; *wālam* “to be suitable, fitting; to turn out positively”; *wilām/ūlām* “correctness, suitability”;² *ṣāyirīn wilīm* “to become friends”³ (CA *lā’ama* “to agree, suit, fit, be appropriate” through transposition of root consonants).
- §3.23 “Rendezvous”: *lāmā* “Close, amatory union with.” A proverbial saying is: “Forget her embrace with that of another one” (*ins lāmāh bi-lāmā*, CA *al-la’m*, “meeting in agreement”; *lā’ama* “to be in harmony, bring together”);⁴ and the Emirati saying: “Some people leave you indifferent [lit. their presence, closeness, *lāmāh*, is like their absence, departure, *frāgah*]; others leave a hole in your soul when they are not there” (*ḥad min an-nās lamāh w-frāgah w-ḥad lā min ghāb khalāhā n-nafs mi’tāgah*).⁵ “Bygone”: *kid ingiḍā* and the verse before *kid ghadā* (CA *qad ghadā*, in the Emirati dialect the *qāf* of *qad* is often replaced by *kāf*, which is affricated in speech: *č (tsj)*).
- §3.24 “Our tryst”: *tōḥ/tūḥ*, lit. “a throw,” as “at night we’d (lit. “throw”) rendezvous (*al-lēl najda’ bih mawā’id*).⁶
- §3.25 “From woe”: *mā tkhākhā jiwādhā*, “its generosity does not show weakness, impotence, low morale.”⁷
- §3.28 Similarly, Rumayzān bin Ghashshām:
- Beware of the nights’ evils and treachery:
in wells limpid water will get roiled;
Don’t reckon you’ll be safe from adversaries’ schemes
and you may find some friends among their numbers

1 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 310.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:56n, 78, 395, 490.

3 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 365.

4 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 1:389.

5 Al-Kuwaytī, *Yaqūl al-mutawaṣṣif: Amthāl wa-aqwāl sha’biyyah jumī’at min manṭiqat al-‘Ayn*, 235.

6 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 159, v. 5.

7 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 165.

wlā tāmin āfāt al-liyālī w-ghadraha
tarā al-kadr yatī 'igb ṣafw al-mishārib
wlā tāmin al-gom allatī ant dīddaha
*fa-rabbat mā kān aṣ-ṣidīg al-mḥārib.*¹

- §3.37 “(Camel) studs”: *bizzil* pl. of *bāzil* (CA *bāzil* pl. *buzzal* “camel that has cut its tush; in its ninth year”); also called *nāb*, after the eye-tooth. “Beautiful maiden” *khūd* (CA *khawd* “soft, tender, beautiful maiden”), as in Bishr ibn ‘Amr’s line: “a young and fair songstress, brought up in luxury, strikes the lute” (*khawdan muna‘amatan wa-taḍribu mu‘tibā*).²
- §3.38 “Not caring,” *ḥallaw miyāthimī*, lit. “they thought it permissible to wrong me” (*miyāthim* is derived from CA *athima* “to sin, err; to do what is unlawful, do wrong”), as in Jābir ibn Ḥunayy’s line, “when they dealt contemptuously with us and meant to wrong us” (*idhā mā zdarānā aw asaffa li-ma‘thamī*)³(CA *ithm, ma‘tham* pl. *ma’āthim* “sin, crime, fault). It is also used in common Emirati speech: “You have wronged this poor man” (*figīr tiwaththamtū fih*); “I cannot do myself a wrong turn” i.e., say something if I cannot vouch for its correctness (*mā arūm awaththim nafsi*).⁴
- §3.39 “Leaky waterskins,” *aṣ-ṣfāg an-nawādiḥ*: “water bags that are leaky because the leather has not been treated properly”;⁵ *yaṣfig as-simm*: “dripping with poison” (CA *ṣafaqa* “to slap, slam, bang”; *naḍaḥa* “to wet, spray, splash”).
- §3.42 “Endeavors”: *m’ānin*, explained as the active participle of *‘ānā* “to strive for, endeavor”; *‘anāhā*: “human striving, efforts, in the netherworld,” cf. §5.14. “Does not contravene”: *lā yakhlif*, as in the line of Rabī‘ah ibn Maqrūm, “The nobleman’s daughter did not keep her promises to you” (*wa-akhlafatka bnatu l-ḥurri l-mawā‘idā*);⁶ and the seventeenth-century poet Muṭawwa‘ al-Maskūf:

1 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 418.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:554, 2:218.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:427, 2:156.

4 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 196, 198.

5 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 167.

6 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:442, 2:159.

“You threw me off balance and made me forget my additional prayers” (*w-akh-laftnī mā ‘ād aṣallī n-nifilāt*).¹

§4.1 “Lofty castles”: *banāyā gṣūrhā*; the plural of *gaṣr*, “castle,” receives the emphasis from its rhyme position. As the poem unfolds, proof is given of the poet’s ambition to transform this sequence of verses into a durable philosophy of life such as may be compared to a fortress that offers a fair measure of security, as explained in the notes to §§4.4, 4.34, and 4.56. Poetry is often created and employed in a competitive spirit that ranges from outright ad hominem attacks in *hijā’* (invective poetry) to teasing and jocular jousting among friends. This verse reflects the poet’s awareness that he builds on and borrows from ancient tradition. Most likely the allusion is to both the oral and written tradition, see the notes to the next verse and §§15.36–37.

§4.5 Verses as these cannot be regarded as conclusive proof of literacy. The narrative lore that until recently circulated orally in the Emirates, gives examples of gatherings as described in the poetry. According to oral tradition, these were held at the poet’s grave in al-Khirrān, near Rās al-Khaymah. Even the narratives about the poet’s search for a suitable location of his grave can be interpreted as part of the poet’s quest for artistic immortality.

§4.5 “Are recited”: cf. a verse by al-Khalāwī regarded by his twentieth-century Saudi editor as sacrilegious:

One says, “such words are spoken by a brave and determined man,
if it weren’t poetry, you’d say, this is revealed by the angel Gabriel”

tigil dhī aḥādīthin w-dhū l-‘azm gālahā
*w-law lāh shi‘rin gīl jibrīl jāh bih.*²

The passage of al-Khalāwī’s chest-beating about his poetic prowess counts sixty-one verses. The same notion is found in the verse of an illiterate nineteenth-century Bedouin poet, ‘Adwān al-Hirbid:

1 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 494.

2 Ibn Khamīs, *Rāshid al-Khalāwī: Ḥayātuh, shi‘ruh, ḥikamuh, falsafatuh, nawādiruh, ḥisābuh al-falakī*, 365, 305.

Carry these verses on light-footed camels;
you are my messenger to generations to come

*min shālhīn yingal ‘alā l-fiṭṭar al-fīh
ma’ wāhīdin yatnā migābīl al-ajyāl.*¹

- §4.6 “Discarded utensils”: *nuwāsī* (CA s. *an-nasy* “forgotten and not remembered; a forgotten thing, e.g., insignificant items left behind or forgotten by travelers, a discarded thing to which no attention is paid, like a cup or a stick, a wooden peg”). “In the hadith, ‘they are left among those forgotten and trodden under the feet of the Merciful,’ i.e., in Hell, as if to say: ‘God makes people forget them so as to make sure that no one will intercede on their behalf,’ as the poet [al-Mutanabbī] says:

After us the nights erased the memory of her love,
and implacable Fate trod on it, as foreordained

*ablat muwaddatahā al-layālī ba’danā
wa-mashā ‘alayhā al-dahru wa-hwa muḡayyadū.*²

- §4.7 “Raging breast”: *dūlāb ṣadri* lit. “the millwheel of my breast”; the pl. *duwālīb* denotes “the vicissitudes brought by the turning wheel of time” (CA *dūlāb* “a kind of waterwheel”). For the lonely mountain scene where the poet is seized by the onset of inspiration, see Kurpershoek, *The Poetry of ad-Dindān*, 38–42.

- §4.8 “Love lost to distance” is a major theme in poetry. “Soaring peaks”: *l-anha* “the highest places, mountain summits” (CA *al-nuhā*). “Wheels of time and distance”: *dōlāt an-niyā*, lit. “the vicissitudes, misfortunes created by distance” (CA *dawlah* “turn, change, vicissitude of time, fortune”). *An-niyā* “distance, remoteness”; it is similar in early classical poetry (CA *na’ā* “to be far away, remote”; *na’y* “remoteness”), e.g., the verse of al-Rā’ī al-Numayrī:

I traveled to you on camel-back from a land
far away to visit on curved camels

1 Sowayan, *Ayyām al-‘arab al-awākhir: Asāfir wa-marwiyyāt shafahiyyah fi l-ta’rikh wa-l-adab min shamāl al-jazīrah al-‘arabiyyah ma’a shadharāt mukhtārah min qabīlat Āl Murrah wa-Subay’*, 214.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 4417.

wa-laḡad maṭawtu ilayka min baladin
*nā'ī al-mazāri bi-aynuḡin ḡudbī.*¹

- §4.11 “Owl’s shrieks”: “the owl, *būm*, as the embodiment of a dead person’s soul, is always savage and shrieking, as in the verse of Muḡriz ibn al-Muka‘bir al-Ḍabbī:

The mill-stone of war grinded a little, then a blow struck
 that made their great owl screech with terror

dārat raḡānā ḡalīlan thumma ṣabbaḡaḡum
*ḡarbun yuṣayyīḡu minḡu jillatu l-hāmī.*²

- §4.16 “Lashed”: *lō‘āt* lit. “severe pangs, attacks of anxiety”; *lā‘at jibdī* lit. “pangs in my liver” (*kabd*) “I feel sick”³ (CA *law‘ah* “agony of love, pain, anguish, torment”). “Unbearable burden”: *wagr* pl. *wḡūr* “load, burden; impact of a hit; a receptacle made of palm leaves for loads carried by a donkey on both sides of its back; load carried on one’s back or head”;⁴ “the thing that someone who tries to suffer in patience can no longer hide beneath outward calm” (*mbiḡin ṣibūrḡā*).⁵ In narrative §21 *wagr* means: “bundle, package” (CA *wiḡr*).

- §4.19 “Wrong”: *al-lyāshah*; in modern usage *lāsh* means “good-for-nothing” (contraction of *lā shay*, “nothing, insignificance”).

- §4.20 “Discourtesy”: *yifāsah*; *jifāsah* “rudeness, frivolity” (CA *al-jifs*, *al-jafs* “a despicable, worthless person”); in MSS an alternative reading is *ṡifāsah* “filth, dirtiness,” as in the verse of Ḥmedān al-Shwē‘ir: “A wave of newborn filth has taken their place” (*w-kaṡraw muwālīd an-njūs al-miṡāfsih*).⁶

- §4.22 “Youthful succulence”: *rayyāntin ḡhuḡḡat aṣ-ṣibā*; *rayyān* (CA *rayyān* “well-watered, luxuriant, lush, verdant, full, plump, succulent, juicy” derived from the verb *rawīya* “to drink one’s fill, to be irrigated”).

1 Weipert, *Der Dīwān des Rā‘ī an-Numairī*, 8.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḡḡḡaliyyāt*, 1:510, 2:195.

3 Al-Maṡṡrūshī, *Lahḡah*, 288.

4 Al-‘Ubūdī, *Mu‘jam al-uṣūl al-faṣiḡah li-l-alfāḡ al-dārtjah*, 13:157–58.

5 Al-Juhaymān, *Amḡhāl*, 1:62.

6 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 81.

- §4.26 **“Beauties of other belles”** (lit. “belles of the common sort”), *‘aṭābīl*, one of the rare words used as interchangeable synonyms that are in vogue in early Nabaṭī poetry to denote “beautiful woman” (CA s. *‘uṭbūl* “beautiful, well-filled woman with a long neck”).¹
- §4.35 **“Primps”**: *tizahhā*; also *tazhī*, as in the Jabrī poet al-Kulayf’s opening line: “Her desert quarters are verdant and beautiful” (*zahat ad-diyār bi-ḥusnihā w-jamālhā*)² (CA *zahā* “to blossom, flower, be in bloom; to shine). **“Since ages”**: *gidāmin ‘sūrhā*, only the connoisseurs, those initiated in poetry (*fāhim*), are aware that Ibn Zāhir’s poetry may exhibit a novel appearance but in fact is rooted in ancient art and wisdom. In this verse it points to people as gullible and prone to being fooled by appearances—a susceptibility that exposes one to harsh lessons taught by reality and ruin.
- §4.41 **“By fate”**: lit. “the doings of the nights” (*ṣrūf al-liyālī*); in these expressions “nights” are synonymous with the alternative *dahr*, “inscrutable fate.” **“Saddle”**: lit. “the highest point, the saddle knob” (*kawāmūkh* pl. of *kāmūkh*, CA *kamakha* “to raise one’s nose, head in arrogant manner”).
- §4.42 In this verse the poet reverts to the conventional scene of the beloved’s departure with her tribe. Her “closeness,” i.e., presence in his proximity, had been balsam to his soul—here phrased as splints for broken legs (*jbūr*; *jibar* “to heal; to set broken bones, put in splints”). Her disappearance reopened the wounds. Another word used for distance is *an-niyā* (CA *al-na’y*), and often distance is presented as a concept with its own agency, like the world, fate, and the like; see note to §4.8.
- §4.45 **“Humiliation”**: lit. “the works of a humiliated person, *mamhūn*.”
- §4.46 **“Torrential”**: *ghēl* “streaming water in a wadi” (CA *ghayl*); *mighīlah* “low land with traces of moist and wet spots, pointing to the presence of water.”³ The rhyme word *ḥdūr* is the plural of *ḥādīr*: “going down, sloping downwards” (CA *ḥadara* “to descend, go downwards”).

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 2993.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 294; similarly, 522.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 651.

- §4.48 “Dust color, dusty hue”: *ghubrah* (CA *ghubrah*; *sanah ghabrā* “a year of drought”), with the connotation of “ugliness, drought.” “Saffron scent”: *al-gāyini*.¹
- §4.49 “Desiccated”: *miyālīh* (for *mijālīh*, CA *jalah* “loss of hair”; *jawālīh* “fluff blown from flower stalks by the wind; *majālīh* “years of drought that causes livestock to perish,”).²
- §4.50 “Wedding party”: *zayy*.
- §4.51 “Perished”: *barhadaw*; *barhadah* explained as “severe, life-threatening cold.”
- §4.53 “Debris”: *ghifā* (CA *ghafā* “loose things that are scattered in the desert by torrents; chaff in wheat; dust that prevents young dates from ripening”).
- §4.56 Instead of *big‘ah* (CA *buq‘ah* “spot, place”), Abu Shihāb’s edition has *bag‘ā*, “the World, Fate,” and the meaning would be “into the abyss of Fate”; *gtūrha*: *gītar* “side, flank.”
- §4.60 “Sandy plain”: CA *ṣaḥṣah*, *ṣaḥṣāh* “barren plain strewn with small pebbles, smooth tract of land.” CA *dumlūk* (also *dumlūq*) “smooth, round stone.” This verse is found only in the MS of al-Mazrū‘ī.
- §4.61 The verse is close in meaning to the view expressed by al-Khalāwī:

In this world humans are subject to dangers and extinction,
as they balance on the edge of a precipice, assailed by devils

wa-l-‘abd fī d-dunyā li-l-akhtār wa-l-fanā

*‘alā jurf hārin wa-sh-shiyāṭim wāthbah.*³

- §5.4 “Sack for storing dates”: *jirbān*, s. *jrāb* (“a sack woven of palm leaves or tanned hide for storing dates,”⁴ CA *qirāb*).

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 73.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 651.

3 Ibn Khamīs, *al-Khalāwī*, 66.

4 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 151.

- §5.5 In this transition to gnomic wisdom, the poet compares his verses to tasty and fat sheep that are in high demand, unlike the unappetizing, deficient rhymes of less accomplished artists: the skin-and-bones sheep.
- §5.7 “**He saves you**”: *ythībak*, *thāb* “to be of use, help” (CA *athāba* “to reward, requite”). “**Aid**”: *faz’ah* “men, horsemen, who rush to the assistance, aid of” (CA *faza’a* “to aid, succor”).
- §5.8 “**Dinghy**”: *galṣ*, dinghy carried on board of a large ship¹; “rowing boat”;² CA *qalṣ* “small launch, barge”). “**Deep sea**”: *al-mighrigāt* (Abu Shihāb: *al-mighrijāt*; CA *al-mughriqāt*, *aghraqa* “to sink, immerse”). “**Jib**”: *al-jīb*, “the smallest sail, storm sail”;³ “the smallest of five sails”;⁴ the best description is given by al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 37: “a triangular small sail used in strong winds and also to maneuver a pearling ship over short distances from one location to the next one in search of oyster reefs.”
- §5.9 “**Poise**”: *samt* “dignified conduct” (CA *samt* “good conduct, gravity”). “**Ascent**”: *miṭlā’*; it also means “the bed, course of a torrent or a subterranean water conduct.”⁵
- §5.12 “**Sucking up to Mammon**”: here as elsewhere “the world” (*ad-dinyā*, CA *al-dunyā*) stands as a synonym for whimsical fate, similar in meaning to *ad-da-har* (“inscrutable fate”), *al-ayyām* (“the days”), *al-liyālī* (“the nights”), “Time” (*al-wagt*). In Ibn Zāhir’s poetry, “the world,” is represented as an active agent who strives to lead people astray and ensnare them in its plots, as does the devil.
- §5.14 “**Pincers**”: *mijlā’/miglā’*, a tool used to extract dates from a sack, *jrāb* (CA *qala’a* “to pluck out, pull out”).
- §5.18 “**Good**”: *tigā* “piety, pious works” (CA *tuqā* “godliness, piety”). It is sometimes used in a sense not directly related to religion, but as part of the traditional

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 95.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:436.

3 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 95.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 163.

5 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 2:256.

tribal ethos and its moral obligations. In practice, religious benefit is not sharply distinguished from traditional tribal virtue.

- §5.19 **“Must”**: *mā yāzim* “does not stay, keep on doing s.th.” It also occurs in poetry from al-Aḥsā’ in eastern Arabia, e.g., the boastful line of Barrāk al-Barrāk bin Ghurayr, the founder of a successor dynasty to the Jabrids: “(In war) we cleave to the backs of our ragged, worn out camel mounts” (*nūzim bihā shu’tḥ an-niḏā kill ligwah*).¹
- §5.22 **“Notice”**: *wā’i* “awake, attentive, conscious.” **“Chest”**: *jawāniḥ al-aḏlā’* “the first ribs, ribs at the higher part of the thorax” (CA *jāniḥah* pl. *jawāniḥ* “rib”).
- §5.27 **“Don’t be fooled”**: lit. “don’t dismiss, disregard, turn your nose up at” *t’āf* (CA *āfa* “to loath”). **“Dust-colored feathers”**: *ghabāthat rīshih*, (CA *aghabath*).² It is the pendant of the wolf, “ashen in color and poor looking,” *aṭlasu l-lawni bā’isū*, in a verse by al-Muraqqish the Elder explained as: “a dirty color,” though contrary to his looks, the wolf’s character and skill are much admired.³ **“Other birds”**: *al-gi’gā’* “weak bird that cannot protect itself”;⁴ it was explained that it is a little bird with greenish-blue feathers, which might explain *zargah*, “blue.” A saying: “Don’t be deceived by the ruffled feathers of a *shāhīn* falcon (*lā ygh-irrak ash-shāhīn fī šaffat rīshah*).⁵ The reading of the printed editions, with the exception of the earliest one by Maṭba’at ‘Umān, is *mā ar-rizg illā* etcetera: “subsistence is found in the wings of the *gi’gā’*”; however, the MSS read *zarg*, not *rizg* (*qu’qu’* “a big bird of mixed color, black and white, with a long beak”).⁶
- §5.29 **“Your fingers”**: lit. metacarp: *ruwāyib* (CA *rā’ibah*). **“Lest”**: *kūd, kūd in* “perhaps, perchance”;⁷ *čūd*, “particle indicating (usually epistemic) possibility.”⁸

1 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 500.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3205.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḏḏaliyyāt*, 1:466, 2:172.

4 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidi*, 100.

5 Al-‘Amārah, *Al-Qiyam al-ijtimā’iyyah fī al-amḥāl al-sha’biyyah al-Imārātiyyah*, 139.

6 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3696.

7 Holes, *The Nabaṭi Poetry of the United Arab Emirates: Selected Poems, Annotated and Translated into English*, 259.

8 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:467.

§5.30 “**Spiteful churl**”: *bghāḍah* “hate, spite” (CA *baghāḍah*); cf. Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 3: “It’s impossible to appease a soul full of hate” (*al-bighḍ nafsin ma tiṭīb jrūḥih*).

§5.31 “**Instinct for virtue**”: *l-aḥsān al-awwili* lit. “the good of old”; Of course, the one who extols the golden generation’s excellence claims to be one of the rare inheritors of its virtue. Shāyī‘ al-Amsaḥ, a poet closer to Ibn Zāhir’s time, puts it more bluntly:

I am the last survivor of a virtuous generation:
the only ones left from those nobles are wretches;
I lived to see a generation that boasts of giving presents,
seeking women’s advice for what is their simple duty

anā min atlā jīl kassābat ath-thanā
w-jīl ath-thanā mā bāgī illā dh-dhmām
w-anā b-awwal jīl mannānat al-‘aṭā
*mshāwirt an-niswān ‘ind al-lizāyim.*¹

§5.32 “**Pittance**”: lit. “sell whatever is praiseworthy for a trifle amount”; *mzāhid* “paltry, little, cheap, worn-out.”²

§5.38 “**In their den**”: *gnā‘*. In CA *qinā‘* means i.a. “face covering,” and the verb *qana‘a* has the general meaning of “to be content, self-sufficient” as in al-Khalāwī’s line: “Without fail, people are fond of a modest, unassuming fellow” (*walā gāni‘in illā yiḥibbūn jānbih*).³ Related to this *qinā‘* is also the plural of *qin‘*, “den, somewhat hidden place in the outdoors,” as in Dhū l-Rummah’s line: “Until they saw that the protected area (was covered) with sprouts of the *safā*-plants” (*wa-ḥattā ra‘ayna al-qin‘a min fāqi‘i l-safā*), with the comment that *qin‘* means “a safe place in the terrain, a dip rimmed in by elevations.”⁴

1 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 293.

2 Ḥanḍal, *Mu‘jam*, 637.

3 Ibn Khamīs, *al-Khalāwī*, 62.

4 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 829, 860.

- §5.40 “Ladling cook”: *al-jaddāʿ* “the person charged with scooping up the foam from the surface to prevent the boiling water from splashing on the fire.”¹ The verb *jidaʿ, jaddaʿ* means: “to throw, cast away; to fell, throw down.”²
- §5.43 “Venom flows like spittle round its incisors”: lit. “the venom shows around its mouth” (*lighūb* “the lower face around the mouth and nose”).
- §5.44 “Sorts”: *ajnās*, “types, classes, sorts”; “people are of different types” (*an-nās ajnās*) is a common phrase (listed as a saying in al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 8:289; al-Rawāhī, *al-Amthāl al-ʿUmāniyyah al-shaʿbiyyah*, 204). In Ibn Zāhir’s poems it is followed by an enumeration of characteristics, both good and bad.
- §5.45 In this nautical imagery “to run before the wind,” *wālim*, means that the ship is propelled forward by a favorable wind that blows in the same direction as the ship’s course;³ *al-wilim* “a pleasant wind blowing in a favorable direction”;⁴ “a light wind blowing in favor of the boat,”⁵ *wālam* “to be suitable, convenient”;⁶ CA *lāʿama* “to agree; to be suitable, favorable”). *fāliʿ* “a wind that blows from different directions, variable wind”;⁷ the intended meaning, however, is “wind that blows against the direction of the ship, a wind blowing from the north.”⁸
- §5.47 “Clouds”: here *rhām*.
- §5.48 “Driven by a breeze”: *zaʿziʿat ar-ryāḥ*, (CA *zaʿzaʿa* “to shake, agitate”; *riḥ zaʿzāʿ* “strong wind”). “Gushes out”: *nashshāʿ* (CA *nashaʿa* “to tear out, tear off”).
- §5.49 “Asleep”: *hiyyāʿ/hijjāʿ* (CA *hajaʿa* “to sleep peacefully”).

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 101.

2 Sawayan, *The Arabian Oral Historical Narrative: An Ethnographic and Linguistic Analysis*, 254.

3 Al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam*, 210.

4 Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 738.

5 Tibbetts, *Arab Navigation in the Indian Ocean before the Coming of the Portuguese*, 386.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:567.

7 Al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam*, 208.

8 Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 499.

- §5.50 **“Showers”**: *ṭashsh* “shower, light rain.” “Bursts into flower”: *bashsh* (CA *bashsha* “to smile, display a happy mien”).
- §5.52 **“In love”**: *yūlah ‘alēh* (CA *walaha, yalih* “to hanker for; to lose one’s head, to become mad with love, infatuated”). **“Goaded from where”**: *miṭlā’* “east, where the sun rises.”¹ A literal reading of the second hemistich might be: “I do not know to whom (or where, *li-min*) he (the western wind of the preceding verses, *maghribī*) has steered them (the clouds) on their way in an eastern direction (*al-miṭlā’*, CA *maṭla’*).
- §5.53 **“Winds lift”**: *hazzā’* lit. “bending” (*haza’* “to swerve; to bend, incline”; CA *haza’a*). The rhyme word *middā’i* means “inclining”; “originally it is *mdāyi’* but some people pronounce it as *middā’i*, as in the verse of Ibn Zāhir.”² **“Crowns”**: *ghdūr*; also: “hair that grows on top of the head” (perhaps related to CA *ghadā’ir* “plaited hair, tresses”).
- §5.55 **“Wedding”**: *zayy*; “feasts and celebrations on joyful occasions like religious holidays and national days, when it is customary to organize dances, horse and camel races, and the like. It seems that the word is derived from the fact that people dress up for such occasions.”³
- §5.56 **“Flow down”**: *manshūl*, explained as “loosened long hair” (CA *nashala* “to take away, liberate”). **“Braided”**: *minsā’*, explained as *mujaddal*, “plaited, braided” (CA *nas’* “thongs twisted to resemble reins”).⁴
- §5.57 **“Burning desire”**: *ghalāyil*, s. *ghalil*, *ghull* “fretting; brooding anger; unsatisfied love,”⁵ (CA *ghalil* “Burning of thirst, anger, vexation”). In a similar early classical verse the same wording is used:

The burning thirst of his heart could not be cured
by sweet drops of rain or exquisite wines

1 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 302.

2 Al-Khāṭiri, *Ash’ār*, 209.

3 Ḥanṣal, *Mu’jam*, 308.

4 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4410.

5 Musil, *Rwala*, 172, 576.

wa-aṣḥaba lā yashfī ghalīla fu'ādihi
qīṭāru l-saḥābi wa-l-raḥīqu l-muraqqaqū

where *ghalīl*, *ghullah* is explained as “a burning feeling in the belly because of thirst or other causes.”¹ And the seventeenth-century poet Jabr ibn Sayyār: “Hurry to quench your thirst from your beloved” (*w-ishfī ghalīlak min khalīlak ājil*).² “**I returned**”: *ankafī* (it was explained that the *k-* is pronounced as *č*); *ankaf*: “to come back, return from a raid.”

§5:60 “**Not through our fault**”: “none of us committed a wrong, fault” (*walā bēnī w-bēnah zallah*); a stereotyped expression in reproaches of people bound by intimacy, as famously in a line of a poem Barakāt al-Sharīf addressed to his father:

I'm surprised that you blame me though I did no wrong,
 while you do not scold others for dastardly acts

arāk t'ātibnī walā dist zallah
wa-l-ghēr law dās al-khanā mā t'ātibih

The line is repeated by ‘Abd Allāh al-Sayyid in his ode to the Saudi ruler Sa‘ūd ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz;³ see also §11:32.

§5.61 “**Aggrieved**”: *sharhin ‘alēh* “reproval, anger, sense of being hurt by s.o. previously held dear, in respect; ambition, yearning” (CA *shariha* “to have a strong desire, greedy”).

§5.65 “**Breathless gallop**”: *ḥathāyith* (*ḥathth* “to hasten, hurry; to incite, urge,” used in relation to pace, or journeying, or marching);⁴ see also §§1:12, 8:65.

§5.67 “**Coat**”: *sibā’* pl. of *sabbā’iyyah* “a loose wrap worn around the neck and shoulders.”⁵

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:889, 2:366.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 460.

3 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 527.

4 Lane, *Lexicon*, 512.

5 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 317.

§6.1 “Knoll”: *zabyin* “elevation”¹ (CA *zubyah*, “hill, elevated piece of ground”).²

§6.2 “Formed”: *yishibb*, “to rise and take shape”;³ *shib rugubtak* “raise your neck”; *shabb al-safinah* “to hoist a sail away from the wind.”⁴ A sequence of Dhū l-Rummah’s verses links the winds and the emotional turbulence of the poet’s state of mind, and therefore elucidates Ibn Zāhir’s purpose in this passage:

Those worn marks, do they stir your lover’s spleen,
 a few wind-blown traces on the rolling dunes of Ḥawḍā?
 About Mayy? As if wind and rain have swept them up,
 all but some scattered hailstones on the sandy slope;
 Violent furnace blasts of two poisonous summer winds
 covered the site with yellowish ridges of dust;
 The third comes howling from the north, ice-cold!
 One after the other cake the stones with smudge;
 The fourth, a wild breeze from sunrise’s
 side, stirs sand devils at al-Mi‘ā and Qurāqir;
 Groaning winds in between heap up layers of sand,
 moaning as pregnant camel-mothers after thirsting for ten days;
 Here they left a little to scratch your agony of passion,
 there they effaced all traces, whimsical;
 Yes, indeed! These crumbling marks stoked my fires of love,
 in a repressed rage, invisible to the eye.
 I keep it buried deep in my soul at Dhū l-Rimth,
 where you wouldn’t say Mayy was even on my mind.

a-shāqatka akhlāqu l-rusūmi l-dawāthiri
bi-ad’āsi Ḥawḍā l-mu’niqāti l-nawādirī
li-Mayyin ka-anna l-rīḥa wa-l-qaṭra ghādarā
wa-ḥawlan ‘alā jar’ā’ihā burda nāshirī
ahāḍību anwā’i wa-hayfāni jarratā
‘alā l-dāri a’rāfa l-ḥibāli l-a’āfirī

1 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 47.

2 Lane, *Lexicon*, 1214.

3 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 47.

4 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 351, 520.

*wa-thālithun tahwī min al-shāmi ḥarjafun
lahā sananun fawqa l-ḥaṣā bi-l-aʿāširī
wa-rābiʿatun min maṭlaʿi l-shamsi ajjalat
ʿalayhā bi-daqʿāʿi l-Miʿā fa-Qurāqirī
fa-ḥannat bihā l-nukbu l-sawāfī fa-aktharat
ḥanīna l-liqāḥi l-qāribāti l-ʿawāshirī
fa-abqayna āyātin yahijna ṣabābatan
wa-ʿaffayna āyātin bi-ṭūli l-taʿāwurī
naʿam ḥājat al-aṭlālu shawqan kafa bihi
min al-shawqi illā annahu ghayru ṣāhirī
fa-mā ziltu aṭwī l-nafsa ḥattā ka-annahā
bi-Dhī l-Rimthi lam takḥtur ʿalā bāli dhākirī.¹*

§6.3 Desert scenes with gazelle, winds, traces in the sand, emotional memory, female beauty, tribal departure, crowns of palm trees festooned with date bunches form a recurrent cocktail in Arabian poetry. “**Twirled**”: *nāʿish*, see §5.55 note. “**Firmer stretches**”: *rēdā* pl. *rīd*, *ryād* “vast desert,” e.g., a long stretch of flat, firm ground along the western edge of the Empty Quarter sands, called al-Raydā. “**Nimble move**”: *ʿiyālā/ʿijālā* “hasty, quick.”²

§6.4 “**Healing**”: *rāyfaḥ*, “healing, mending” (CA *raʿafa* “to show mercy”).

§6.5 “**With abandon**”: *azdā* “to add” (CA *zadā* “addition, more”). *mʿil* “singing” or perhaps “hasty, quick.” “**Singing**”: *al-bnā* “composition,” lit. “building, construction.” Here and in §§1:4,5, 5:62, 63, 10:12, 14:20. Dhū l-Rummah’s verses are close in spirit and wording to Ibn Ṣāḥir’s, including the strong winds:

Is it because of droppings at Julājil’s desert basin
that your companion stands in tearful awe? [. . .]
A stiff wind howls and rolls the stones
loose and raises clouds of dust;
Our days, will they ever return
at Dhū l-Rimth, or not, never anymore?

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 1665–69.

2 Alameemi, *Ibn Ṣāḥir*, 47, where Alameemi also notes that the *ṣibā*-wind starts blowing before daybreak at a time when insects, beetles and other creatures start moving swiftly and stealthily (*ʿiyālā, khafāyifah*).

Is it not enough that they've departed,
 must the coos of hidden doves pile on the grief?
 They commiserate and lament without end
 about their love but their eyes stay dry;
 Her tribe sojourned close by but life is fickle:
 separation follows union without respite;
 The call of love for Mayy is my torment—
 a infatuation deep and old and so remote;
 If the pain of her being away so far abates a while,
 it returns to punish me with a vengeance;
 My heart was torn in two, one half here,
 the other ran off after her camel train;
 By God, our kinfolks' resolve has broken, cut down the middle;
 yesterday as one, now they're dispersed in space

*a min dimnatin bi-l-jawwi jawwi Julājilin
 zamīluka munhallu d-dumū'i jazū'ū [. . .]
 a rabbat bihā hawjā'u tastadriju l-ḥaṣā
 mufarriqatun tudhrī l-turāba jamū'ū
 a-rāji'atun yā-Mayyu ayyāmunā allatī
 bi-dhī l-Rimthi am lā mā lihun rujū'u
 w-law lam yashuqnī l-rā'ihūna la-shāqanī
 ḥamāmun tughannī fī l-diyāri wuqū'ū
 tajāwabna f-astabkayna man kāna dhā hawan
 nawā'ihū mā tajrīli-hun dumū'ū
 idh al-ḥayyu jirānun wa-fī l-'ayshi ghīrratun
 wa-sha'bu l-nawā qabla l-firāqi jamī'ū
 da'ānī l-hawā min ḥubbi Mayyi wa-shāqanī
 hawan min hawāhā tālidun wa-nazī'ū
 idhā qultu 'an ṭūli l-tanā'ī qada rwa'ā
 abā munthanin minhu 'alayya rajī'ū
 'ashiyyata qalbī fī l-muqīmi ṣadī'ū
 wa-rāḥa janāba l-zā'inīna ṣadī'ū
 fa-li-llāhi sha'ban ṭiyyatin ṣadda'a l-'aṣā
 hiya l-yawma shattan wa-hya amsi jamī'ū.¹*

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 1077–81.

- §6.6 “**Trekked**”: *astā* “to go far, a great distance” (CA *saṭā* “to pounce, jump”). “**Dunes**”: *rahm*. “**Briskly**”: *zāyif* (*zāfa* “walk proudly, in arrogant manner,” said of a camel; *al-zayyāfah min al-nūq* “conceited looking she-camels.”)¹
- §6.7 “**Sturdy**”: *admā al-‘alābī* (CA *qad dumma bi-l-shaḥm* “the camel was covered with fat”). “**Stolid**”: *bilīhiyyah* (CA *baliha* “to be simple-minded, absent-minded, lost to the world”; *nāqah balhā* “imperturbable camel, stolid and sedate as if she is stupid.”)² “**Vexed**”: *shanāhum* lit. “they were aggrieved, suffered” (CA *shanna* “to suffer from thirst”). “**Thirsting**”: *mhāyifah* (CA *hāfat al-ibl* “the camels were exposed to a hot wind from the south and kept their mouths opened, thirsted.”)³
- §6.8 “**Carried**”: *gādū ‘ayil/‘ajil* “they marched quickly.” “**Hooves turned inward**”: *malāwī ḥanāyifih* explained as “joint in the foot” (*malāwī* s. *milwah*); *aḥnaf* pl. *ḥinf* means that the forefeet of a camel or horse are slightly turned inwards, which is considered a desirable trait (CA *al-ḥanaf fī l-qadamayn* “when both feet are pointed somewhat in the direction of the other”).⁴
- §6.9 “**Rippling water**”: *ghīl* “water running in a little stream”; *ghēl* “permanent little stream of water in a wadi that often receives a torrent”;⁵ *mighīlah* “water that runs on the surface of the earth”⁶ (CA *ghayl*, *ghīl* “rivulets, streamlets for irrigation”). “**Dense crowns**”: *yilwā/jilwā* “forelocks, front part of the hair when it has been brushed upward” (CA *jalwā* “high forehead, retreat of the hair from the forehead”).⁷ “**Brushed up**”: *al-gidhāyil*, *gadhl* “the front part of one’s hair” in Emirati dialect (CA *qadhāl* “occiput”).
- §6.10 “**Succulent**”: *yuwāzīl/juwāzīl dhōg* “receptacles made of palm fiber holding tasty dates.” “**Swerved**”: *tiyalyl/tijaljīl* “a manner of running that resembles the swerving run of an ostrich” (CA *jaljala* “to come and go, go to and fro; to

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 1900.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 354.

3 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4738.

4 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 1025.

5 Al-‘Ubūdī, *Mu‘jam*.

6 Al-Khāṭirī, *Al-‘Arīj fī ash‘ār Ibn ‘Atīj*, 180.

7 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 670.

move with a sound”).¹ **“Sprightly”**: *zarmin* (as in the MS; the printed edition gives *razmin*); *zaram* “to attack, fall upon”; *zirm* “agitated, tense” (CA *zarama* “to cut off”; *zarim* “a tense person, who feels cornered; agitated, fidgety”).²

§6.11 **“Prepare to leave”**: a primeval scene from the beginnings of Arabic poetry, and see note to §14.10.

§6.12 **“Blistering”**: *wiyā/wijā* “abrasion; pain caused by a wound.” **“Canopus’ reign”**: *wahāyifih* “diseases, suffering from heat, brought by the season named after the star Canopus.”

§6.14 **“Wafts”**: *dāyifih* (CA *dāfa* “to mingle, admix”).

§6.15 **“Svelte white gazelle”**: *rīm al-yiwārī/jiwārī* “gazelle-like beauty” (CA *jāriyah* pl. *jawārī* “girl, slave girl”).

§6.16 As elsewhere, “distance” becomes shorthand for separation from the beloved and is represented as an independent actor capable of issuing commands detrimental to the poet’s heart. **“Distance”**: *maṣrūf an-niyā*, lit. “the dictates of distance”; like “misfortunes, the nights,” “distance” has become a synonym for “fate”: *ṣrūf an-nāybāt* and *ṣrūf al-liyālī* in §§1.11, 5.40.

§6.19 A popular saying, as appears from a verse by the Jabrid poet ‘Āmir al-Samīn that is repeated almost three centuries later by ‘Abd Allāh al-Sayyid.³ Numerous verses and sayings affirm that if a person has not learned to act responsibly on reaching adulthood, no improvement can be expected at a later age:

If you do not gain a stature at an early age,
surely you will not do so as a graybeard;
And if you fail to make an impression in youth,
you end up as a failure later in life

min lā yhaṣṣil b-awwal al-‘umr ṭolah
fa-hū ‘ājizīn ‘anhā ilā ṣār shāyib

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 666.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 1828–29.

3 Sawayan, *Shīr*, 345, 524.

w-min khāb fī auwal ṣibāh min ath-thanā
*fa-hū lāzim fī tāliy al-‘umr khāyib.*¹

- §7.13 “**Overlook a friend’s shortcomings**”: lit. “a friend will not seek you out, be loyal to you.” Similarly, Rumayzān bin Ghashshām advises to be gentle with friends:

Don’t give in to self-pity in life’s adversities:
 be intelligent, may God guide you, and do not wrong a friend;
 Give a rapid response with adroit use of your powers:
 God forbid that you ruin your glorious ambitions!
 If a friend disappoints you, reward him with the opposite:
 forgiveness and gifts, at the cost of your own deprivation;
 There is no virtue in making your friend unhappy:
 by treating him well you spite your enemy

lā tistikī nōb al-khṭūb aw ḥādīth
w-iḥlim hidīt w-lā tjanif ṣāhibā
w-istibig al-adnā mā istiṭi’t walā tikun
ḥāshāk tabnī bēt majdin khāribā
mistagbilin ‘ujā ṣ-ṣidīg bi-ḍiddahā
‘afwin bi-l-ḥirmān mink wahāyibā
lā khēr fī min lā yisirr mṣāhib
*wi-yghīz bi-l-fi’l al-jimīl mḥāribā.*²

- §7.15 “**Adjust**”: ‘*adal* “adjust to”; ‘*adil* “correctly, properly.”³ The balance, or lack of it, in loads fastened to both sides of the camel’s saddle, is often used as a metaphor for success or failure in addressing affairs that need adjustment, e.g., in this verse by Rumayzān ibn Ghashshām:

Whenever I try to adjust this one, the other sags,
 as if the behind and head work at cross-purposes

1 Ibn Khamīs, *al-Khalāwī*, 57, 84.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 432.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:342.

in jūt a'addil dhā w-ilā dhā māyil
*mītkhālīfīn 'iyyāzahā wa-r-rāsī.*¹

“**Load**”: *ar-rfā'*, lit. “heavy load; the load of a harvest,” as in the Emirati saying: “For someone who is able to lift a heavy load, carrying a sieve is nothing” (*illī yishill ar-rfā' mā yiyiz 'an al-minkhal*).²

§7.17 “**Unable**”: *yidhā; jādhi* “falling short, faltering, limping.”

§7.20 “**Little she-camel**”: *hijj* or *higg* (CA *hiqq*), a she-camel in the third year, raises its tail, frightened at the domineering sound produced by the rutting male. The simile marks bathos after hubris, as in the saying: “whimpering groans after threatening roars are a humiliating retreat” (*ar-rghā 'igb al-hdarān gibīh*).³

§8.1 “**Amazing verses**”: *migālin 'ajīb*. The poet vaunts his mastery in crafting verses that are understood, yet are also different from ordinary speech in such a way as to command the listener’s attention and stimulate his curiosity. It shows a parallel with Bedouin fascination with falcons caught in the wild and trained for the hunt, until they are released again.

§8.2 “**Gushes**”: *diyīl/dijīl* in the editions of Abū Shihāb and Thānī; *dibīl* in the edition of Alameemi, on basis of MSS readings. If it is *dijīl*, the meaning, as explained to me, would be “outpour, outflow” (*tadaffuq al-mā'*); *dibīl* was said to be related to *dabl*, “flow, course of water; moving” (*madbūlah, dibīlah* “driving camels in the same direction”).⁴

§8.4 “**Choose**”: *khammalaw* “to study, weigh and estimate the value of pearls. Here it means that the pearls, in order to protect them, are wrapped in a piece of cloth made of *khamūlah*;⁵ *khmāl, mukhmal* pl. *makhāmīl* “red square of velvet used by merchant to wrap pearls”; *khammal* “to wrap pearls in *makhāmīl*.”⁶

1 Sowayan, *Shi'r*, 456.

2 Ḥanzal, *Jāmi' al-amthāl wa-ma'thūr al-aqqāl wa-l-ḥikam wa-l-kināyāt 'ind ahl al-Imārāt: Dirāsah fī al-thaqāfah al-sha'biyyah wa-l-qiyam al-fikriyyah*, 467.

3 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 3:196.

4 Al-Khāṭiri, *Ash'ār*, 184.

5 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 230.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:162.

“Pearls”: *gmāsh* (pronounced with k-sound), if the *gmāsh* are small, it means that they are of inferior quality.”¹ The word already occurs with the same meaning in seventeenth-century poetry, as in this line by Rumayzān: “His hands are empty of precious pearls”; i.e., he has fallen on hard days (*w-kaffēh min ghāl al-gmāsh khawālī*);² and Rāshid al-Khalāwī:

We profess, poetry owes it all to Rāshid,
he is the one who pries open the oysters that hold the rarest pearls

nigūl ash-shi‘r mā dān illā li-Rāshid
*walā ṣadda‘ al-ash‘ār illā gharāyibih.*³

The poet refers to his careful selection of materials that should be readily understood and excite marvel because of vocabulary and expressions, as hinted at in the first verses, “amazing words” (*migālin ‘ajīb*), what was called in Arab antiquity *al-awābid*, see n182.

§8.5 “Amounts”: *ziwīl*, “gain, profit”; as in the line, “I found no profit in his speech” (*ligēt lih harjin bi-ghēr ziwīl*).⁴ The earliest Nabaṭī poet, Abū Ḥamzah al-‘Āmirī, reaches for the metaphor of a febrile market for the sale of exquisite pearls to describe the effect of his verses:

My God, the wonderful verses in the ode of this poet
whose deft handling of arduous tasks is laudable;
Like a string of pearls, though composed in Nabaṭī style,
they are recited and spread by admiring crowds

allāh min bēt w-giṣīdat shā‘ir
‘ind al-umūr al-mi‘dilat ḥamādā;
ka-l-dirr illā annahā nabṭīyyah
*taḥlā ‘alā t-takrīr wa-t-tardīdā.*⁵

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:374.

2 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 425.

3 Ibn Khamīs, *al-Khalāwī*, 306.

4 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 601.

5 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 271; incidentally, this is the first attested use of the word *nabaṭī* for this poetry, dating from the early fourteenth century

- §8.7 “**The lesser sort**”: *al-azyā* “small pearl of lesser value.” “**Respectable price**”: *hijil/higil* “not a trifling amount).”¹
- §8.8 “**Less tasty**”: *rizāyā* “bad, inferior; despicable, blameworthy”;² as in the line of the Jabrid poet Ibn Zayd: “I do not stoop to praising unworthy fellows, / and the virtuous should not be fobbed off with inferior wares” (*abayt bihā ‘an madh al-andhāl raf’ih / wa-l-ajwād mā ti’tā l-razāyā dhimūmhā*);³ *rizyyah* pl. *rizāyā* “fault; sin; losses” (CA *ruz*’, *razī’ah* pl. *arzā*’, *razāyā* “disaster”).
- §8.10 “**Colocynth**”: *sharā* (also: *hanzal*) “bitter apple,” already in the earliest Arabic poetry a synonym for bitter, abhorrent taste (but sometimes unavoidable in the absence of other food). “**Unlike**”: *shirā* (also *shirwā*) “like, similar, comparable to.” “**Spring water**”: *salsabīl* name of a spring in Paradise, the source of the sweetest imaginable water.
- §8.11 “**Razor-sharp**”: *hawārī*, *harā al-rajil xaṣmih* “the man killed his enemy by cutting him up, planting his spear in the breast and slashing his belly with a sword, lance, or knife”⁴ (perhaps from CA *ahra’a* “to kill”).⁵ “**Bone-shattering**”: *fawārī*, *fary*; *farā* “to rip open, to cut wide open”⁶ (CA *farā* “to split, cut, mince”). “**Blunt**”: *narm* “inferior quality steel.”⁷
- §8.15 “**Restore greenery**”: *bi-thanw al-khiṣīb*, lit. “the return of fertility”; in desert poetry *khiṣīb* means “a state of plenty brought about by rains and the resulting abundance of good pasture after a period of drought,” as in the verse of the pre-Islamic poet al-Muraqqish al-Akbar:

If they are in a state of plenty, they do not use it to gain a good reputation,
and if they suffer drought, they are even worse

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 109.

2 Al-Kuwaytī, *Yaqūl*, 244.

3 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 314.

4 Al-Suwaydā’, *Faṣīḥ al-‘ammī fī shamāl Najd*, 1054.

5 Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān*, 4646.

6 Sawayan, *Narrative*, 297.

7 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 110.

in yukhṣibū ya'yaw bi-khaṣbihimi
*aw yujdibū fa-hum bihi al'am.*¹

“Never seen”: *khiṣbin mḥīl* “unheard of blooming,” Alameemi avers that here *mḥīl* must have the meaning of *muḥāl* “impossible, unique, a one-off event.” In another context *mḥīl* may refer to the dimension of time: “year (*ḥōl*) after year,” as in a verse by Khalaf Abū Zwayyid, “your enemy of old, year after year” (*w-‘aduwik illi min gidīmin mḥīl*).² If the latter reading is chosen, it might mean: “(so much rain that) the greenery remains for another year.”

- §8.18 “**Cloudburst**”: *harūg* (CA *harāqat al-samā‘ ma’ahā* “the sky released its waters”).³
- §8.19 “**Rains**”: *wadg* (CA *wadq* “rain of all sorts, heavy or light”; *wadaqat al-samā‘; khurūju l-wadqi min khalali l-sahābi* “the rain erupted from the cracks in the clouds”).⁴ “**Split**”: *hidag* (CA *hadaqa* “to break s.th.”).⁵
- §8.20 “**Tawny buildings**”: *sumr al-mibānī*, perhaps goat hair tents are meant, but it could be any structure. “**Blackish-blue**”: *nīl* “indigo,” as explained to me, the change of color is caused by the wetness, *khars; kharas* “to make wet”;⁶ *khirs* “conical jar, made of porous clay, for storing water.”⁷
- §8.21 “**In sheets**”: *thā‘at al-mā difūg* “the water came down in streams” (CA *thā‘* “to stream”), as in the verse of ‘Amr ibn al-Ahtam, “(a cloud) with a fringe hanging near the ground, gushing with rain” (*lahu haydabun dānī s-sahābi dafūg*).⁸
- §8.22 “**Pranks**”: *zghāwī; zghēwī* “trickster”⁹ (CA *zaghāwah* “a type of people from Sudan”). It occurs in the saying: “Prayer of the frivolous, without proper

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:183, 2:491.

2 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 593.

3 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4654.

4 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4800.

5 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4634.

6 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 234.

7 Ḥanẓal, *Mu‘jam*, 208.

8 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:248; 2:84.

9 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 47, §15:17.

ablutions or intention” (*ṣalāt zghēwiyyah lā wuḍū walā niyyah*).¹ *zaghwā*, *zāghā* (noun *mzāghāh*) “to lead astray; incite, stir up, incense; instill evil, insinuate.”² “**Brighten**”: *zāwī*, explained as “amusing, entertaining”; *ziwiyyah* “clamor, noise, din.”³ “**Glances**”: *rimij/rimīg* (CA *ramaqa*). The comparison is with a beauty who shoots lethal glances from under her eyelashes.

- §8.25 “**Greedily sucked up**”: *tāb az-zlālī ‘amār an-nikhīl*, explained as “the sweet, limpid water was drunk heartily by the palm-trees, heavy with dates” (*‘amir bi-t-tamr*).
- §8.30 “**Sleeves**”: *gimṣān khūṣ* “wrapped in a cover made of palm leaves” to protect the dates from birds and insects.
- §8.33 “**Huge stallion**”: ‘*abann* (CA ‘*abann*, ‘*abannā* “huge camel”).
- §8.34 “**Goaded by chanting**”: also in §12:32.
- §8.35 “**Dangling**”: *mdikhin*.⁴
- §8.42 “**Peerless**”: *ḍarb* explained as “proverbial” (CA *ḍaraba mathalan*). “**Straight bridge**”: *gūd ‘irnin* explained as “long and fine” (CA *aqwad* pl. *qūd* “long-necked horse or camel”; ‘*irnin* “bridge of the nose”).
- §8.43 “**Beauty’s power**”: *mtihin* “reveling in, conceited” (CA *tāha* “to wander; to swagger, boast, brag”). *yatabāhī* “she takes pride in, in competition with others.”⁵
- §8.45 “**Shred of evidence**”: *ywāzī ad-dilīl* lit. “in support of such an indication”; it was explained to me that *dilīl* in this context might be taken to mean “evidence, indication (of good sense)” as in the Emirati saying: “Take a guide and shorten

1 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 4:149.

2 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 88, 187.

3 Al-Khāṭirī, ‘*Arīj*, 164.

4 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 115.

5 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 242.

the distance” (*khidh ad-dilil w- garrib al-misāfah*).¹ *Ywāzī* “to support, bear up, sustain, hold up”; *w-yā zēn zād al-galb bimmā ywāzī* “darling, this is more than my heart can bear”;² *awzētnī* “you tired, burdened me”;³ *mitwazzī* “patient in bearing with fatigue, hardship”;⁴ *ywāzīh* “to bear with, endure”;⁵ *tammēt galbī muwazzīh* “I kept burdening, putting heavy demands on my heart”;⁶ *w-illī wizānī hūb fī trābik* “the one who pains me is not in your land”;⁷ *ywāzūn al-khaṭar* “they brave the danger”;⁸ *mitbandigīm tḡāgat ash-sharr / yarmūn ramiyin mā nwāzīh* “armed with rifles they are evil sharp-shooters: / their hostile fire is too much for us to endure”;⁹ also, *mitwazzimīnih* with the same meaning.¹⁰ *Ōzēt nafsi ‘alā shayy* “I forced myself to to it.”

§8.46 “**Mirage**”: the traditional metaphor for false and treacherous appearance. The early Nabaṭī poet al-Khalāwī boasts that his verses quench one’s thirst, while the rhymes of others are a mere mirage.¹¹ Warnings against the hazards of desert expeditions without sufficient water, or being deluded by a mirage into believing that water is awaiting you, emphasize the importance of precautions, as in the lines of the famous late eighteenth-century poet Muḥsin al-Hazzānī:

Their words are a mirage wrapped in simmering heat;
a little puddle that does not quench one’s thirst
No more than floating reflections at noon
of midsummer’s scorching flames: no water at all!

ḥakihum lik mithl lālin fī sarāb
daḥḍaḥīn mā yirwī al-‘aṭshān māh

1 Ḥanṣal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 263.

2 Alameemi, *Safarjal: Dīwān Rāshid al-Khiḍr*, 329.

3 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 156.

4 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 232.

5 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 944, 1093.

6 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1093.

7 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1141.

8 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1181.

9 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1189.

10 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1186.

11 Ibn Khamīs, *al-Khalāwī*, 172.

mā yikūn illā sarābin fi hajīr
*shams gēdin lays yirwī min ḡmāh.*¹

The difference is that Ibn Zāhir speaks pensively about his beloved/youth, whereas al-Hazzānī follows the traditional pattern of praising a prince, while belittling the ruler's enemies. The simile remains current in more recent times, e.g., Ibn Sbayyil's verse:

Do not act from surmises and guesswork:
 a cool spell is no reason to travel without a waterskin

wlā takhidh ad-dinyā khrāṣin w-hagwāt
*yagṭa'k min nagl aṣ-ṣimil al-barād.*²

The metaphor turns into metaphor when the desert crossing stands for life in general and poetry for the waterskin, not a receptacle holding water but wisdom poetry for guidance and survival.

§8.47 **“Mirage”**: *lāl* (CA *al-āl*), syn. of *sarāb* in the previous line. Lack of preparedness and the danger of stumbling unawares into disaster are implicit in the imagery of the mirage as a metaphor for deceptive appearances.

§8.49 **“Intractable”**: *mistiḥīl*, “So, like an ox, he crouches and refuses to budge”;³ and Rushaydān bin Ghashshām: “If you know no ruse to extricate yourself from this quandary” (*ilā ‘ād mā lik ḥūlatin tistiḥīlahā*).⁴ The verse illustrates the saying: “If someone comes at you, know whether he is friend or foe” (*i‘rif‘aduwwik min ṣidīgak ilā jāk*).⁵

§8.51 **“Murderous disasters”**: *ghāyilātin tighīl* “you commit treacherous murder, assassinations” (CA *ghā’ilah* “calamity, ruin, danger; secret hatred”; *qūtila fulānun ghūlatan* “So-and-So was treacherously murdered”; *wa-ghāla mra’an mā kāna yakhshā ghawā’ilah* “he murdered a man who did not suspect him

1 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 534.

2 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 61, §14.2.55, and the identical proverb in al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 9:301.

3 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 103.

4 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 443.

5 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 1:191.

of hating him”;¹ *ghīlah*, *ighṭiyāl* “murder, assassination”; *ghāla* “to take away, destroy”); “it took my love for her away” (*ghālat wuddahā ghūl*).² As expressed in a proverb: “So-and-So is disease and treacherous murder” (*flān ad-dā wa-l-ghāyilah*), i.e., he commits his character assassination in a sly and surreptitious manner.³

§8.53 “**Come down**”: *timīl*, lit. “inclines, tilts to one side,” as in the saying, “the heavy hand of Fate pressed upon him” (*mālat ‘alēh bag‘ā*).⁴ Often it is compared to the balance of a camel load that must be equal in weight on both sides of the beast of burden for it to be carried without mishap.

§8.54 “**Trampled down**”: *miṭillīn* (CA *ṭall* “blood spilled with impunity, without being avenged or compensated”; *ṭallahu ḥaqqahu* “he wronged him with impunity.”)⁵ “**Unhinged**”: *miḍillīn*, derived from *aḍalla* “to lose one’s way, go astray.”⁶

§8.57 “**Ambushed me**”: *dahānī*; “sudden, unexpected attack” as in §16.38. Alameemi’s edition reads *khliṭathā*, “mixed with,” but this has no support in the MSS, which give *hiṣathā*, followed by the other editions. The broad meaning should be “fleet riding camels, with an escort of cavalry protected by armor”; *malābīs*, pl. of *milbis*, is a term for “warriors, men in armor”; *labbas* “to ready a horse for war.” The verb *hiṣa* here probably means “to have in its care” (CA *ḥaṣiya* “to enjoy the favor of; to acquire, gain”). The general meaning is that he stands no chance against this enemy: a warlike party of Bedouin raiders on camels and horses, as in the verse of Dhū l-Rummah:

Chances are that when they set up camp for the evening, you’ll hear
the neighs of pedigreed horses and roars of camels

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3329–39.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:270.

3 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 10:230.

4 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 7:139.

5 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 2696.

6 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 244.

ḥarā ḥīna yumsī ahlukā min finā'ihim
*ṣahīlu l-jiyādi l-a'wajyyāti wa-l-hadrū.*¹

Similar to this verse is §1:24. Obviously, the poet does not share the view of the poet Ibn Dawwās, in his reply to Jabr ibn Sayyār, that a higher age also brings advantages:

He complains about old age, but old age is a source of pride:
 it brings the dignity extolled by religious sages

yashkī ash-shēb wa-sh-shēb fih iftikhār
*ma'a wigārin hal ad-dīn yanbūnih.*²

§8.60 “**Refugee**”: *bitīl*, *mubattal*, see previous note; “someone who seeks refuge with a group, having robbed the animals of another tribe or being guilty of manslaughter, is declared unfit for acceptance, *ṭūliba bi-l-batl*”³ (CA *batala* “to cut off, sever”).

§8.64 “**Canopies**”: *ghidūf al-muwāshī*, lit. “the upper parts of the animals,” in reference to the highest part of the caravan, the ladies’ litter chairs carried by the strongest and biggest camels (CA *ghudfah* “headcloth, kerchief”).

§8.66 “**Predators**”: *as-sab'*, a word commonly used for “lion,” but here it is used in opposition to *isd* (CA *usud*), the specific word for “lion.” It is suggested⁴ that here *sab'* means “lion cubs.” Possibly, it refers to wolves. Similarly, in *Arabian Satire*, 43, the “lion” is presented as the good ruler who protects his law-abiding subjects against miscreants:

The true ruler provides his subjects with security
 by wielding the sword against theft and attack. [. . .]
 Like a fierce lion he rips the enemy to shreds,
 but reigns without violating his subjects’ rights. [. . .]
 Should the Bedouin dare to break his peace,
 he leaves the battlefield littered with their corpses.

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 576–77.

2 Sawayan, *Shi'r*, 482.

3 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 119.

4 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 246.

“Mark for murder”: *ghūl* “victim of a violent attack.” “Victim”: *ghibn*, lit. “suffering a loss, being the loser, dupe, fall victim to”; *ghbūn* “sorrow at a loss”¹ (also §9.38–39) i.e., they fell prey to the predators when they lost the lion’s protection.

§9.2 “Rejected”: *zāyil* “disappearing, leaving,” as in the line of ‘Abd Qays ibn Khufāf: “I have become sober and my foolhardiness left me” (*ṣaḥawtu wa-zāyalanī bāṭili*).² Here it means that the medicine remained without effect.

§9.3 “Spear”: *zargā*, lit. “blue, dark colored”; *zarag* “to throw, dart”; *zrigih bi-rumḥ* “he pierced him with his spear”; *mzarrag* pl. *mizārīg* “javelin, spear with a hooked spearhead” (CA *zaraqah bi-rumḥ* “he pierced him with a spear”). “Screw-shaped”: *dōbiliyyah*, synonym of *lawlabī*, “screw-shaped.”³

§9.5 “Buckets”: *ajwād* pl. of *jūd* “a large bucket.”⁴

§9.8 “Abused”: *ḥaggin ma yigūlūn ‘āyil* “people say, indeed, she is doing him wrong (*‘āyil*).”

§9.11 “The world for you”: *siwāh al-bidāyil* (*fidāk al-bidāyil* in Abū Shihāb, *al-Mājidī*, 141) “in compensation for, instead of other outcomes (such as grudges and anger).”

§9.13 “Gift-seeker”: *gaṣd al-‘aṭiyyāt*; cf. the use of the word *gaṣṣād* for the visitors who come from afar to meet Ibn Zāhir, “s.o. who travels with the express purpose to visit s.o. in particular,” in §21.28.

§9.17 “Leaky skin”: *ḍ‘āf aṣ-ṣimāyil*; plurals of *ṣimīl* “skin used for carrying water or milk,” are repeated in §§9.20–21. See notes to §§8.46, 10.34 for the frequent use of the waterskin as a symbol of one’s need for precautions to ward off dangers. Here these verses have not developed into a full-fledged section of

1 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 255.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:593, 2:221.

3 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 314.

4 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 314.

gnomic wisdom. “**Shoddy**”: *washlah* “dripping with water; bad quality, make” (CA *wāshil al-ra’y* “feeble judgment”; *wāshil al-ḥaẓẓ* “with little luck”).

§9.20 “**Harebrained**”: *khamīl*, *khāmīl*, explained as “someone who does not take sufficiently care of himself, for instance, by carrying an insufficient amount of water, and who is too liberal in the consumption of a limited amount”;¹ *khamāl* “stupidity; foolish act”; *khāmīl* “stupid” (CA *khamala* “to be obscure, unnoticed”). “**Precautions**”: *rāf* “to take precautions, use foresight in dealing with a situation”; *rāf*, *yirūf* “to be at s.o.’s service, be attentive to s.o.’s needs and wishes with loving care; *yihūf w-yirūf* “to show complete dedication in attending to s.o.’s needs”² (CA *ra’afa* “to be kind, show mercy”).

§9.21 “**Seasoned desert traveler**”: *man ‘ānas al-khalā*, “those used to arduous desert crossings”³ (CA *‘ans* “strong camel”; but more likely the verb is a variation of CA *anisa* “to be companionable; to be accustomed to” by substitution of *‘ayn* for *alif*, the linguistic phenomenon of *‘an‘anah*).

§9.24 It was explained to me that *sawā* here means “the work of, because of,” i.e., “(I am sleepless) because my heart went running after its first loyalty (the beloved).” In another reading it means “together,” i.e., “I and my heart,” and that the rhyme word *ḥāyil* stands for “something that comes in the way of, interposes itself; obstacle” (CA *ḥāla dūn*). Hence, the literal meaning would be: “(I am in this condition), because of my heart (or: as is my heart), because of a person who is no longer with me (*min lā bī*), and to whom he (the heart) is strongly attached (*ywālīh*), who has moved away (or: is preventing (us from enjoying sleep))” (*wālā* “to care for, about,” also in §10.37 and 14.35, as in the saying “if you do not wish to look after, care for, your camels, you’d better sell them” *mālīn mā twālīh bi’ih*).⁴ Thānī’s reading is *juwālīh jāyil*, which would mean that the heart went off in search of the beloved, as in the line of Bishr ibn Abī Khāzim: “Your heart is in the keeping of the ladies’ litter chairs as they depart” (*wa-qalbuka fī al-ḥa’ā’ini musta’ār*).⁵

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 142; Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 318.

2 Al-‘Ubūdī, *Mu‘jam*, 5:371.

3 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 142.

4 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 10:297.

5 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:660, 2:278.

§9.26 “**Unbearable loss**”: lit. “she for whose loss patience and consolation are of no use” (*lā ‘anh ṣabrin walā ‘azā*); the lover’s lack of patience to bear his trials is a stock motif, e.g., the early Nabaṭī poet Ibn Zayd:

In vain I struggled, my patience has run out,
because my heart’s arteries have no power to bear with it

ṣibart ilēn aṣ-ṣabr nahhā w-ingiḍā
*bi-l-asbāb mā lā yistiṭig al-‘alāyig.*¹

§9.32 “**Sturdy camel**”: *‘ēdihīyyah* “an archaic word popular with Arabian poets at the time, e.g., Ḥmēdān al-Shwē’ir and his older fellow-citizen of al-Qaṣab, Jabr ibn Sayyār² (CA *‘īdīyyah*). Ḥmēdān uses almost the same words as Ibn Zāhir in the hemistich: *da‘ dhā yā-ghādī ‘alā ‘ēdihīyyah*. “**Drooping lips**”: *hadlā* (CA *hadīla al-ba’ir* “the lips of the camel are drooping”).

§9.34 “**You ride**”: *tārish* “traveler; messenger”; *ṭarash* “to travel without tent and women, e.g., for some business.”

§9.36 “**Hellish pit**”: *dahānī bi-nīrānin*, lit. “ambushed me between several fires.”

§9.39 “**Swindling**”: *ghibn*, lit. “loss, frustrating outcome” (CA *ghubn* “fraud, swindle, duping, damage”); *walad ghiban* “boy born out of wedlock.”³ “**Throw good money**”: *‘ala sadd ghēbin* “without any idea of what it means, entails; blindly.” “**Degenerate brides**”: *al-haṭāyil* explained as “bad (women).”

§9.40 “**Plump**”: *ṣimūt al-ḥayy*, lit. “the silent one in the tribe,” i.e., her calves are so fatty that the anklets clasp tightly around the flesh and produce no sound, see note to §14.11.

§9.43 “**Combat-ready**”: *duwāwīr ḥarb*, explained as “men spoiling for a fight, eager to wage war.”

1 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 310.

2 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, xxxii, xlviin91, 115; Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 480, 489.

3 Al-Rawāḥī, *Al-Amthāl al-‘Umāniyyah al-sha’biyyah*, 164.

§9.45 “**Raucous fury**”: *bi-lā sa’yin* explained as “without thinking, unreasonable” (CA *sa’y* “endeavor, effort”).

§10.1 “**Molded**”: *ysā’ifnī bnāh*, lit. “helped me, was propitious to constructing”; a verb also used by Rumayzān in one of his political poems:

If past years benefited from fortune’s favors,
the world does not grant anyone lasting happiness

w-law kān māḍī ‘āmhā sā’afat lih
*ṣrūfin fa-mā d-dunyā bi-yibga si’idhā.*¹

§10.2 “**Well**”: *ghāḍiyah* is explained as “cloud,” but here used metaphorically for “water,” i.e., a well replenished by rains; *ghāḍiyy al-maghānī* “showering the desert pastures with rain”;² it also features in a proverb: “(how wonderful,) the water from a raincloud in daylight” (*wa-mā’i al-ghāḍiyah*)³ (CA *ghāḍiyah* pl. *ghawāḍī* “cloud that appears during the day and brings rain”).⁴ “**Gushes**”: *khlāf al-jadwal* explained as “the opposite of a calm stream,” i.e., it comes gushing out in a powerful jet.

§10.3 “**Boulders**”: *jandal* (CA *jandal* coll. “stones; what a man can lift of stones; mass of stone like a man’s head”).⁵ “**Sweeps away**”: see note to §10.6.

§10.16 “**Scented**”: *sijī/sigī* (CA *saqā*; *suqiya* “it was irrigated, sprinkled”). “**Loosened**”: *hillin* (CA *ḥalla* “to untie”).

§10.18 “**You pull the strings**”: *ōtilēt/awtilēt* lit. “you took the reins of power, overmastered,” as in a verse by ‘Abd al-Raḥīm Muṭawwa’ Ushayqir:

She fell in deep, delicious sleep, as when people
fall asleep and unawares are overmastered by the enemy

1 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 419.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 318.

3 Al-Maydānī, *Majma’ al-amthāl*, 2:329.

4 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3221.

5 Lane, *Lexicon*, 470.

*ghashāhā lidhīdh an-nōm wa-n-nōm kam ghashā
min al-gōm ḥadhrin wa-ytilōh ‘dāh.*¹

According to Alameemi the verb is an eighth form of *waliya*, with the same meaning as CA *tawallā*, “to take charge, seize power, control of”; this is also the explanation given in Abū Shihāb, 174: *awtilēt ar-rāy*, i.e., *tawallēt*. Normally the first radical of pattern VIII verb with /w/ is assimilated (as for instance CA *ittaqā* “to beware, stand in fear of God” from the verb *waqā*, *yaqī*). Another instance is *itīfā* (< *awtafā*, non-existent VIII form of CA *wafā*); and *iwta‘ā* as in *min ayyām mā wta‘enā* “at the time when we first became aware of that.”²

§10.34 “**Desert travelers**”: *wārdīn al-lāl*, lit. “those who enter into a desert mirage,” i.e., start on a hazardous journey (CA *al-āl* “mirage”), see also note to §12.33.

§10.37 “**Rusty steel**”: *ḥiliy*; *ḥilah*, *ḥilā*, “rust, oxidation”; *ḥilyat al-ḥadīdah* “the iron became rusty.”³ See also §15.14.

§10.39 This verse is regarded as a statement of the poet’s reasons for not touching the genre of *madīh*, panegyrics. The exception might be the reference to Oman’s Ya’rūbī (pl. al-Ya’āribah) ruler nicknamed Qayd al-Arḍ (“Registrar of the Land”), see §13.28 and Introduction.

§10.40 “**Reville**”: *rimast*, lit. “to speak about,” but clearly a negative sense is intended; for *rimas*, see notes to §§2.3, 3.5, 13.4.

§10.41 “**Cheerful countenance**”: *wayh/wajh al-mibishsh*; *bishāshah* “cheerfulness, joy” (CA *bashsha lah* “he met him kindly; behaved in a free and easy manner, cheerfully towards him”); “they meet travelers with a hearty and smiling welcome” (*tilgāhum b-hashshāshah w-bashshāshah*).⁴

§10.46 The verse’s guiding idea is one of frequent occurrence, e.g., Muḥammad ibn Manī’ al-‘Awsajī al-Badrānī al-Dawsarī, the chief of the town of al-Bīr:

1 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 385.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:157–58.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 189.

4 Kurpershoek, *A Saudi Tribal History*, 273.

The climb to the fulfillment of lofty ambition is tiresome,
 too hard and steep for the weak-willed [. . .]
 If it were otherwise any wimpish dud would do it;
 without the hardship it would be a picknick for all and sundry

marāgī al-‘lā ṣi‘bin ti‘bin sinūdahā
mikādin ‘alā ‘azm ad-danāyā ṣ‘ūdahā [. . .]
fa-law lā ghalāhā sāmahā kill mifllis
w-law lā ‘anāhā kān killin yirūdahā;¹

and in an eighteenth-century poem:

Strive for excellence with persistence,
 and if the market of good deeds is hot, make the highest bid

fa-bādir ilā l-‘ilyā bi-‘azmin w-himmah
w-in sīm fi‘l al-khēr yōmin fa-ghāl bih;²

and verses by Ḥmēdān al-Shwē‘ir on this routine: “My ambition is harder than the hardest rock” (*lī himmitin tagwā ‘alā gāsī aṣ-ṣifā*).³

§10.48 “If you have enough Omani *ghāzī* coins, you do not have to depend on others” (*bi-ghawāzīk maḥḥad ywāzīk*).⁴ See also §11.7.

§10.51 “Verdant youth”: *rayyān ash-shibāb*, lit. “sappy, juicy, succulent youth,” also *bāhī ash-shibāb* “splendid, dazzling youth,” see §§13.16, 20, 16.52; similarly, Shāyī‘ al-Amsaḥ:

Except tears shed for delicious youth:
 I can’t blame you for crying over those marvelous nights

illā min yabkī ladhḥat shibābih
mā alūm min yabkī liyālī l-‘ajāyib.⁵

1 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 514.

2 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 517.

3 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Satire*, 77.

4 Ḥanḥal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 293.

5 Sowayan, *Ayyām*, 292.

“**Higher pastures**”: *filiy*, explained as pl. of *falāh*, “desert pasture”; *filuw*; *rūs al-filiy* “the heads of the pastures,” i.e., the most distant, far-away parts, as in the line of Dhū l-Rummah: “Well-watered pastures, swept clean by torrents from the upper valleys” (*marabbi nafat ‘anhā l-ghuthā’a al-rawā’isū*).¹

§10.53 “**Torrential rains**”: *al-ghidr*, explained as pl. of *ghadīr*, “a large pool of water left by rains.”

§10.56 “**Well’s precinct**”: *min jibāh kawānif*, lit. “they (the damsels) hug the well’s perimeter” (*jibā* “the sides of a well, the earth around a well”; CA *jabā’* “the ground around a well”) as in the verse of al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥillizah:

When the camels hurry home from the wintery cold,
with an ostrich’s short steps towards the wattled enclosure at the well
wa-idhā l-liqāḥu tarawwaḥat bi-‘ashiyyiatin
ratka l-na‘āmi ilā kanīf al-‘arfajī.

where *al-kanīf* is explained as “an enclosure (*ḥaḏīrah*) made of wood of the ‘*arfaj*’-shrub where the camels find protection against the bitter cold of winter; wattled screens raised to protect camels from the wind”; *al-kanf* “protection”; *fulān yaknifu fulān* “someone who provides another person with cover and protection.”² On wattled enclosures of the Bedouin, see nn. 253 and 303.

§10.58 “**Beauties**”: *naḥāyil*, lit. “slim, lean ones” (CA *naḥīl*).

§10.61 “**Draped**”: *m’addal*; ‘*addalnāh* “we smoothed it out.”³

§10.63 “**Canopy**”: *ḥiniy*; *ḥaniyyah* pl. *ḥanāyā*, *ḥiniy*, *ḥinā* “bent litter pole; a litter with long curved poles”⁴ (CA *ḥinw* pl. *ḥiniy* “curving; any curved piece of wood”).

§10.64 “**Dispersed**”: *tifarrigat al-anwā*, lit. “travel intentions diverged”; i.e., each group of Bedouin assembled at their summer station decides to depart and they all travel in different directions (CA *nawā* “to intend, have in mind”;

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 1140–41.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḏḏaliyyāt*, 2:517–18, 2:198–99; also 1:530, 2:207, 2:210.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:77.

4 Musil, *Rwala*, 249–50.

niyyah “intention, plan”). The dispersal of the Bedouin tribes at the end of the summer, is preceded by a tribal council in which the travel plans are decided (*al-anwā*), but the term is also used to describe processes of the private mind, as in Ibn Zayd’s verse:

The inclinations of the heart are unpredictable, though
I am fated to remain inseparable from Ḥasnā’s memories

tṣarrif anwā l-glūb walā arā
*niṣībī min adkāri l-Ḥasnā mfārig.*¹

Time and season, intentions, the lovers’ hearts, the arbitrary acts of fate (*ṣarf*), and separation are intertwined, as also in §16:30. “Season”: here *anwā* refers to the time of the year; the year being divided in portions of time called after certain stars; “The Pleiades [. . .] is one of the twenty-eight *anwā*’ into which the heavens are divided. In each *naw*’, which lasts for thirteen days [. . .] some particular asterism rises just before dawn. The ancient Arabs used to ascribe rain falling during this period of thirteen days to the influence of the asterism dominating it”² (CA *naw*’ pl. *anwā*’). The day-of-departure scene is a prelude to the poet’s description of seasonal cycles of Bedouin migrations. In the hot season of midsummer the Bedouin would spend time at palm oases like al-‘Ayn and Līwā and depart after the date harvest. This and the next verse offer a terse sketch of the cycle of one year; perhaps another verse or verses have gone missing. For the poet the seasons are mainly of interest as a way of measuring the distance or proximity of the beloved; or the seasons may symbolize the fickleness of fate.

§10.65 “Without heed”: *la rāfū* “they showed no consideration for” (CA *ra’afa* “to show mercy, kindness”), see §9.20 and note. “Sickness of heart”: *bi-ḥālin ṭāyil* “with a serious condition.”

§10.68 “Snatch away”: *abdaw*, lit. “to move towards the desert” (CA *badā al-qawm*, *badā ilā al-bādiyah* “the people went forth to the desert”; *badw* “an Arab of the desert.”³

1 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 307.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 2:271.

3 Lane, *Lexicon*, 170–71.

- §11.6 “**Ignite**”: *lā tithīb* “it brings no profit, has no use”; *tithīb thībah* “help, rescue.”¹
“**Insidious gossip**”: *illā w-al-khibīth ḥdhā lahā*, lit. “its only outcome (*ḥdhā* “near, besides, attendant upon”) is vicious evil.”
- §11.10 “**Proliferate**”: *yizūl* “appear in great numbers, be numerous”; *zōl* “multitude, great mass of people packed together”; *yẓawwil*, “he gathers, collects, assembles”; *gaṭrah gaṭrah yẓawwil ghidīr* “a pool of water is collected drop by drop”;² *zāl al-gōm* “people assembled”; for *ẓiwīl*, see also §8:5, and *ash-sha‘ar aẓ-ẓiwīl* “thick hair”; *ẓiwīl al-kashar* “a gathering of poor devils, low classes.”³ “**No benefit**”: *lā yirā ẓiwālhā, ẓiwīl*, explained as “no one sees any profit, anything useful in it,” i.e., “the riches that accrue to scrooges are without benefit”; similarly, in an early Najdī Nabaṭī poem: “I found his speech to be devoid of profit” (*ligēt lih harjin b-ghēr ḍiwīl*)⁴.
- §11.11 “**Amass fortunes**”: *ḥiwaw*; the verb *ḥawā* often connotes riches collected by plunder, as in the line of an early classical poet, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Anamah: “If not for the footsoreness of their horses and the plunder they had already amassed” (*fa-la lā wajāhā wa-l-nihābu allatī ḥawat*) (Lyll, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:748, 2:319). Though not necessarily illicit, such gains amassed in “the world” (*ad-dunyā*) have no intrinsic value, according to this time-honored view.
- §11.18 “**Gaudy shine**”: *bā-tibahhīhā* explained as “she (the world) will take pleasure in, be in a festive mood”; *abhūt* “you became beautiful, your presence has lent beauty to”;⁵ *tabhī*, i.e., *tabhaj*, “you are glad, delighted”; *abhūt* i.e., *ibtahajt* “you are glad, delighted”⁶ (CA *bahā* “splendid looks that evoke admiration and happiness; *mubāhāh* “to boast, show one’s pride in”). “While you’re at work, the world is busy with you.”⁷ The enumeration of measurements of time, as part of the poet’s brooding on the vicissitudes and inequities of this world, is echoed by another poet of the period, Rumayzān:

1 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 88; Ḥanẓal, *Mu‘jam*, 137.

2 Al-‘Amārah, *Qiyam*, 144.

3 Ḥanẓal, *Mu‘jam*, 434

4 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 601.

5 Al-Khāṭirī, *‘Arj*, 85.

6 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ar*, 782, 734.

7 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 83.

A ferocious world unleashes its days and months,
its years pour out for you bitterness after bitterness

dunyan tighīz ayyāmaha wi-shhūrahā
wi-snīnahā tasgi ar-rjāl mrūrahā

followed by the common description of role reversals between owls and falcons, real men and feral cats, peregrines and sparrows, while chicken live in castles.¹

§11.21 “**Leave it**”: *yijlāh*, lit. “he clears it up, sets it right.” “**Transient matter**”: *ziw-wālha*, according to Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 188, “the world’s moving forces, steered by God,” (CA *zawwala*, “to remove, disperse”), but also given the context the more likely meaning is “transitory, ephemeral” (as a pl. of CA *zā’il*).

§11.24 “**Horses’ blankets**”: *yilāl/jalāl* (CA *jull* pl. *jilāl*, *ajlāl* “protective cover against the cold for a horse or camel”).²

§11.25 “**Embrace**”: *lāmā* (CA *la’m* “joining, connection”; *mulā’amah* “concord, harmony”).

§11.26 “**Woe unto them**”: *wā-‘azzāh* “how sorry I am for,” see Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 202n105 on this use of the *ḥarf al-nudbah*, the particle of lamentation.

§11.29 “**Death**”: *al-mōt ḥaggīn lāzim*, “death is an unescapable truth, fact,” as in the line: “With help of a cloud’s rainwater, my frivolity scores a victory against death” (*bi-mā’i saḥābin yaghlibi l-ḥaqqa bāṭili*), whereas the scholion observes, *ḥaqq*, “truth,” has the meaning of “death” and *bāṭili* “my fun, frivolous play”;³ “the messenger of death,” *ṭarīsh al-ḥagg*, i.e., lit. “the messenger of truth,” i.e., Izrā’il, the angel of death;⁴ see also §5.15. “**Time has come**”: *yūḥā lahā*, passive form of *awḥā*, *ōḥā* “to hear” (CA *waḥāh* “voice, sound”).

1 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 460.

2 Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān*, 664.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:754, 2:324.

4 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 456.

§11.32 “**Mistakes**”: *zallāt*, also §5:60. It refers to a gnomic wisdom expressed in the verse of the Jabrid poet ‘Amir al-Samīn:

Know that if a man committed a wrong,
surely, he will do so again later in life

ilā dās rajlin zallatin f-i‘lam innih
lizūmin ‘alēh in ‘āsh sawwā nizārahā.

The verse repeated by the end of eighteenth-century poet ‘Abd Allāh al-Sayyid.¹

§11.33 “**Godliness**”: *tigā*, repeated in §§11.35, 11.38, see note to §5:18.

§11.37 “**Tilt**”: *tadriy/tadrij*; *daraj* “to move, go” (CA *daraja* “to go on foot, walk slowly”).

§11.38 “**Too late**”: *mā wāḥā lahā*; *waḥiyy* “rapid”; *waḥā*, *waḥāh* “speed”; *waḥāyā* “fast riding camels.”²

§11.39 “**Calm weather**”: *khuwāhir*, “lack of wind, windless conditions, stagnant air,” also called *dūg*.³ “**Rough seas**”: *khubb* “very humid and strong eastern or southeastern winds, sometimes accompanied by clouds and rain: in these conditions ships seek shelter from violent waves and anchor in coves or near the coast”;⁴ *khabb* “shake, convulse”; *khabbah* “tumult, noise”⁵ (CA *khabbā* “to surge, heave,” said of the sea; *khabbā al-baḥr* “the sea is rough, agitated”). “**Shipload**”: *bār* pl. *bārāt* “heavy load”;⁶ this Persian word also means “effort, force, power.”⁷

§11.43 “**Pull buckets**”: *aḡ-ḡimāyā ar-rāshyīn ‘alā ḡ-ḡimā*, lit. “the thirsty men who are lowering their buckets (CA *rishā*’ “rope used to lower a bucket into a well”) into the well to slake their thirst.” “**Failed**”: *yikbā lahā* “those who gave up for

1 Sowayan, *Shi‘r*, 345, 524.

2 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 683, 537, 529.

3 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 206.

4 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 205–6.

5 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:80.

6 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 169.

7 Ḥanzal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 262.

lack of results,” as in a line of Rabī‘ah ibn Maqrūm, “when the weakling’s firestick gave no spark and he was at a loss what to do” (*idhā al-niksu akbā zandahu fa-tadhabdhabā*), i.e., *akbā*, “he had nothing to show for his efforts.”¹ In later usage it generally means “to fade, die down” as in the saying: “A fire only dies down in the fireplace” (*an-nār mā tikbā illā fī mawgidhā*), i.e., things tend to follow their natural course (CA *kabā* “to fade”; *akbā* “to fail, not produce a spark”).²

§11.48 **“Journey”**: *yi‘nā lahā*, lit. “it (the place) will be headed for,” third person singular present tense passive form of *‘anā*, “to travel with the purpose of meeting someone in particular,” as in the saying, “who has traveled from afar with the purpose of visiting us, must be given a hospitable reception” (*min ‘anā ilaynā wijab ḥaggih ‘alēna*).³ “He stands by his obligations toward this visitor” (*dūn ‘ānih*).⁴ In the narrative saga the verb is used for men coming from afar with the express purpose of meeting the poet.

§11.50 **“Poetry”**: *wasf*; *muwaṣṣif* “narrator, person telling a story”;⁵ and in one of the stories: “After that event he began to speak and to compose and recite poetry” (*wi-b‘idah rimas wi-twaṣṣaf w-giṣad*);⁶ see also §§14.43, 16.13. **“Ropemaker”**: *jālid*; *yilād/jilād* “rope strung through a ring on the ship’s deck to keep the oars drawn up when not in use.”⁷ **“Rope’s end”**: *māyāl*, explained as a “poetic plural” for *māl* (“thread”).

§12.2 **“Cauldron”**: *ḥimash* “to burn; light a fire.”⁸

§12.3 **“Victim”**: *khiṭirin bhā* “suffering, seriously wounded” (*ibidem*) (CA *khaṭar* “imminent danger, peril”).

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:733, 2:314.

2 Al-Rawāḥī, *Amthāl*, 204.

3 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 8:201.

4 Al-‘Ubūdī, *al-Amthāl al-‘ammiyyah fī Najd*, 2:529.

5 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:559.

6 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 209.

7 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 121; he believes the word is derived from *jalada*, “to whip, lash.”

8 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 188.

- §12.6 “**Vision**”: *jidā/gidā al-anzār*; *jidā* “towards”; *gādi* (Najdī) “in the right direction”; *jidāy* “come to me”; *jaddayt al-a’mā* “I guided the blind man”; *shū ant tjaddīnī* “what do you guide me” i.e., “you’re telling me nothing I don’t know already”¹ (CA *qidan*, *qidwah* “model, example”).
- §12.9 “**Sick**”: *wthūm*,² (CA *ithm* pl. *āthām* “sin, offense”).
- §12.11 “**Sad news**”: *ma’ānih shūm* (CA *shu’m* “calamity; evil portent”).
- §12.19 “**Eclipsed**” (*al-kannah*), that is, the disappearance of the Pleiades from 28 April to 6 June, heralds the end of the season of pasture, because the grasses shrivel in the hot sun and for lack of water:

There was grazing in Wāḥif and al-Ṣulb until it ended:
after the Pleiades’ eclipse, nothing was left to be had

luh Wāḥifa-l-Ṣulbu ḥattā taqaṭṭa’at
khilāfa l-Thurayyā min Arīkin ma’āribuh.³

The refusal of the tribe’s camel Bedouin to leave the desert pastures at this time caused a crisis with the poet ‘Adwān al-Hirbīd whose sheep could no longer endure the heat, an episode that starts: “One day ‘Adwān noticed that the stars had set. One should know that if the Pleiades have disappeared no further rains of early summer can be expected until the year after” (*yōm rā’ā ‘Adwān yōm min al-ayyām wi-lyā mēr hādhōlī an-njūm ghāban. wi-lyā mēr at-thurayyā lyā minnih ghābayh lā tirtijī ṣēf illā ṣēd dāyir*).⁴ Here §§12.19–20 are a concise summing up of the Bedouin year’s seasons. “**Tall palm trees**”: *marfū’ an-nya*, explained as “the white heart of a palm tree, *shaḥam*, the tree’s ‘fat’”; *an-nya*: *al-bu’d*, “distance,” i.e., a lover’s distance from his beloved, the distance that makes the lover pine away (CA *al-nā’y*). “**Surplus dates**”: *khashāyishih*; *khashāsh* “the inferior dates (CA *ḥashaf*) that are separated from the fresh *ruṭab*

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 149.

2 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ār*, 95, 1108.

3 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 842.

4 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 217.

dates.”¹ “**Shed**”: *tnaffiḍ* (CA *nafaḍa* “to shake, shake off”); *awān in-nafāḍ* “at date-picking time.”²

§12.20 “**Giants**”: *‘iwwān* “tall palm trees”; *‘iwwānah* “palm tree with a tall stem.”³

§12.22 “**Gurgling, silent**”: *min rāghiyin w-kitūm*, “when other camels whimper with distress, she remains silent” (*idhā mā baghamna [bughām*, explained as a synonym of *rughā* “whimper”] *tarāhā katūmā*);⁴ to remain silent under pressure, *katūm*, is often used in passages of love poetry to denote the lovers’ determination not to divulge their affair’s secrets, see §12.39. Similarly, a silent riding camel is much preferred: “A good camel will utter no sound when being saddled; this is very important at night or in a dangerous territory.”⁵

§12.23 “**Pack camel**”: *‘abīhī* “a strong, rested stud camel.”⁶ *‘bayyān* f. *‘bayyā* “an excellent strain of horses.”⁷ Perhaps it should read *‘abann*, *‘abannā* (CA “strong, hardy camel”).

§12.24 “**Chattels**”: *kill mā ṣār fī l-ḥiwī*, lit. “all chattels that were inside the shack”; *ḥiwī* “courtyard of a house”; *mḥawī* “trappings on the back of a camel.”⁸ “**Loaded**”: *jashsha’/gashsha’* (here in the passive) “to take down a tent or hut made of palm fronds”; *gashsha’ bēt ash-sha’ar* “he loosened the ropes from the pegs and collected all items inside the tent in preparation for the journey.”⁹ “One takes the tent down, another pitches his tent” (*ḥad yigsha’ w-ḥad yibnī*);¹⁰ see also §17:28. *gasha’* “to remove, pull out (weeds).”¹¹ In early poetry *gash’* occurs with the meaning of “tent made of hide,” as in a verse of Mutammim: “When the tent’s deck creaks in the bitter cold of winter” (*idhā al-qash’u min ḥassi l-shitā’i*

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 191.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:101.

3 Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 476.

4 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:355, 2:132; and 1:787.

5 Musil, *Rwala*, 298.

6 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 191.

7 Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 445.

8 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 124, 298; Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 195.

9 Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 155, 528.

10 Al-Rawāḥī, *Amthāl*, 53.

11 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:424.

taqa‘qa‘a).¹ “Colorful clothes”: *rgūm* “colorful, ornamented clothes” (CA *raqm* pl. *ruqūm*); in early classical poetry the word occurs as part of the scene at the beloved’s departure and descriptions of her camel and litter chair, in strikingly similar terms and imagery, e.g., *mustakīm* “quiet” (see §12.28 below) in a verse by Muraqqish the Elder:

Carrying broidered curtains, amazing to see,
on the back of a full-grown, docile camel

rāfi‘ātin raqman tuhālu lahu l-‘āynu
*‘alā kulli bāzilin mustakīmī;*²

and one by al-Muthaqqib al-‘Abdī:

The litters are covered with a thin muslin veil [*killah*] and over that a
thicker embroidered cloth [*raqm*],
and they have pierced in them peepholes for their eyes

zaharna bi-killatin wa-asdalna raqman
*wa-taqqabna l-waṣāwiṣa li-l-‘uyūnī.*³

The scholion explains that *al-raqm* refers to cloth from Yemen draped over litter chairs, as is the cloth called *‘aql*, and that the color of both is red, as in the verse of ‘Alqamah ibn ‘Abadah:

Worked with red broidery in lines [*‘aql*] and circles [*raqm*], all day long
the birds snatch at them,
as though they were stains of blood from entrails

‘aqlan wa-raqman tazallu al-ṭayru takhṭafuhu
*ka-annahu min dami l-ajwāfi madmūmū;*⁴

and in an early sixteenth-century poem by Abū Zāhir: “He protected the red litter chairs” (*ḥamā ḥumr al-hawādij*);⁵ see also note to §2:46–47. “Poles”: *ghdān* “pole from which clothes are hung; colored drapes hung around the bed

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:528, 2:207.

2 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:468, 2:173.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:578, 2:229, 2:231.

4 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:790, 2:334.

5 Sawayan, *Shī‘r*, 289.

in a bridal chamber”;¹ “wooden poles on which clothes are hung to dry after washing (in the absence of ropes to suspend and hang clothes on).”² “A shirt on a hanger” (*thōb ghdān*) is an Emirati designation for an insignificant person, a slacker and idler.³

§12.25 “**Stripes**”: *rgūm*, as in the previous verse, it refers to “colorful clothes,” this time the Syrian-made women’s dress (CA *raqm* “a striped sort of garment, cloth; cloth figured with round forms”).⁴

§12.27 The anklets (*khilkhāl*) do not produce a jingling sound because the plumpness of the calves makes the anklets clasped tight: a metonymic way of praising the beauty for her fleshy, plump appearance. See Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 198–99n89, for a discussion of this ideal of female attraction.

§12.28 “**Touch**”: *hiyas/hijas*, explained as *limas, taḥassā*, “to touch, stroke.” “**Thumb’s touch**”: *lafzin bi-l-ibhām*; *lafz*, also *labz*: “gentle touch, such as soft tapping of the ground with the hoof by a camel in stationary position.”

§12.30 “**White brilliance**”: *jalāhā al-khibā* lit. “the little tent (in which she was kept) cleared her (skin)”; i.e., she did not have to work outside like the common women but was sheltered from the sun so as to preserve her “aristocratic” whiteness of skin (CA *jalā* “to clean, polish; to be brilliant”), see note to §14.12 and §12.21 above.

§12.32 “**Driver’s chant**”: a standing expression in the departure scene, e.g., this verse by Suwayd ibn Abī Kāhil:

One morning she made a firm decision to depart;
the caravan leader brought the camels and off they went

bakarat muzmi‘atan niyyatahā
*wa-ḥadā l-ḥādī bihā thumma ndafa’*⁵

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:376.

2 Ḥanḥal, *Mu‘jam*, 486.

3 Ḥanḥal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 380.

4 Lane, *Lexicon*, 1139.

5 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:396, 2:143.

“Camel train”: *aẓ‘ān*, *ẓa‘āyin* “camels which carry the tents, clothing, household goods, women and children of a migrating clan”¹ (CA *ẓa‘īnah* “camels carrying the litters in which the women ride; woman carried on such a litter”). The seasonal and emotional cycles are warped up in these early verses of Dhū l-Rummah where many details that read like a paraphrase of Ibn Zāhir’s scenes:

I fixed my gaze on Mayy’s camel train,
the litters swaying from side to side like branches of a *mays*-tree;
Camel trains that travel far before halting
in unspoilt nature swept by cool breezes;
They alight at al-Ṣamān’s pastures,
a camel’s paradise of grassy sands and pools of water;
Where in wide hollows, rimmed around the edges,
rivulets and water courses laid carpets of *safā*-greenery;
Until, at night, desert beetles climbed the wilted stalks,
and in Ma‘rūf the crickets started chirping;
In early morning, at Mālik’s steep dunes,
the simmering mirage seemed to lift up all shapes:
Before we knew, dreaded separation took us by surprise,
as camels and litters were readied for departure;
Chattels were loaded on the pack camels’ bruised backs,
the ladies’ chairs were fastened on the sturdy males;
For intimate friends to say goodbye there was no chance,
except for a furtive glance and eyebrows’ signs;
Through a curtain’s slit we caught a view
of a dark-eyed doe, creamy-white above her chest

nazartu ilā aẓ‘āni Mayyin ka-annahā
muwalliyatan maysun tamīlu dhawā’ibuh
ẓa‘ā’inun lam yaḥlulan illā tanūfatan
‘adhātan idhā mā al-bardu habbat janā’ibuhā
ta’arrajna bi-l-Ṣamāni ḥatta ta’adhdharat
‘alayhin artā’u al-liwā wa-mashāribuh
wa-ḥattā ra’ayna al-qin’a min fāqi’i l-safā
qadi ntasajat quryānuhu wa-madhānibuh

1 Musil, *Rwala*, 286, 625.

wa-ḥattā sarat ba'da karā fi lawiyyihi
asārī'u ma'rūfin wa-ṣarrat janādibuh
fa-aṣbaḥan bi-l-jar'ā'i jar'ā'i Mālikin
wa-Ālu l-ḍuhā tazhā l-shubūḥa sabā'ibuh
fa-lamma 'arafnā āyata l-bayni baghtatan
wa-ruddat li-aḥdāji l-firāqi rakā'ibuh
wa-qarrabna li-l-aḏ'āni kulla muwaqqā'in
min al-buzlī yūfi bi-l-ḥawiyya, ti ghāribuh
tarā'ā lanā min bayni sijfayni lamḥatan
ghazālun aḥammu l-'ayni biḍun tarā'ibuh.¹

- §12.33 “**Mirage**”: *al-lāl* (CA *al-āl*) may symbolize the distance and consequential rupture of relations, and the rupture itself, as in the saying: “Between you and her is the mirage” (*bēnik w-bēnih al-lāl*).²
- §12.36 “**Stout litter poles**”: *jathth al-ḥanā* (CA *jathth* “to pull up, cut off from the root”; *jathīth* “young palm trees, shoots”); *ḥanā*, see §10.63, *ḥiniy*.
- §12.41 “**Headwinds, tailwinds**”: *fāli'* (pl. *fāli'āt*), *wālim* (pl. *wlūm*): winds against the direction of the ship; favorable wind when sailing out to sea”; for more detail, see §5.45.
- §13.2 “**Ceaseless stream**”: *aknifat* “ever more water flowed from it (the well)”³ (CA *kānafa*, *aknafa* “to help, assist”; *kinf* “box with one’s necessities, professional tools; oblong box used by traders, tool-box; something that offers all that one needs”).⁴ “**Well**”: *yilib/gilib* “well” (CA *qalib* “a well in the desert”). “**Stream**”: *ymām/jmām*; *jamm* pl. *jmām* “the collecting of water in a well”; *ghazīrat al-jamm* “a well abundant in water” (CA *jamma* “it became abundant,” said of water in a well).

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 825–32.

2 Al-'Ubūdī, *Anthāl*, 1:292.

3 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 58.

4 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3941.

- §13.3 “**Opulent**”: *bahyā* “wide, plentiful, well-to-do” (CA *bahw*). “**Cool**”: *ṭahyā* “cold”¹ (*ṭahyān* “a piece of wood on which a water vessel is kept cool,” *Lisān*, 2716). “**Sands**”: *hayām* “place of soft, shifting sands; sandy earth.”²
- §13.4 “**Recitals**”: *rimast*; *rimas*, n. *ramsah*, is still the common word in the Emirates for “to speak, have a conversation”; here it refers to words spoken in public at a social gathering where verses are quoted, recited, and discussed, among other topics. It also occurs in Najdī poetry of the period, e.g., Rumayzān ibn Ghashshām: “Stormy winds carry words spoken in an intimate session,” i.e., divulge what should have remained private (*w-lākinn yibdī ‘āṣif ar-rīḥ ram-sah*).³ See notes to §§2.3, 3.4; as here, the other instances of use of the word for “to speak” also come with the word for “crowds” (*zōl*) that are attracted to the cultural gathering.
- §13.5 “**Poetry**”: *jīl/gīl* lit. “speech” from the passive of *gāl* “he said” (CA *qāla*). “**Raw**”: *thām* “food without salt, tasteless”;⁴ *tahhām* “tightfisted and greedy person”⁵ (CA *tahima* “to become spoiled (food), give a bad smell”). “**Well-cooked**”: *nādiy/nāḍij* (CA *nāḍij* “ripe, mature, well-cooked”).
- §13.7 “**Crabbed bigot**”: *bilūt*, also *billūt*, “hidebound person, bigot, rancorous prig”⁶ (CA *balata* “to cut off”; *balita*, *ablata* “to be cut off from speaking, stop speaking”; *billūt* “a *zimmūt*, dour man, moralist who censures, cuts off people”).
- §13.9 “**Erased**”: *tamm illā ka-mā ‘afwin* lit. “it would only remain as an erased trace” (in Emirati dialect *tamm* has the CA meaning of *baqiya* “to remain”).
- §13.10 See §13.21 below. “**Astride**”: *ṣrūyhā/srūjhā* “saddles” (CA *sarj* pl. *surūj*). “**Camels**”: *hiyin/hijin* “fast riding camels” (CA *hujun*).

1 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 58.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:490.

3 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 428.

4 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 58.

5 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 127.

6 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 58.

§13.12 **“Wooden ship”**: *washriyyah* “a strong, wooden ship of recent built”;¹ *wishār* “newly built ship, not older than three years”² (CA *washara* “to saw”). “Sail”: *dāmānt*; *dāman*, *dāmān*, *dīmān* “mainsail sheet [. . .] when on a port tack [. . .] the sheet should be to the starboard of the helmsman.”³ *Dāman* “the lower part of the sail at the backside of the ship, a word probably derived from Urdu, and in Persian *dāmān* and *dāman* mean the ‘side of something or the lower part of a sail’”;⁴ *dāman* “order of the captain to the helmsman to tack the ship somewhat more to the wind.”⁵ It is the opposite of *yūsh* (*jūsh*), said when steering the ship to sea, as in the saying: “I said, ‘steer towards sea,’ and he said, ‘no, steer it back to port!’” (*agūl yūsh*, *yigūl dāmin*), i.e., a confusing situation when contradictory signals are given and discord reigns;⁶ see §15.30. “Back to port”: *mā tighibb*; *ghibbah* “deep sea.”⁷ **“Favorable wind”**: see §§5.45, 12.41, 14.10, 17.9.

§13.14 **“Swooned”**: *lāthat*; *lāth al-markab* “the ship keeled over, the crew lost control, and it drifted helplessly on the waves”; *lāth ‘ala* “to consign o.s. to the care of s.o. else for lack of other options”; “naked and seeking support with s.o. dressed in shreds of clothes” (*‘aryān w-lāyith ‘ala mfaṣṣakh*), like the idiom “the blind leading the blind”⁸ (CA *lawitha* “to be tardy, linger”; *lūthah* “lassitude, fatigue, derangement”).

§13.17 **“Bailed”**: *anzif* “I bail, scoop water out”; *nazzāf* “a pump to suck water out of a ship’s bottom”⁹ (CA *nazafa* “to drain, draw off”). **“Deep”**: *ymām* “deep sea, open sea” (CA *yam* pl. *yumūm*); *yimmah* “water that collects in the bottom of a ship (and must be pumped out).”¹⁰

§13.20 **“Rope”**: *dāmhā*; *dām* a rope used to pull a small or medium-sized pearling ship on shore or back into the sea by a group of men, which is considered a tricky

1 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 59.

2 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 24.

3 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 256, 524.

4 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 43.

5 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 146–47.

6 Ḥanḏal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 244.

7 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 195.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 593.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 683.

10 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 752.

operation; the rope is wound around a wooden pole on shore, and the word may be derived from *tadwīm*, “turning, winding”;¹ *dāmāt* “the tips of wooden beams that meet in a ship’s bow and stern.”²

§13.22 “**Sin**”: *zallah*; the common expression is *mā dist zallah* “I committed (lit. “did not tread on,” *dās* “to step on”) no wrong, offense,” as in Shāyī‘ al-Amsaḥ’s line:

I am the rampart of my neighbor, committed no wrong;
never did I stoop to despicable acts or lost my nerve

anā ‘azīz al-jār mā dist zallah
*walā marritin dist al-khanā wa-l-fishāyil.*³

See §5.60 and the notes to §11.32 and §15.17.

§13.33 “**Waterholes**”: *msāḥ*, explained as “watercourse where sweet water is found.” “**Enjoy**”: *al-‘ēn ṭāb manāmhā* lit. “the eye enjoyed sound sleep.” In today’s Emirates this famous verse is considered a succinct description of the country’s coastal and inland desert areas. In Ibn Zāhir’s saga it is connected to his search for a suitable grave which led him to the area of Rās al-Khaymah; see §23.1.

§14.3 That is, like camels after they have been watered at the well, lie down to rest (CA ‘*aṭanah* “the watering of camels and then making them lie down at the water”); *mi‘ṭān* “resting place at the water.” Here the word used is ‘*aṭīn*, “People and herds that rest a few hours after the watering at the well.”

§14.5 “**Unsewn cloth**”: *khzūf* s. *khazf* “unsewn piece of cloth” (CA *khazaf* “pottery, baked clay; *khazafa* “to rend”; *khazafa al-thawb* “he cut a piece from the cloth”). Other reading: *jzūf*; *jizaf*/*yizaf*, *majzūf*/*mizūf* “numerous, ample.”⁴

§14.14 “**Civet-scented**”: *zihām* synonym for *zibād*, “civet.” “Behind the ears”: *dhifāriḥ* “the bone behind the ear” (here in dual, “both ears”)⁵ (CA *dhifrā*). The wording

1 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 124–25.

2 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 42–43.

3 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 274.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 154.

5 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 208.

and context is ancient, e.g., *dhafārā* in Dhū l-Rummaḥ's verses is remarkable for its close parallel with Ibn Zāhir's departure scene:

[They stayed on the pastures] until the desert's withered barley grasses
 shed their prickles
 and the pasturing Bedouin hanker for cultivation's shade; [. . .]
 They readied well-trained strong male camels for the ladies' litters,
 denuded of their wool by the summer heat;
 Neck muscles daubed with a yellowish smear,
 a crust left by runnels of dried black transpiration;
 Like pepper rolled into grains by the secretion
 of sweat streaming from the cavities behind their ears;
 Their backs adorned with colorful Syrian coverings
 hung over the curved litter poles of the doe-eyed beauty

ḥattā idhā hazzati l-buhmā dhawā'ibahā
fī kulli yawmin yushahhī l-bādiya l-ḥaḍarā
raddū li-aḥḍājihum buzlan mukhayyasatan
qad harmala l-ṣayfu 'an aktafiḥā l-wabarā
taqrī l-'alābiyya muṣfarra l-'aṣīmi idhā
jaffat akhādīduhu jawnan idhā n'aṣarā
ka'annahu fulfulun ja'dun yudaḥrijuhu
naḍḥu l-dhafārā idhā jawlānuhu ḥadarā
shāfū 'alayhinna anmātan shāmiyyatan
'alā qanā alja'at azlāluhu l-baqarā

and “A camel with noble cavities behind the ears and light-footed” (*itāqu l-dhafārā wussaju wa-mawālī'ū*).¹ Lane explains it as “the place that sweats in the back of a camel's neck behind the ear; two protuberances on the right and left of the small hollow in the middle of the back of the neck, derived from *dhafaru al-'araqī*, ‘the pungency of the odor of sweat,’ because it is the first part that sweats in a camel.”² Ibn Zāhir's imagery and wording resembles Dhū l-Rummaḥ's verses, though from a different perspective: Dhū l-Rummaḥ describes the departure of the Bedouin from the desert towards their summer station at a palm oasis, whereas Ibn Zāhir does so from the perspective of an oasis-dweller who watches in dismay as his Bedouin sweetheart departs from

1 Dhū l-Rummaḥ, *Dīwān*, 1149–50, 1295–96.

2 Lane, *Lexicon*, 967.

the oasis with a fresh supply of dates towards the desert. The contrast reinforces the impression that Ibn Zāhir's roots are among the inhabitants of the oases. See Introduction, p. xiii.

- §14.15 **“Kick”**: *lighz* a kick, knock on the higher part of the flanks, *mankab*,¹ synonym of *lafz* in §12.28 in a similar scene.
- §14.23 Sayings that correspond to “with friends like you, who needs enemies,” are common in poetry's complaints about insufficiently loyal friends.
- §14.31 **“Strife”**: *zihām* (CA *muzāhamah* “enmity and strife”; *zahamtu fulān ‘an* “I rebuked, drove back from”).
- §14.33 **“Son”**: *ḍanan* (CA *ḍana'a*, *aḍna'a* “to bring forth, give birth; *ḍan'*, *ḍin'*, *ḍanw*, *ḍinw* “offspring of anything”); i.e., the results of the state of mind (*ḥāl*) mentioned in §14.31. **“Be of use”**: *mā jāz li-* lit. “he would not suit, please”; as in the saying, “If you like doing something, then do it” (*min jāz lih sayyin f-yatbi'ih*).² The verse states that it is of no use under any circumstances, not for decent purposes nor for forbidden activities (similar to the statement that one's conduct will not benefit him either during his life or with a view to the hereafter, §§11.11–12). In the following verses the poet embroiders on this conclusion: the only solution for such a state of mind is a heavy dose of tough love.
- §14.38 **“Astray”**: *athām* “fault, damage” (CA *ithm*, *athām* “sin, offence, unlawful act that retards recompense in a religious sense”), as *wthūm* in §12.9, it refers to the injustice done by the beloved.
- §14.39 **“Real farewell”**: i.e., the inevitability of death, as prefigured by the beloved's departure and separation, as expressed in the saying: “Separation from the beloved is fated and written in the stars” (*mgaddar w-maktūb frāg al-maḥbūb*).³
- §14.52 **“Hollered”**: *nihām*, *nahmah* “loud chant to encourage lines of rowing oarsmen of a pearling ship”; *nahhām* “the man whose job it is to intone this chant on a

1 Information from Ḥammād al-Khāṭirī.

2 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 8:139

3 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 10:313.

ship”;¹ *yinham in-nahhām*: the singer (of the ship) would sing”² (CA *nahama* “to scold and threaten, to chide a camel; *nahīm* “chiding of camels”). In Najd *naham* means “to call for assistance, aid.” See §§2.11, 8.23–24 on the personification of thunderstorms and rain. Professor Clive Holes communicated two examples of modern usage in an Omani sedentary dialect: *naham* / *yinham* is used with the meaning “call, shout, invite,” *yinahmu l-arbā’ ilē iltamm il-arbā’* “they call together the communities until they gather together”; *nāham* “call to one another, invite one another,” as in *yitnāhamu u yigību l-ḥalwa* “they invite one another and bring sweets.”

§15.8 “**Feed**”: *al-yawāz/jawāz* “sufficient (to feed them)”;³ *jāz min* “to leave”; *jūz min shughlak* “leave your work”⁴ *mā yāwizan fī dīrat al-Ḥarāsīs* “they (f. pl.) are loath to stay in the land of the Ḥarāsīs tribe (in Oman).”

§15.11 “**Ne’er-do-well**”: *hdānī* “coward, sluggard, wimp, irresolute person.”

§15.14 “**Feet**”: *rithāyim*; *rathīm* “bruise, contusion; bleeding of a camel’s pads caused by stones.”⁵ “**Without a care**”: *mashy at-tarsh* “the walk, conduct of a heedless, frivolous person (*al-jāhil al-naziq*).”⁶

§15.15 “**Gird up for battle**”: *‘ṣiyy al-ḥarb law dāmaltahā*” explained as “if you have been swinging, handling, battle clubs” (CA *dāmala* “to handle carefully”).

§15.16 “**Peddlers**”: *aṭ-ṭirīd* “small-time itinerant trader who specializes in gossip.”⁷

§15.17 “**Good life’s music**”: *ayyām at-taghānī*, lit. “days of luxury.” The idea expressed here, that one should always deal gently with friends—if only for the reason that one may need them one day—is a very current piece of wisdom in poetry.

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 694.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:433.

3 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 10:336.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 144; al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ār*.

5 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 273.

6 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 211.

7 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 211.

- §15.20 “**Noble pedigree**”: *al-ḥirr*, lit. “free, pedigreed,” which commonly is applied to “noble” falcons and she-camels used for fast long-distance riding, and by extension to men who boast of a noble lineage and the chivalrous qualities supposedly inherent in it. Here, the first hemistich seems to refer to the human variety of nobility. *Yimīnih*, “knightly strength,” lit. “his right hand,” stands for admirable deeds, such as serving guests, bestowing gifts, and wielding the sword. The left hand is used for cleaning oneself after defecating, and therefore a symbol for base behavior.
- §15.21 “**Smoldering fuse**”: *‘iṭbah* “piece of cloth or cotton rope or a rag that is set on fire, burns slowly at first, and spreads a stench,” as in the saying: “He said, ‘I smell a burning rag,’ and the other, ‘when it burns harder, you will see it’” (*gāl riḥ ‘iṭbah gāl tikbar w-tibīn*).¹
- §15.24 “**Fend off**”: *tigā tittigi bah*, see note to §5.18 for the use of *tigā* (CA *tuqā*, *taqwā* “godliness, piety”). “To be on one’s guard against, protect oneself against” (CA *ittaqa*), i.e., from Hell’s fires, is the religious function of *tigā* (*taqwā*). In the tribal ethos what counts is one’s reputation as an upholder of social virtue. The two are intimately related, though there are great differences in emphasis.
- §15.29 “**Taunts**”: *law twāfik lāyimah*, literally “if you get plenty of blame.”
- §15.30 “**Sails**”: *al-yūsh/jūsh* “the tack of the sail; used as a directional term from the point of the helmsman”;² “tacking [. . .] entailed the tricky operation of dipping the yard and putting the sail about [. . .] the phrase *māla li-aḥad al-jawshayn*, i.e., to incline to one of the two jawshes [. . .] when the pilot is sleepy the jawsh (luff) may draw the ship round”;³ *jūsh* the luff; when on a port tack [. . .] the jawsh should be off the port bow and the sheet to the starboard of the helmsman.”⁴ “Rope attached to the sail; *yūsh* a command to pull the rope to steer the ship towards the open sea”;⁵ “the shortest of the sail’s ribs at the ship’s bow or

1 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 5:246.

2 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 520.

3 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 57.

4 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 256.

5 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 753.

its corner”;¹ *ḥadd al-yūsh* “to sail against the direction of the wind, at an angle to the wind”;² *yūwwāsh/jūwwāsh* “to sail against the wind by tacking left and right”;³ “sail to the sea with the tide (*madd*), but not against a very stiff wind” (*yāwish fī l-madd wā tyāwish fī r-rīḥ*), advice to do things at the propitious time;⁴ see also §13.12. “**Shallows**”: *ar-rigg sāfil*, *rigg* “shallow water; as in the Kuwaiti saying, ‘*ar-rigg ḥawwāsh*, shallow water lets the ship run aground, to run into an obstacle”;⁵ *ragg* “to be shallow, the opposite of *ghizr* (deep water); *rig* “shallows,” *rigig* “water of three fathoms depth.”⁶ *Sāfil* “the position of ships relatively to the direction of the wind; a ship closest to the direction of the wind is called *ālī* (“high”) and a ship at a greater distance from the wind *sāfil*; all ships in the southern part of the Gulf are called *sāfil*, and those in the northern part *ālī*; any ship sailing to the south of other ships is called *sāfil*, and the others *ālī* in relation to the *sāfil* ship.”⁷ “**Other ships**”: *sinyār* “a number of ships sailing in one line; *shallat as-sifn sinyār*, the ships sailed out as a fleet; a fleet of pearling ships sailing together from a certain harbor, the fleet of Dubai, etc.; the captain is asked, *man hu sinyārik* ‘Who are in your fleet?’ i.e., which other ships are going to accompany us?”⁸ “**Run aground**”: *lāth gāʿi*; *lāth al-markab* “the ship keeled over to one side, the helmsman lost control over the ship, and it was tossed about by the waves while it drifted helplessly towards the shore”; *lōth* “driftwood of a shipwreck that washes ashore”;⁹ *gāʿi*, said of a ship, “stationary, at anchor.” The rhyming word *zaʿāyimiḥ* is explained as “one of the names for a ship.”¹⁰ The term seems to be unknown in Abu Dhabi, but in Rās al-Khaymah a picture was found of a *zīmah* (pl. *zaʿāyim*) in the Zayed Marine Heritage Museum whose owner is Ṣāliḥ Aḥmad Ḥanbalūh al-Shiḥḥī, a still active sea captain who used to sail such ships. : <https://www.thenational.ae/uae/heritage/a-dutchman-s-quest-to-translate-bedouin-poetry-takes-him-to-ras-al-khaimah-1.989704>.

1 Al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam*, 37.

2 Al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam*, 184.

3 Al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam*, 183.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Jāmiʿ al-amthāl*, 508.

5 Ḥanḏal, *Jāmiʿ al-amthāl*, 186–87.

6 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 526.

7 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 217.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 338.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 592–93.

10 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidi*, 213.

§15.33 **“Snuggled up”**: *‘an al-jidhā* “safe from harm”; *jādhi* synonym of *gāṣir* “falling short, faltering, limping” (CA *jadhā, jathā* “to kneel down,” e.g., to engage in close combat).¹

§15.36 **“Irrefutable”**: *mā min nāhiyin* “there is no one to forbid, refute it”; the parallelism in two consecutive lines can hardly be fortuitous, and this is reflected in the use of the same wording in the translation.

§16.3 **“Defame”**: *shanānī, shanā* “to badmouth, slander, defame, hurt one’s good name”; *allāh yishūnih* “may God put him to shame” (CA *shana’a* “to loath, hate; *shan’an* “spiteful, malevolent, bad of character”).²

§16.7 **“Put down”**: *bilīt, balwā*; here the meaning is close to the original sense of a warrior’s ability to inflict grievous harm on his opponent, as in the line of Abū Dhu’ayb:

Each keen to win for himself the praise, each confident
in his skill of fence—and the day for either a day of bale

mutahāmiyayni l-majda kullun wāthiqun
*bi-balā’ihi wa-l-yawmu yawmun ashma’ū.*³

(CA *balā* “to afflict”; *balwā* “trial, tribulation, misfortune, calamity”). **“Unless trifled with”**: *lā yijūz lahā* lit. “it is not permissible, bearable”; *mā yāwizan fī dīrat al-Ḥarāsīs* “they (f. pl.) are loath to stay in the land of the Ḥarāsīs tribe (in Oman)”

§16.8 **“Chatterbox”**: *hadhrān*; a babbler earns disrespect, as expressed in the sayings: “So-and-so is an obnoxious babbler” (*flān hadhdhār ‘alā ghēr maṣlūh*)⁴ and “A prattler does not command respect” (*min kithir hadhrih gall gadrih*).⁵ The nefarious consequences of hatred inspired by rumormongers are described by the early classical poet ‘Abdah ibn al-Ṭabīb in a section that opens with the verse:

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:677.

2 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 2335.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:359, 2:881.

4 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 10:239.

5 Al-‘Ubūdī, *Amthāl*, 4:1449.

Spurn the peddlers of malicious gossip among you:
they administer deadly poison under the guise of good advice

*wa-‘šū lladhī yuzjī l-namā’ima baynakum
mutanaṣṣiḥan dhāk l-simāmu l-munqa‘ū.*¹

§16.9 “**Calumny**”: *mishānī* “problems caused by slanderous aspersions.”²

§16.11 “**Benevolence**”: *mitwāsiyīn* (CA *wāsā* “to console, comfort”; *muwāsāh* “consolation; beneficence”), as in the verse of Rumayzān:

I know that all good flows from the Lord of Heavens,
and I willingly accept misfortune and consolation

*wi-‘lamt inn al-khēr min wālī s-simā
wi-rḍēt bi-l-māyil w-bi-l-mitwāsī.*³

“Evil design”: *yī‘nāh ‘ānī* “to come to someone for a purpose, with certain intent or designs.” It is not entirely clear from the wording who are meant in this verse. The translation was the explanation given to me. Usually, such rebukes would be reserved for slanderers and informers who act as spoilers in love affairs.

§16.14 “**No matter**”: *hawān* “a simple matter, not grave; no reason for joy or sorrow” (CA *hawān* “insignificance, triviality”). It is put succinctly in the Emirati saying: “Death (of a disliked person) is no cause for rejoicing and poverty is not shameful” (*mā bi-l-mōt shamit walā bi-l-fagr ‘ār*).⁴

§16.15 “**Scalding winds**”: *al-lihabān* “dry wind, air.”⁵

1 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:297, 2:102.

2 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 81.

3 Sawayan, *Shi‘r*, 456.

4 Ḥanzal, *Jāmi‘ al-amthāl*, 299.

5 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 82.

- §16.16 **“Wounds”** *dhāyāt* “diseases and calamities” (CA *adhā* pl. *adhiyyah*; *idhāyah*; *īdhā* “harm, damage, pain, suffering”).¹ **“Remain”**: f. pl. *yitimmin*; *tamm* “to remain, stay.”
- §16.18 **“Reward”**: *wjūr* (CA *ajr* pl. *ujūr* “wages; recompense”).
- §16.20 **“Expose”**: *ybayyin bi-* (CA *bayyana*, *abāna* “to remove, cause to be far away,” *Lisān*, 404).
- §16.21 **“In public”**: *bi-l-ghibā w-bi-l-biyānī*,” literally “hidden, covert; clear for all, openly.” The verse’s wording leaves open the possibility that the poet believes he must say the same thing in private and in public, especially on sensitive subjects like amorous feelings. But the choice of words is similar to the saying “A person consists of a heart and a public face (or public speech)” (*al-insān galbin w-bayān*), explained as “a person has his ‘two small ones,’ his heart and his tongue, and his bodily features, i.e., one should not judge a person by appearances only.”²
- §16.28 **“How in heaven’s name”**: *rabbat kēf*; *rabbat* “perhaps, possibly.”
- §16.29 **“Because”**: *īlan*, i.e., *li-ann*. “In short supply”: *ad-dahr fānī*, literally “time passes, is not infinite.”
- §16.31 **“Right moment”**: *maynā* (CA *majnan* “crop, profit”).
- §16.32 **“Tumbledown”**: *zittīt* “quick.”³ **“Buried”**: *mashliy* “rickety, in bad condition” (CA *shaliy* “remnants, remains”).
- §16.34 **“Overdue”**: *ta’addāh al-miyānī*; *miyānī* was explained as “appointed time, promised date” (pl. of *maynā*, see §16.31).
- §16.36 **“Tucked away”**: *tūghil lik mi’ī shayy*, explained as “you took, stole from me” (CA *waghala* “to penetrate, intrude”).

1 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 82.

2 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 1:388–89.

3 Al-Khāṭirī, *’Arj*, 86.

- §16.38 **“Onslaught”**: *dahānī* “(I suffered) a sudden, unexpected attack”; the onset of old age is commonly likened to a sudden, unexpected attack by raiders who have come riding from a great distance or an ambush, e.g., the poet Ibn Dawwās in response to Jabr ibn Sayyār, “In revulsion he recoiled from old age, O Jabr, when it fell upon him” (*ankar ash-shēb yā-Jabr sāʿat dahāh*).¹ **“No mistake”**: *fa-limmā bah*, explained as *fa-allidhī bah* “because for sure it will.”²
- §16.42 **“Knocks me out”**: *sibānī* literally, “to take prisoner, captivate” (CA *sabā*). **“Salt”**: *shifā millh*, *shifā* explained as “medication that is applied to wounds.” **“Cast”**: lit. “strewn with” *dharānī* explained as *madhrūr* “strewn on” (CA *dhara* “to scatter, blow away, winnow”).
- §16.48 **“Unction of tar”**: *mūmiyānī*, “soft and light black tar applied to broken bones as a medicine, as in the saying *tarāh al-mūmiyān yijbir al-ʿzām*, ‘*mūmiyān* heals the bones”; it is mixed with other ingredients for more lightness.”³
- §16.49 **“Human”**: *mūdīmanī* “human, belonging to the human species,” derived from Adam, *ādam*, and adapted for the rhythm.⁴
- §16.50 **“Numbness”**: *ʿinān* explained as “lack of feeling, numbness; inability to move, paralysis” (CA *ʿunnah* “impotence”).
- §16.52 **“Nimble-footed”**: *al-hamīm al-misfihānī*. According to Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 272, *hamīm* means “light rain” (CA *hamīmah* “soft, fine rain”; *saḥābah hamūm* “cloud pouring with rain”), and according to Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī ibn Zāhir*, *misfihānī* means “white cloud.” This may represent a mere guess. More likely, the vocabulary compares the movement of clouds across the sky to camels: in CA *hamīm* is an epithet of a camel with excellent riding qualities, “swift,” and also a camel that while running keeps its mouth close to the ground to snatch grasses and plants while on the run, another laudable trait in camels;⁵ *misfihānī*

1 Sawayan, *Shiʿr*, 482.

2 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 268.

3 Ḥanẓal, *Muʿjam*, 667.

4 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 240n405.

5 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 4704–5.

is derived from the verb *safaha*, with the general meaning of “lightness” (*nāqah safīhat al-zimām* “nimble-footed, with a light style of running.”)¹

§16.53 “Flanks”: *snāḥ* literally “windbreak (of a tent); “often a side wall of the tent is extended by attaching a piece of cloth, a carpet or bundles of twigs.”²

§16.54 “Goaded”: *dāgalhā, digal* “to hit, strike, pound, slam” (CA *daqala*). “Eastern breezes”: *aṣ-ṣabā* “the north-east monsoon was known to navigators as the *rīḥ al-ṣabā*, the latter name being a general Arabic name for a wind from this quarter.”³ “Cool air”: *shartā* pl. *shrātī*.⁴

§16.55 “Winds of Canopus”: *w-habb lhā shēliyyin yimānī*, lit. “the wind of southern Canopus (CA *suhayl*)”; see §6.4 for “rains of Canopus.” Many expressions feature winds that goad rainclouds in the desired direction as a shorthand to designate a person favored by good fortune or someone who is lucky, hence auspicious and welcome company as a bearer of good omen. The opposite is “still air” (*saknat ar-rīḥ*), which is taken as a bad omen and the prevalence of miserable conditions;⁵ *hābbat rīḥ* “good omen”;⁶ *hābb rīḥ* “expert, skilful; friendly, capable, willing worker, person”;⁷ “a good guy.”⁸ See also §§6.2–3, 12.31, 15.31; and “winds of fortune,” “lucky breezes.”⁹

§16.75 “Tinged with rose”: *jānī/gānī* “a dark tinge” (CA *qānī*). The second *jānī*, the rhyme word, is the participle of *ajnā* “to acquire” (CA *qanā* “to acquire, gain, make one’s own”).

§17.1 “Raving”: *hadhō bhā* “to speak at length, rave”; it is also used in common speech, as in *anā min iftihamt rīt an-nās yhadhūn b-giṣīd bin Zāhir* (“since I grew up and began to understand, I have seen how people rave about the

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 2034.

2 Hess, *Von den Beduinen des Innern Arabiens*, 110.

3 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 368, 531.

4 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ar*, 790; al-Khāṭirī, *’Arīj*, 150.

5 Al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 9:137.

6 Musil, *Rwala*, 330.

7 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:538–39.

8 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 348.

9 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 85, 123.

poems of Ibn Zāhir”); “to aver, maintain, repeat things that are being said”; *hadhaw, hadhaw, w-illā bi-ḥyād, lā, hadhaw, wa-sh-shay illī mā aḥīdah mā arūm armis bah* (“These are things that are being said, but whether it is for sure, no! It is just talk, and I cannot not speak about things I am not sure of”).¹

§17.2 “Weave”: *saff, sifif* “woven utensils, baskets.”²

§17.3 “Guided”: *tijādā/tigādā*; guidance *jidā/gidā* (CA *iqṭadā* “to emulate, be guided”); “peacably or through force” (*‘alā al-gidā wallā ‘alā ghēr gādī*), i.e., “reasonably, rightly so or arbitrarily, by sheer force.”³

§17.4 “Gaining”: *yirūb*, explained as “to gain (a result, profit).”

§17.6 “Stung”: *wāghif* explained as “to hit, penetrate in” (CA *waghf* “weak eyesight”).

§17.9 “Pleasant breezes”: *walm* “favorable wind for sailing a ship out of port into the open sea; wind from the west or the south; *ywālim* “it is suitable, favorable”⁴ (CA *lā’ama* “to agree, fit, suit; to be propitious, favorable”). “Hoisted”: *gbūbhā, gabb* “mast-head”;⁵ “the highest part of the ship’s mast, the location of the pulleys for the ropes used in hoisting up the sail”⁶ (CA *qabb* “perforation in the pulley used for hoisting up buckets from the well”).⁷

§17.10 “Monsoon winds”: *kūs* “wind from the south; rough seas that endanger a ship; the wind that propels sailing ships on the way back from India to the Gulf; winds that are calm at first and become stormy later on the day, while it is the opposite for winds from the north”;⁸ the name of a wind “used in the Indian Ocean especially for the monsoon.”⁹

1 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 183.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:119.

3 Kurpershoek, *Arabian Romantic*, 61, §14.2.52; al-Juhaymān, *Amthāl*, 4:389.

4 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 210.

5 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 537.

6 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 74.

7 Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān*, 3507.

8 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 208–9.

9 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 364, 367, 540.

- §17.11 **“Headwinds”**: *fāli* “winds that blow from different directions; wind that blows against the direction in which the ship is sailing”; “wind that blows into one’s face, also said to be winds blowing from the north.”¹ **“Seasick”**: *hdāmā, flān hadmān* “So-and-So is seasick and vomits”;² *hidam* “to be seasick.”³ **“Clumsy”**: *ghimārā; ghamrī* “clumsy, inexperienced, synonym of *ghashīm*”⁴ (CA *ghamr* “inexperienced”).⁵ **“Rope pullers”**: *syūb, s. sīb* “the man in charge of hauling the pearl diver up by the rope attached to him when he is ready to surface,” see also §13.13.
- §17.16 **“Honor”**: *hēbah* lit. “awe, esteem,” i.e., if you do not do justice to the sheep by slaughtering it for the guests (CA *haybah*).
- §17.17 **“Bushes”**: *shikhar* “a kind of tree.” **“Spadix”**: *‘lūb s. ‘ilb* (CA *‘ulbah* “box, case, etui”); it was explained that *‘ilb* is the word for an unimpregnated spadix; the impregnated spadix is called *ṭal’ah*; i.e., the wolf waits patiently until he can snatch his prey unnoticed, in the same way as no one takes notice when an unimpregnated spadix falls and remains hidden in the vegetation.
- §17.21 **“Matched with deeds”**: *ijtizō bhā* “they accept it, abide by” (CA *ijtaza’a* “to be content”).
- §17.22 **“Apply reason”**: *ingād*, lit. “to follow, obey, be guided by” (CA *inqāda*), as in the Emirati saying: “If you must, then follow a horse, but not a donkey” (*ingād ḥṣān w-lā ingād ḥmār*).⁶ **“Just to blame”**: *w-illā lā tjāzī ‘yūbhā* lit. “or else you will not go beyond blaming,” explained as “do not content yourself with blaming others” (CA *jaza’a* “to be satisfied, content with”).
- §17.23 **“Mangy”**: *ajrab* (CA *ajrab*). **“Deranged prattler”**: *‘alīlin mjārīf; ‘alīl* “sick (CA *‘alīl*). *mjārīf* explained as “outsider looking for weak chinks, faults and rumors” (CA *qarafa* “to blame; *yurqaf* “he stands accused of”; *qarafa ‘alayh qarfan* “he

1 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 499.

2 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 711.

3 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 346.

4 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 492.

5 Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān*, 3295.

6 Ḥanzal, *Jāmi’ al-amthāl*, 531.

lied to him”; *qarāfah bi-* “he accused him of”; *qārafa al-dhanb* “to acquire bad habits”).¹ Similar advice is given by another early Nabaṭī poet:

Don’t busy yourself with faultfinding:
the other may get wounded and you get killed

walā tastighil bi-‘yūb ghērak min al-malā
*tarā l-ghēr bih jarḥin w-ant giṭil.*²

“Scavengers”: *ṭanānif* s. *ṭānif*, *ṭinif*, explained as “someone searching, looking for” (CA *ṭanaḥ* “accusation”; *ṭanif* “standing accused of; harboring evil intention”; *ṭannaḥ li-* synonym of *qāraḥah*, “to acquire the habit, become accustomed to”).³

§17.24 “Never in short supply”: *mā ywannī*, lit. “it does not weaken, become feeble, less” (CA *wanā* “to become faint, weak; to flag”).

§17.25 “Beyond recall, unavenged”: *la min tithannī wlā riḍā thārin*, lit. “no turning back and no satisfaction of revenge” (CA *inthanā*, *tathannā* “to turn away, turn back”; *tha’r* “revenge, blood revenge”). “Wooden cover”: *mithānī* s. *mithnā*, as explained to me, “a piece of wood laid over the shaft of the well as support for the man who hoists up the bucket” (CA *mithnāh* “rope”). In this case, the wooden piece is broken, hence there is no way to draw water from the well. In this context the well is a metaphor for the woman, marriage, and procreation; *mithānī* is also used with the meaning of “sides” (*aṭrāf*); and “conditions, promises” (e.g., for a transaction). As explained it would be a synonym for *mathāb*, place at the rim of the well where the man drawing water positions himself, as in a verse of Dhū l-Rummah in a description of a hardly usable well in a fearsome desert:

It (the spider’s web) was spun by one spider or together
woven by spiders from the foothold over the well’s mouth

hiya ntasajathu waḥdahā aw ta’āwanat
‘alā nasjihi bayna l-mathābi ‘anākibuh)

1 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3600.

2 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 601.

3 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 2709.

with the explanation that *al-mathāb* is “the foothold on which the man drawing up the water from the well keeps his balance”).¹ However, the meaning of the second hemistich is uncertain. Perhaps more plausibly, it may mean that there was no fulfillment (*wāfā*) of youth’s rich flow (*ṣībūb*) of promises (*mithānī*).

§17.27 **“Bastards”**: *ṣlūbhā*, i.e., *ṣalab*, s. *ṣlubī* “members of a pariah tribe who used to perform menial tasks, for example as blacksmith, for the Bedouin tribes and would not intermarry with them.”

§18.1 **“Without doubt”**: *bi-l-wikādah wa-l-hyād*; *hyād* “personal knowledge of a fact”; *yihīd* “he is sure that.” **“My father’s story”**: *ramsāt al-wālid*; *ramsah* “speech; story, narrative.” **“Very long time ago”**: *yōm ad-dahar al-awwili* “the earliest times, primeval age” (CA *dahr* “time, long time, eternity, fate, destiny”). **“About”**: *čidhī, čh* “about, thereabouts, like that, something like that.”² **“Met him [...] saw him”**: *lahag ‘alēh [...] al-awwilin lāhgin ‘alēh* lit. “caught up with him, reached him.

§18.2 **“During the hot season”**: *yhađir*, see note 408 on *al-ħiđarah*, the migration to these palm oases. **“Ḍanj”**: i.e., Ḍank. **“Date harvest”**: lit. “when the *farđ* comes down”; *farđ* “name for a particular kind of palm tree or date”;³ “the *farđ*-dates are the pillar of the earth, tasty as food and profitable when sold” (*al-farđ ‘umūd l-arđ in kalthān hanāk w-in bi‘tah ghanāk*).⁴ **“Fruits of the bunch”**: ‘*asuw* s. and coll. “twigs, branches of the date bunch”; dates picked earlier are called *shamārīkh* or ‘*kūš*. It may also mean “brush made of these twigs.” From ‘*asuw* are made cups for drinking milk, *karmah* (both words spoken with a soft *k*-).⁵ **“Lifted the heavy bags (with dates)”**: *siħħ*, ripe dates and earlier harvested ripe dates, *ruṭab*;⁶ as in the Emirati expression, “at the appearance of the Canopus star the ripe dates (*siħħ*) of the end of season harvest (*farđ*) are healthier than the early *ruṭab* dates (which by that time may cause digestive discomfort)”

1 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dīwān*, 2:855.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:454.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 503, with reference to al-‘Aṣma‘ī’s words, “the best dates of Oman are the *farđ* and the *ba‘laq*”.

4 Al-Kuwaytī, *Yaqūl*, 233.

5 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 456.

6 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 320.

(*yūm yazhar shēl siḥḥat al-farḍ aṣaḥḥ ‘an raṭbah*).¹ “**Hōr al-Balmā**”: *hōr* means “sandy plain.”²

§18.4 “**Call**”: *tizgirīn*, 2 f.s. of *zīgar* “to call in a loud voice”;³ *izgar flān* “Call So-and-So,”⁴ (CA *zajara* “to rebuke, scold”). “**Little daughters**”: *yihḍān/jihḍān* (CA *ajhāda* “to give birth prematurely”; here CA *jihḍ* “miscarriage” is used for “baby, little kid”); *frēkhāt*, lit. “little chicks; little kiddies”;⁵ also in CA e.g., al-Ḥuṭay’ah: “What would you tell my little kiddies at Dhū Marakh” (*mādhā taqūlu li-afrākhin bi-Dhī Marakhin*).⁶

§18.5 “**Cup**”: *kirmah*, “a vessel made of tightly woven palm leaves or racemes, used as a cup for drinking milk.”⁷ “**Bag**”: *yrāb/jrāb* “sack in which dates are kept; sack of dried dates made of palm-fronds”;⁸ “date sack made of palm fronds or from tanned hide, also called *hubbān*.”⁹ “**Clump of dates**”: *nigṣah*; *nugṣ* pl. *nugūṣ*, *nugṣ it-tamr* “a lump of (boiled) dates.”¹⁰ “**Dates**”: *siḥḥ* “dried dates (syn. of *tamr*).”¹¹ “**Mute**”: *balmā*; *balmah* “a mute woman.”¹² “**As long as I live**”: *isti-wēt*, lit. “I grew up”; *istuwā* “to be proper, fit; to become, reach the stage of; to happen”¹³ (CA *istawā* “to be even, straight; to ripen”).

§18.6 “**He woke and sat up**”: *nashsh min nōmih* “to wake up and rise, get up; go out.”¹⁴

1 Al-Kuwaytī, *Yaqūl*, 233.

2 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 73.

3 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 176.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 302.

5 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:127, 463; s. *frēkh*, Holes, *Dialect*, 1:392.

6 Al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 188.

7 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 566.

8 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:85.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 151.

10 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:528.

11 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:233.

12 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 70.

13 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 58; Holes, *Dialect*, 1:258–59.

14 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 684.

- §18.7 “**Desert**”: *sīh* “treeless desert”;¹ in the Emirates the name given to the desert area adjoining the coastal strip. “**You cross over**”: *b-taghdif*, *ghidaf* “to go and pass behind s.th.”; *flān ghidafnī* “So-and-So passed behind me”; *idhā ghidaft min al-jisir tūšil aṭ-ṭirīg* “After crossing the bridge, you will reach the road.”² “**Left behind**”: *zār/zārr* “moving”; *zarr* “to budge, move”; *lā tzirr* “don’t move!”³ “**Grew up**”: *rābī*; *ribā* “to grow up”; *min rbēnā* “from the time when we were raised,”⁴ (CA *rabā* “to grow, grow up”). “**Before today**”: *mbūnik*, lit. “at first, you.”
- §19.1 “**Hired hand**”: *ti’azzab* lit. “he went to stay alone (i.e., without a family)”; *‘izbī* “a guest who stays longer than three days”; *m’azzib* “host; boss, chief”⁵ (CA *‘azaba* “to be single, unmarried”). “**On the move**”: *al-khalg intashlat*, *kilha khalg allah hāy min al-jizārah al-‘arabiyyah* lit.: “people migrated, everyone (lit. all God’s creatures) from the Arabian Peninsula.” “**Wages**”: *ya‘ālah/ja‘ālah* (CA *ja‘ala* “to make; appoint; fix, set a sum, price”; *ja‘alah* “pay, wages; reward”). “**Dry, hardy camel**”: *khashinah* literally “rough, coarse, rude, tough, harsh”; here it would correspond to the Italian *asciugata*, “dry, dried out,” which describes the physical condition of being lean and fit, without any superfluous elements that would impede the body’s most efficient performance in a sport event, particularly in long-distance competition; it fits the description of the hardiest camels, *molto asciugata*, “having shed all fat” (information from Danielle Kurpershoek in Milan). “**Put it to work, trained it**”: *zammalhā*, *addabhā*, synonyms for “to train a camel.” “**Could not keep up with**”: *mā ṭhidhā* “unable to catch up with.”⁶ This is a common motif in storytelling, the Arabian equivalent of the Ugly Duckling, used for both humans and animals. In northern Arabia a similar version of the motif is found in the narrative lore and verse of the nineteenth-early twentieth-century Bedouin poet Khalaf Abū Zwayyid. A minor poet of the Rwalah tribe visited the Arabian ruler Ibn Rashīd and, with the assistance of Abū Zwayyid, succeeded in eliciting a reward for his verses. He was given permission to select a riding camel to his liking. To the dismay of the ruler’s

1 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 198.

2 Ḥanṣal, *Mu‘jam*, 487.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:220.

4 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:198.

5 Ḥanṣal, *Mu‘jam*, 454; Holes, *Dialect*, 1:348.

6 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 215.

servants, he selected an inauspicious looking animal: “The Rwēli’s eye fell on a young, half-blind she-camel that was gnawing on a bone, its umbilical cord dangling from the belly, and an outsized callosity on the breast-bone. The Rwēli knew that this inauspicious-looking camel, once grown up, would make for an exceptional mount and he confirmed his choice. ‘What a missed opportunity,’ the booty’s attendants said. ‘Why don’t you take a better one since this stroke of good fortune came your way?’ ‘Absolutely not,’ he said, ‘I’ve made up my mind to take this one-eyed camel.’ He trained the camel and she turned out to be fast and tough, a mount that stood out among the desert-crossing camels.”¹

§19.2 “Spent all his life”: *mgazzar* part. of *gazzar* “survive, live through (a verb of Persian origin)”;² “to complete, finish,” *gazzar ḥayātah ta’bān*, “he spent all his life as a sick person.”³ It is a common for the heroes of these stories to be constantly on the road, e.g., Shāyi’ al-Amsaḥ, where the same expression, “no place excepted,” occurs: “They went raiding in all directions. He stayed some time with al-Fuḍūl, then packed up again and went to Subay’ and from there to ‘Utaybah. There wasn’t a tribe he didn’t stay with. He loved distant desert treks, crisscrossing the land” (*yghazī bhum w-yanhaj bhum ‘alā kill dīrah. w-khidh ‘ind al-Fḍūl luh wgt wuhū ‘indahum. w-yijik minhum ‘ād, rawwaḥ minhum. w-ṣār ind Sbē’ w-ṣār ‘ind ‘Tēbah, mā khallā aḥad mā jāwh, rā’i firjah, rā’i fraj yimīn w-yasār*).⁴

§19.3 “Halted”: *čazz/kazz* “to halt, stop.”⁵ “Detailed description”: *fatwā*, here not with the meaning of “formal legal opinion,” but “description”⁶ (CA *fatiya* “to expound, set forth”). “Mother”: *sirr* “lineage of a camel’s mother.” “Broke through”: *rimazhā mbēnhum* “he kicked it and rushed away from their circle”;⁷ *trammaz* “to jump up and down.”⁸ “As a bullet”: *sha ar-riṣāṣah*; *sha*, “like,” is an abbreviation for *shayy*, “thing.”

1 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 608–9.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:150.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 552.

4 Sawayan, *Ayyām*, 282.

5 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ār*, 530.

6 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhīr*, 216.

7 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhīr*, 216.

8 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:213.

- §19.6 “Is it us?”: *‘idnā* for *‘indinā*. “Rage”: *zighūm* (CA *tazaghghama* “a camel’s angry grumbling; talk in an angry voice; *tazaghghum* “angry and unintelligible voice”). “Saggy-balled”: *riṭṭāl al-khṣiyy* lit. “with sagging testicles,” explained as “wolf” (CA *raṭṭala* “to let hair flow down, to have hanging ears”). “Gaunt”: *miṣāfiḡ al-jnūb* lit. “the skin of their flanks hangs down and moves at every step,” because of loss of fat on long journeys. A play on words: *dil’* “rib,” also means “a range of mountains or hills”; *dilī’* means “limping” (generally because of bleeding pads caused by sharp stones) CA *dil’*; *ḡala’a* “to limp, walk with a limp”). “Well, my dears”: *‘ayal abūy*; *‘ayal, ajal/ayal* “well, then; yes, of course; so, then; but”¹ (CA *ajal* “yes, indeed; certainly”). The story shows that the poet is shrewd and alert even after long desert treks at night: he notices the presence of other people from his camel’s yawning.
- §19.8 “He tried”: *āzam yḡaṭṭī’ ‘alēhā*, lit. “he kept lopping off (branches) for her,” *āzam* “to become, start” (CA *ṣār*), see §5.19, *yāzim*. “Ghāf-tree”: *Prosopis cineraria*, declared the national tree of the United Arab Emirates in 2008. “Use”: *nifa’* “to be of use”; *naffa’* means “to feed an animal”; *innaffi’hum* “we’d feed them.”² “Lopped branches”: *ykhatt b-čilih*, explained as “he hit, cut, the branch (*kīl*).”
- §20.1 “Small boat”: *shāhūf* also *mashhūf*, syn. of *zarrāḡah*, “a small, narrow boat”;³ *māshuwwah*, “The ship’s boat [. . .] a short boat or gig although even this may be fitted with a mast and sail. The latter is now known as a *hūrī* especially if it is only a dugout, small boats are also known as *zawraq*, *jalbūt* and *mashwā*. The latter is the typical longboat of the present-day ocean-going dhow [. . .]”;⁴ “a small boat used for shuttling between the ship and the shore for the transportation of seamen and small quantities of goods; its stern has a square shape. The word is of Aramean origin, *mākūnā*, as reported in *Majallat Lughat al-‘Arab*, v. 11, May 1914”;⁵ “the larger ones are used for cargo, the smaller ones for fishing;

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:5–6.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:347.

3 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 348.

4 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 56.

5 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 22–23.

they carry a crew from 6 to 12 men and are a very common type in the Gulf.”¹ “I don’t know exactly”: *shigāyil*, *shingāyil* (from: *shayy gāyil*) “what sort of.”² *Shāshah*: “primitive small canoe, made of palm-branches lashed together”;³ “small boat made of palm fronds, tied together with stalks of date bunches, used to sail in shallow coastal waters and creeks”; “it is easy to make and rides on the wave while any ater that comes in seeps out through the fronds and their thick bases.”⁴ “Generally about 10 feet long, peculiarly constructed of date-stalks alone [. . .] sometimes a primitive sail is used [. . .]. They have no rudder, and are used for fishing close to the shore; they carry 1 to 3 men.”⁵ One narrator credits Ibn Zāhir with introducing this type of boat from al-Bāṭinah, the coast of Oman.⁶ “Wove them”: *ydarmūnih*, explained as to weave, stitch (leather) (CA *darrama* “to clip”). “Big needle”: *misallah*. “Floated”: *mghafyah*; *ghaffā* “to skim over water.”⁷ “Shark”: *nihim*, “shark”; *nihim* “shark (*ḥūt al-baḥr*)”, so called because of its voracious appetite.”⁸ “Waiting”: *yatrayya*; *tarayyā/tarajjā* “to wait for, linger”; *trayyānī* “wait for me!” *tariyyūtkum w-mā yitū* “I waited for you, but you didn’t come”⁹ (CA *tarajjā* “to hope, expect, anticipate”). “Helper”: *iwil*.

§20.2 “Bundle of wood”: *ḥṭibah*.¹⁰ “Cough up”: *ḥlā* “food; tax”;¹¹ *ḥalā* “share (of a catch of fish); fee; levy”¹² (CA *ḥalan* “sweetness”; *ḥulwān* “present of money, gratuity”). “Duty”: *ḥlā* “condiment.”¹³ “My own work”: *khādmīnā b-idī* “I worked on it with my own hands”; *khadamt* “you work”; *makhdūm* “properly

1 “Appendix F: Sailing Craft of the Persian Gulf,” in Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia Online*.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:94.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:262.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 349; Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 22.

5 Lorimer, “Appendix F.”

6 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 430.

7 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 255.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 695.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 123.

10 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:118.

11 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 185.

12 Ḥanḏal, *Muʿjam*, 189.

13 Alameemi, *Safarjal*, 155.

done.”¹ “**Fed up**”: *matlūh*; explained as *mitilwah* “I have no need to stay here any longer” (CA *talāh* “confusion, bewilderment”). “**Large dhow ship**”: *būm*, pl. *abwām*; “The *būm* in which Cmdr. Alan Villiers sailed had its mast head 90 ft. above the sea and carried 2,500 packages of dates (est. 150 tons). [. . .] The ships of the 15th century were certainly as big as the dhows of today. [. . .] and the whole hull must have resembled that of the modern Kuwaiti *būm*. Square ended ships, i.e., those with a transom stern were an innovation based on European ships after the coming of the Portuguese to the Indian Ocean”;² “a modern type of dhow”;³ “sailing ship in different sizes: the small type is used for pearl diving; the medium size for trade; and the large ships for sailing the ocean to India and Zanzibar. The *būm* has been in common use in the Gulf since a long time: it is already mentioned in the poetry of Abū al-Baḥr Ja’far al-Khaṭṭī who died in 1618”;⁴ “*Būms* carry crews from 15 to 40 men, and are used chiefly for cargo; but the small boats are used also for pearling; they carry from 20 to 200 tons of cargo and, as a type, they appear to be the most numerous in the Gulf.”⁵ Another reading has *dūm*, “one end of the sail’s rail.”⁶ “**Sink it**”: *b-aṭabba’hā*; *ṭabba’* “to sink (a boat after being laid up on the beach in winter, in order to cause its planking to expand).”⁷

§20.5 “**Sitting area**”: *mbarrazāt*; *barzah*, *mibrāz* “sitting area, place where visitors and guests are received”; *majlis*; *fulān baraz*, *bāriz* “So-and-So is present, is in attendance”;⁸ *barzah* “outside sitting area, *dakkah*.”⁹ “**How are you**”: *ishqā sawwēt* lit. “what, how have you done”; *shingāyil* “what kind of, what sort of, how much” (compound of *shayyin*, *shin*, “thing” and *gāyil* “saying”).¹⁰ “**Rupee**”: *rūbī* pl. *rūbiyāt*; *rubbiyah* pl. *rubbiyāt*, *rabābīl* “rupee.”¹¹ “**Paisa**”: *bīzah* pl. *bīzāt*

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:133, 1:413.

2 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 49, 52–54.

3 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 517.

4 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 16–17.

5 Lorimer, “Appendix F.”

6 Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 22.

7 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:317.

8 Ḥanṣal, *Mu’jam*, 89.

9 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 62.

10 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:280.

11 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:196.

“baisa” (low values Indian coin formerly in use in Bahrain); also a general term for “money”;¹ “there are 64 paisas to the rupee.”²

§20.7 “**Pearl diving**”: *madd al-ghōs*; *maddū al-ghawāṣīṣ* “the pearling boat and its crew set out on their journey towards the pearl banks”;³ *madd* also means “tide.” “**You can do**”: *trūm*; *rām* “to be able to, capable of; *mā arūm ashīl al-ḥadīd* “I cannot carry that iron.”⁴ “The occupation of diving, though a severe form of labour and fatiguing at the time, is not considered by those engaged in it to be particularly injurious to the health, and is practiced even by old men.”⁵ “**Captain**”: *nōkhadhah* “ship’s captain (who may also be its owner).”⁶ “**Around noon**”: ‘*aṭṭan* “to bring at noon”; ‘*aṭan* “to come, visit, at noon, the hottest part of the day”;⁷ “to arrive at a place before noon prayers or lunch”;⁸ ‘*aṭan* “to lay down, rest near the watering-place after drinking (said of camels)” (CA ‘*aṭana*). “**Snacks**”: *fwālah* “snacks, light meal, served to a guest immediately on his arrival; any food that is ready and available in the house when a guest arrives unexpectedly; *mā tistuwī dallah b-dūn fwālah* “coffee should be served with snacks (like dates)”; the word *fwālah* is derived from *fāl*; *tifāwal min al-fwālah fāl ṭayyib* “he took the snacks offered to him as a good omen (i.e., for the main meal that would follow in due course)”; it is also used for the main meal when the fast is broken at the end of the day during Ramadan (CA *fa’l*, “good omen”).⁹ “**Shed**”: ‘*arish*, ‘*irsh* “palm-branch hut.”¹⁰ “**Hauling up**”: *sīb* pl. *syūb* “rope-man on a pearling boat”; *sāb*, *yisūb* “to pull up the rope to which a diver is attached”;¹¹ “the *syūb*, who are next in importance to the captain and the divers, and whose duties are merely to manage the boat and to lower and pull up the divers, are usually landsmen or ex-divers whom age or other causes

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:62, 1:248.

2 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 112.

3 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 628.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 270.

5 Lorimer, “Appendix F.”

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:533.

7 Al-Khāṭiri, *Ash’ār*, 575.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 459.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 512–13.

10 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 453; Holes, *Dialect*, 1:345, 1:118.

11 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:259.

have obliged to abandon diving.”¹ *Sīb* “man who hoists up the pearl diver when the latter has given a sign by a tug at the rope tied around his middle, *yidā/jidā*”; the importance of the *sīb* in pearl diving, and in popular imagination, is expressed in sayings like *mā sāb ‘alēk illā ghīṣ* “only former divers (*ghīṣ*) should be your rope-puller,” i.e., only those with experience in the dangerous work of a diver, can be trusted to quickly and safely haul up a diver”; and *sīb walā minnat nisīb* “rope-puller, not the charity of a son-in-law,” i.e., make sure to earn a living by your own efforts; do not depend on hand outs of in-laws or others who feel an obligation towards you.² “**Have the strength**”: *yirūm*, the Emirati word for “to be able to do s.th.” (CA *rām* “to seek, desire; attempt). It occurs in eighteenth-century Nabaṭī poetry with the original CA meaning, as in the line of Rumayzān: “Not a lout whose aspirations are not matched by his ability” (*fa-lā baghwiyyin rām mā lā yiṭṭīgh*).³ “**Rue the day**”: *msammir* “useless”; *sammār* “to toss about (a ship),” said of the waves. For instance, when it is not anchored, and the wind and waves are tossing the ship about.”⁴ The expression occurs in seventeenth-century verse, e.g., Rumayzān’s line:

I was being tossed about in the sea of love:

O Jabr, my ship sank battered by the waves of passion

w-aṣbaḥt fī baḥr al-gharām msammir

*baḥr al-hawā yā-Jabr gharrag miḥmalī.*⁵

And in recent usage: *il-xeer*, *akhūk*, *ḍā’*, *sammār u ghadā* “the good things in life, my friend, have got lost, they have drifted off and gone”; *al-musammār* “flotsam.”⁶ “**Burden on others**”: *taklā*; *tiklih*, i.e., CA *ittikāl* “reliance on, trust.”⁷ “**Young and energetic**”: *hāb riḥ* “good fellow”;⁸ *hābbat riḥ* “favorable wind; good omen for success”;⁹ *lyā habbat ryāḥik* “when the winds of success

1 Lorimer, “Appendix F.”

2 Ḥanzal, *Mu’jam*, 341.

3 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 428.

4 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash’ār*, 208; Alameemi, *Safarjal*, 289.

5 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 458.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:249–250 and communication of Clive Holes.

7 Sowayan, *Shi’r*, 273.

8 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 348.

9 Musil, *Rwala*, 217.

blow towards you”;¹ *habb luh sa’ad*, “the wind of luck blew in his direction.”² In everyday parlance it means “having know-how,” “being expert,” and a much beloved expression of farmers, e.g., *ha-sh-shughil yabbi lih hābb-in riḥ* “this is a job that requires an expert” (communication of Clive Holes). “Agreement on wages”: *tishāhar*; *mshāharah* “wages, recompense.”³ “Grown tired”: *t’ayyī*; *’ayy*, *’iyā*, *’iyah* “to lack strength, be weak, incapable, unable”; *fulān ’ayyā ’an al-’amal* “was unable to perform work”⁴ (CA *dā’ i’yā’* “an incurable disease,” *’ayyā* imperfect *ya’yā* “to lack the strength or power”). “Yanked”: *yanzighāh* (CA *nazagha* “to stab”). “Torrid heat”: *dūg* “calm”;⁵ “complete windstill.”⁶ *dawwag* “air is stagnant.” “Ship’s hold”: *khinn* “the hold, everything below deck in a ship.”⁷ “Palm pollen”: *’ūl* “the efflorescence of the male spadix.” “Hard work”: *’abālah* “toil, hard labor; trouble, effort, bother”;⁸ *’ābal* “look after, take care of”;⁹ *m’ābal aḍ-ḍanā* “looking after a new-born baby.”¹⁰ “The number of the Ghāṣah [divers] is generally less than that of the regular *syūb* [haulers] in the same boat [. . .] the reason of this arrangement is that, if a diver were to be thrown out of work for want of a hauler, the loss would be greater than the expense of carrying a few extra *Siyūb*.”¹¹

§20.10 “Boat”: *snūbij*, dimin. of *sanbūk* (the *k-* is pronounced as *č*, here rendered as *j-*, *jīm*, in accordance with the Arabic edition); “ship’s boat”;¹² *sanbūk*, *sanbūg*, pl. *sanābīk* “a very common type of ship in the Gulf with a sharp prow and a square stern; the medium-sized variety is used for pearl diving; it has a long history in Arabia and is already mentioned by Ibn Baṭūtah and al-Maqrīzī”;¹³ “a

1 Musil, *Rwala*, 475, 479.

2 Sowayan, *Narrative*, 274.

3 Al-Ṭābūr, *Rijāl fi ta’riḥ al-Imārāt al-’Arabiyyah al-Muttaḥidah*, 55.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 479.

5 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 525.

6 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 206.

7 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 41.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 444; al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 230.

9 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:339.

10 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:385.

11 “Appendix C: The Pearl and Mother-of-Pearl Fisheries of the Persian Gulf,” in Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia Online*.

12 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 56, 529.

13 Al-Rūmī, *Mu’jam*, 19.

word of Persian origin, with the meaning of small boat, *zawraq*.¹ “**Push off**”: *ifdaw*, *ifad* “to jump”; *ifad al-ghawwāṣ* “the diver jumped into the water”; *ifad ‘alā* “he attacked”; *az-zōjah* *ifdat min ahl zōjhā* “the wife clashed with her husband’s family”;² *affad* “to enter by force”; *ifad ‘alā* “he threw himself on”; *afadnā ‘alā* “we confronted, clashed with.”³ “**Pry open**”: *afligū al-mahḥār*, *falag* “to split open, sunder (especially clams)”; *tammaw yifilgūn al-mahḥār* “they carried on splitting open the clams” (Holes, *Dialect*, 1:405). “The interval between the early morning prayer and the commencement of diving is spent by the crew in opening the oysters collected on the previous day. This is done with crooked knives called *mifālīg*, s. *mifligah*, under the personal superintendence of the *nākhuda* [captain], who takes charge of the pearls as they are extracted.”⁴ “**Gnat**”: *barghūsh* (CA *barghash* “gnat, midge”). “**Fleas**”: *kitt*. “**Blood-sucking insects**”: *zamy*, *zamiy*, *zamiyyah*, “a kind of gnats, mosquitoes (*ba‘ūd*) and flying insects that resemble the big ticks sucking blood from camels.”⁵

§20.11 “**Crown**”: *ghirūnī*. “**Tossed**”: *yfirhin*; *farr* “to toss, throw far away”; *farrēt as-simčah al-khāsyah* “I threw the rotten fish away.”⁶

§20.12 “**No two ways about it**”: *immirrah* “absolutely, without any doubt” (CA *bi-l-marrah*). “**Boat**”: *khishab*, lit. “wood”; “small boats (made of wood)”;⁷ “coll. for ships; the s. is *khshibah*.”⁸

§20.13 “**Shallow waters**”: *gaḥḥah* pl. *gaḥiḥ*, “land which is alternately covered and uncovered by the tide”;⁹ “pearling waters near the coast where men go diving in small boats”;¹⁰ “shallow waters over an even, flat bottom without rocks, not far from the coast.”¹¹

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 336.

2 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 461.

3 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 1052.

4 Lorimer, “Appendix C.”

5 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 435.

6 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 501.

7 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 522.

8 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 18.

9 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:414.

10 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 521; Abū Shihāb, *al-Māyidī*, 22.

11 Al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 221.

- §20.14 “Not endure”: *mā yitwāzī* “unbearable,” see §8.45; *wizā* pl. *wizāyā* “pain, trouble.” “Cut out for”: *w-lab killin ywāzīh* “not everyone is able to endure it.”
- §21.1 “As neighbors”: *‘iddālih*, lit. “next to him”; *ig‘id ‘iddālī* “come and sit next to me”; *ḥitt ash-shayy ‘iddāl ash-shayy* “put this thing side by side with that one.”¹ “Sheep and goats, camels”: *hōsh w-bōsh*; *hōsh* “four-legged farm animals (cows, sheep, goats)”;² *bōsh* is the same as *ṭarsh*, “herds of camels”³ (CA *bawsh* “a mixed company”). “Piece of cloth”: *‘ogidiyyah* or *lās* “a cloak, outer garment, made of silk or cotton and worn over the left shoulder; the right hand holds the cane; on the lower right side of the cloak a dagger is worn, the other end is wrapped over the left shoulder.”⁴ “Markh-tree”: *markh* “a leafless tree without thorns, with bare branches and slender twigs.”
- §21.2 “Carry on an argument, bicker”: *yit‘āyūn*, *t‘āyūn*; *‘ayah fulān* “So-and-So quarreled with him”; *m‘āyī* “bickering, quarreling”; *m‘āyāh* “quarrel, fight, hot argument”;⁵ *t‘āyā* “to argue with one another.”⁶ “You can’t, no match, not by a long way”: Emirati dialectal expressions, *mā trūm* “you are not able to”; *mā tībīh* “to overpower, overcome, vanquish, prevail over”; *mūl* syn. of *abadan*, “no way, never, absolutely not”; *mūl* and *mūliyyah* “intensifier with various meanings [. . .] in negative sentences “at all, never, not once, never ever, not at all.”⁷ “Beat him”: *battānah* “inflict crushing defeat”; *batt* “to be decisive, absolute” (CA *batta* “to cut off, sever”; *batta yamīnah* “he made his oath take effect”). “Vulnerable spot”: *‘ūgah*; *‘ōg* “disease, affliction”;⁸ “a chronic disease”;⁹ *‘āfāk al-‘ōg* “May God save you from obstruction”;¹⁰ *lī ‘ād ‘ūgak fī baṭnak wīn tijīk al-‘āfiyah* “if your affliction is in your belly (i.e., within your own tribal group), how can you expect to be restored to a healthy condition,”

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 449.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:547.

3 Musil, *Rwala*, 159.

4 Ḥasan, *al-‘Ādat wa-l-taqālīd fī Dawlat al-Imārāt al-‘Arabiyyah al-Muttaḥidah*, 32.

5 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 317.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:153.

7 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:509.

8 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:370.

9 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ash‘ār*, 232.

10 Musil, *Rwala*, 114.

a saying about the insidious nature of a problem with one's own kin.¹ “As sure as hell”: *imirrah* “absolutely.”

§21.3 “Stock up” *mitmayyir*; *mayyar* “supply, provision”;² *mūrah* “food” as in the saying *sāyir yistimīr w-istimārū bah* “he went to seek food and they feasted on him.”³ “Charcoal”: *ṣkhīkhīm* dimin. of *ṣikhām* “black soot, charcoal (*sikhām*, the *ṣīn* is pronounced as *ṣād*)”⁴ (CA *sakham* “blackness; *sukhām* “soot, smut”). “Untied the knot”: *‘indah ribiyyah fī sifritah w-kān lik yfajjij*; *sifrah* “man’s headdress kept in place with a headband.”⁵ “Currency”: *khari/kharīj*; *kharj* “pocket-money”; *kharjiyyah* “daily expense, the smallest of three payments made to pearl-divers”⁶ (CA *kharj* “expenditure, expense; land tax”). “Hatchet, axe, field digging tool”: *khṣīṣīn* dimin. of *khaṣṣīn*.⁷ “Bundle”: *wagir*, *wḡar* “bundle of firewood”⁸ (CA *wiqr* “load, burden”). “Cloak”: *kandūrah* “the national dress of the Emirates: for men a shirt reaching to the heels, white in summer and sometimes darker in winter, similar to the *dishdāshah* in other Gulf states and the *thōb* in Saudi Arabia; the women’s dress is also called *kandūrah* and comes in many sorts.”⁹ “Sack”: *jūniyyah/ yūniyyah* pl. *jawānī*, *yawānī* “(gunny) sack.”¹⁰ “Rode up”: *dghiraw* “they arrived, entered.” “Did not deign to dismount”: *mā ṭā’aw yighīmūn*; *gīham/jiḥam* “to attack; to dismount, as in the saying ‘*ad-dinyā mithl miṭiyyah*, *rākibhā gāḥim*, the world is like a mount, one day its rider will dismount;” *ighīm al-bāb* “close the lock on the door”;¹¹ *gaḥmah*, *ghamah* “descent, dive to the sea-bed.”¹² “Unassuming”: *ḥāltah ḥālah* lit. “his situation, appearance was nothing special, rather poor.” “Animal droppings”: *yallah/jallah* (CA *jullah*, *jillah* “droppings, dung”). “At the camels”: *‘ind khshūm ar-rkāb* lit. “at the noses of the riding camels.”

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 475.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:510.

3 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 669.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 383.

5 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 326.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:480.

7 Of Akkadian origin, communication of Clive Holes.

8 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 164.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 572.

10 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:96.

11 Ḥanḏal, *Mu’jam*, 548.

12 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:414–15.

- §21.4 “For his enclosure”: *yhaṭib li-l-ḥaẓīrah*; *ḥaẓīrah* “enclosure around sitting area in front of the dwelling for protection against sand raised by the wind, made of palm fronds, stalks of *rimth*-shrubs, and branches of the *ghāf*-tree.”¹ “Tamarisk”: *jazz* “a kind of tree that does not bear fruits; its trunk is made into roof beams for the ceilings of houses” (Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 154).
- §21.5 “Pulled away”: *zarraw* “they went away”; *zarr* “to grip, pull (the reins)”;² “budge, move”;³ *zarrēt* “you went away”;⁴ *wagṭin zarr* “time that has passed, days of old.”⁵ “Rode up the hill”: *ghadifaw*; *ghidaf* “to go, pass, circle behind s.th.; *idhā ghidaft min* “if you have left behind”;⁶ “to disappear from view behind an elevation”;⁷ *ghadf* “behind”; *mighdāf* “a path, trail that leads up into sand hills”;⁸ *taghdīf* “shooting from behind an elevation, random shooting”; *ghadfah* “random attack, without a good reason; a sudden, unexpected problem”;⁹ *ghdūf* “hidden from view.” “Slopes of sand hill”: *ḥdād*. “Outside sitting area”: *birzah*; *barzah*, *mibraz* “sitting room for the men and guests in a house, the *mīlis/majlis*; *flān biraz*, *bāriz* “so-and-so is present and sits in the *majlis*”;¹⁰ *baraz*, *buraz* “to be ready.”¹¹ “*Ghāf* tree”: *ḥiḍībah* “young *ghāf* tree.” “Enclosure”: *ḥaẓīrah*; *ḥaẓẓar* “protect with a fence, wind-break”¹² (CA *ḥaẓara* “to fence in”; *ḥaẓīrah* “enclosure, fence, pali sade, compound, yard, corral, pen, paddock”).
- §21.6 “Made to feel welcome”: *malfāy* “he had many guests; a hospitable place always teeming with guests”; *malfā* “addressee”; *lifā* “to come to, go to, arrive at” (CA *alfā* “to come to, to find”). According to the stories, “Ibn Zāhir was a hospitable destination (*malfā*), who was constantly visited by people from

1 Alameemi, *Muʿjam al-ghāf*, 102.

2 Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 298.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:220.

4 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ashʿār*, 549.

5 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ashʿār*, 915.

6 Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 487.

7 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ashʿār*, 1109.

8 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ashʿār*, 913.

9 Al-Khāṭirī, *Ashʿār*, 926.

10 Ḥanzal, *Muʿjam*, 89.

11 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:37.

12 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:119.

everywhere: they arrived in groups and camel trains from Oman, the Banū Yās and al-Hawāmil tribes, Saudi Arabia [*sic*], or from ‘the south,’ while a group of al-Mirar tribe used to spend the winter in al-Khirrān and in summer would go pearl-diving at the coastal shoals (*gaḥḥah*) and take Ibn Zāhir along with them.”¹ “**Once he was sure**”: *ḥayyadhūm nḥiyaw*; *ḥayyad*; *ḥīd* “memory”; *ma ḥīd* “don’t you remember”; *‘alā mā ḥīd* “as you know very well, for sure.” *nḥiyaw/nḥijaw*; *nahaj* “to hasten, set out on a journey; to go away” (CA *nahaja* “to proceed, to take a route”). “**From behind**”: *lawwaṭ* “to circle, come in a roundabout way”; *lāt* “to cut the throat (with a circling movement)” (CA *lāta* “to stick, cling; to hit”). “**Did not know what to do**”: *ta‘āyat* “she was powerless, helpless”; *flān ‘ayyā ‘an al-‘amal* “So-and-So was unable to do it” (CA *‘ayya* “to be incapable, lack the strength or power”).

- §21.8 “**Luggage**”: *gshār* pl. *agshār* “baggage, belongings, bags”;² *shālāw gshārhum*, “they loaded their baggage,” said when belongings are packed and loaded for the moment of departure and travel from a place of sojourn.³ “**Luggage**”: *sāmān*, “items found in storage, for use or sale; *wēn ḥaṭṭēt as-sāmān*? ‘Where did you put the articles, things, stuff.’”⁴ “**Leather bag**”: *gallah* (also pronounced *kallah*) pl. *glāl* “sack made of leather to store clarified butter or dates; if made of palm leaves, it is used for dates”;⁵ “sack of dates weighing approximately 56 lbs.”⁶ “**Eight kilos**”: *mannēn*, “two *mann*”; *mann* a measure of dry weight, thirty *wiqiyyah*, each *wiqiyyah* five *raṭl*, i.e., a weight of about four kilos.”⁷ “**Assorted needs**”: *bahānis* “miscellaneous goods from the market, such as perfumes, trinkets, fancy clothes, as in the expression *khallīnā nisīr li-s-sūg nitbahnas shwayyah* ‘let’s go and buy some fancy stuff at the market’”;⁸ here it probably means “food additives, like spices to flavor the rice.” “**Mortar**”: *minḥāz* “vessel made of wood or stone.”⁹ “**Cut the clump**”: *yizill li-kwārah*; *zall* “remove, sub-

1 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 466.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:424.

3 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 528.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 315.

5 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 536.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:434.

7 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 658.

8 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 107.

9 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 660.

tract”;¹ *kwārah siḥḥ* “a sack of dates”; *kwār* “fireplace”; *kawar* “cover, hood of a car (from English: cover).”² “Eat and enjoy”: *ihbishū*; *hibash* “to eat, have food”; *ihbish* “please, *bon appétit!* I hope you enjoy it!”³

§21.9 “Had gone”: *zarr* “to budge, move”;⁴ “to pull, tighten.”⁵ “Led it up the back side of the sand hill”: *ghaddaf an-nāgah fī l-‘argüb*; *ghaddaf* “to make it go uphill.”

§21.10 “We’d like to ask you”: *bi-nkhabbirk* “we ask you for information about” (CA *takhabbara* “to inquire, ask for information”); *khabbar* “tell, inform.”⁶ “We came all the way for him”: *‘ānīn lih*; *‘ānī* “to travel, come to see s.o. in particular.”

§21.11 “Easy as pie”: *mā y’aṭṭisnī*, lit. “it does not make me sneeze.” “Threadbare cloak”: *knīdīrah*, dimin. of *kandūrah*. “His clothes”: *shlū‘ih*. “Improper”: *mā tilīj/tilīg* (CA *lāqa*, *yalīq* “to befit, be proper”). “Tear”: *ṣilkhah* “place where a cloth has been torn, rent” (perhaps from CA *salakha* “to skin, strip off, flay”). “Twig”: *shikl/shijl*, a variety of the *sidr* tree, “Christ’s-thorn.”⁷ “Covered with leaves”: *mūrig*, as in Dhū l-Rummah line:

Green leaves cannot withstand such a long separation,
but Mayy’s absence has not broken our intimacy

idhā l-hajru afnā ṭūluhu warāqa l-hawā
*min al-ilfi lam yaqṭa’ hawā Mayyata al-hajrū.*⁸

(CA *awraqa* “to leaf, burst into leaf, sprout”). “Rebuff”: *mjaffī/mgaffī* “turning one’s back on, giving a cold shoulder” (CA *qafā*, *taqaffā*).

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:223.

2 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 574–75.

3 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 707.

4 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:220.

5 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 298.

6 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:140.

7 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 568.

8 Dhū l-Rummah, *Dūwān*, 573.

- §21.12 “**Wrestled him down**”: *bāṭ ibbāṭ*, explained as “arm to arm (CA *ibt* pl. *ābāṭ* “armpit); he immediately gave a powerful reply.” *bāṭ* “long sleeve from the armpit to the hands.”¹ “**Pitiful**”: *ghlīwīṣah*, explained as *muzrī*, “contemptible, despicable, pitiable.” (CA *waqa‘a fī tughullis* “he fell into calamity”).²
- §21.13 “**The only one**”: *bi-tigṣir illā ‘annī* lit. “camels go missing (i.e., are given away) except mine.”
- §21.16 “**Next evening**”: *yōm ‘addā b-lētaghad (bi-lēlat al-ghad)*; a conjunction followed by *addā* or ‘*addā* followed by the time of the day is frequently used to signal adverbial clauses of time, e.g., *lē addā ṣ-ṣibḥ* “when morning came”; *ilā addat ish-shitā* “when winter came”;³ *addā* “to come, reach (especially of a particular event, or time in the day, season or year; always 3rd pers. sing.).”⁴ “**Supported by his cane**”: *gabā ash-shēbah*, *tī‘akkaz*; *gabb* “stick, staff of wood”⁵ (CA *qabā* “to gather, hold together, with one’s fingers”);⁶ see also §1.37. “**Hello, it’s me**”: *hūd hūd*, “words spoken in a loud voice by a visitor who knocks on the door of a house.”⁷ The original meaning seems to be: “easy, take it easy, good, well-meaning folks at the door”; *irmis b-hūd* “talk in a soft voice”; *hawwad al-wija‘* “the pain has subsided”; *hawwad flān* “So-and-So has gone to sleep.”⁸
- §21.17 “**Early in the morning**”: *yōm ‘addāhā al-farkhah ghabbāshī* lit. “before dawn the chick (i.e., the poet’s daughter).”
- §21.18 “**Broken in**”: *lēn yākhḏhin w-ya‘ṭin* lit. “until they (f. pl.) can be engaged in give and take, become obedient.”

1 Ḥasan, *Ādāt*, 31.

2 Lane, *Lexicon*, 2281.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:101, 1:423.

4 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:9–10.

5 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:411.

6 Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, 3523.

7 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 719.

8 Ḥanzal, *Mu‘jam*, 719.

- §21.20 **“Enclosure”**: *ḥaẓīrah* (CA *ḥaẓīrah* pl. *ḥaẓā’ir* “enclosure, fence, palisade, yard, coral”; *al-ḥaẓā’ir* “an enclosure made of wood to protect camels against the cold and wind; as God said, ‘like debris of wood cut from trees for building an enclosure.’”
- §21.21 **“Fattened”**: *widač/widak* “the fat that is extracted from the meat of camels or fish oil from dolphins, used for coating the wooden hulk of boats or as ointment for broken limbs”¹ (CA *wadak* “fat”; *wadik* “fat,” adj.).
- §21.22 **“Stirred”**: *yzāghihā*, see §8.22 above. **“Screaming”**: *tijahjil*, explained as “loud voices, shouting, screaming.” **“Outwit”**: *iyyībū lah ghaṭwāh*, “they present him with a riddle, *ghaṭuw* (CA *ghaṭā* “to cover, wrap”).
- §21.24 **“Kalbā”**: for his stay there during the hot season, see §17.30. **“Greet”**: *tawāyah/tawājah* lit. “to come face to face; to greet”² (CA *tawājaha* “to face each other, meet face to face”). **“What”**: *ishgā*, see §20.3. **“Mounted”**: *ifad* lit. “he jumped.”³ **“Trappings”**: *itād* (CA *atād* “equipment, material”).
- §21.26 **“His honor intact and resplendent”**: *bayyaḍ wayhah*, lit. “he whitened his face”; *bayyiḍ allah wajhik* “may God whiten your face, honor” (said to s.o. who has rendered assistance or entertained the speaker hospitably). **“Never forget”**: *širruhā* lit. “tie it up in a bundle” (CA *šarra* “to lace, cord, tie up”). **“Taught a lesson”**: *iddawrūnhā* lit. “they are looking for it (for trouble).”⁴ **“Two riders mounted on one camel”**: *irtadfaw; mardūfah* “a she-camel mounted by two riders, one in the saddle and one behind it”; *ridīf* “person who sits behind the saddle, holding on to its rear knob.” **“Penchant for boasting”**: *fashrah; fashar, fshār, ifshār* “arrogance, conceit, a haughty attitude”; as in the verse:

These days our kids do not study:
they look down their noses upon school”

1 Ḥanẓal, *Muʿjam*, 732; Holes, *Dialect*, 1:554.

2 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhīr*, 200.

3 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 235.

4 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhīr*, 229.

awlādnā al-yōm mā yadrisūn
*mākhḏhīn at-tā'īm ifshār.*¹

§21.28 “For the sake of getting to see him”: ‘*ānīn*; ‘*ānī* “someone who travels with the specific purpose of meeting a certain person for a certain purpose.”

§21.29 “What”: *jī*, *shī*, interrogatory particle.²

§21.30 “Just to see you”: ‘*ānī*, see §21.28.

§22.1 “Push”: *zikhkh* “take hold of, take in a strong grip, seize, grasp tightly, arrest”;³ *zakhkhētah min idah* “I grasped his hand”; *zakhkhatah ash-shurṭah* “the police arrested him.”⁴

§22.3 “Vast desert”: *zīzā* “rough terrain”;⁵ as in an early Nabaṭī poem from al-Sudayr region in Najd:

I packed a waterskin and a traveling bag for the desert wastes
 and fastened a wooden saddle on the camel’s towering back

w-adnēt li-z-zīzā ṣimīlin w-mizhab
*w-min fōg manbūz al-wrūk niḵr*⁶

(CA *zīzāh* “small protuberances in the terrain; uneven, rough ground”).

§22.5 “Freezing rain”: *nifāf khūmah*, “heavy rains that keep pouring down a long time.”⁷ “At dusk”: *yōm ‘addā li-mgharb*.

§22.6 “Tie up tightly”: *tibattal* “he did so firmly, tightly”;⁸ (CA *batala* “to make s.th obligatory on oneself”; *tabattala* “to devote oneself exclusively to s.th.”).

1 Ḥanḏal, *Muḥjam*, 505.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:284–85.

3 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:220.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Muḥjam*, 298.

5 al-Khāṭirī, *al-Zafrah*, *Shi’r wa-shu’arā*, 40.

6 Sawayan, *Shi’r*, 549.

7 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 221.

8 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 221.

“**Listened intently**”: *yitṣawwakh wi-ytarayyāhā* lit. “he listened and waited”; *ṣākh, iṣṭākh, taṣawwakh* “to listen”¹ (CA *ṣākha*); *tarayyā/tarajjā* “to wait.”²

§22.7 “**Lifted her up**”: *yhiḥfā* (Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 221) (CA *haffa* “to pass swiftly, flash; to blow”).

§22.8 “**With open arms**”: *mirḥibāniyyah* “welcoming hostess” (*al-Qiyam*, 123) (CA *raḥḥaba* “to welcome, receive graciously”). See §§17.9–11.

§22.9 “**Listlessly**”: *ghamrān*; *ghumar* “to faint, become unconscious; to flag, hang, be loose, listless (said of a sail)”; *ghamrān* “unconscious, fainted.”³ “**Mast**”: *digal* “ship’s mast.”⁴ The particle *mā* in the second hemistich is not a negative, but used to lend emphasis (see Holes, *Dialect*, 1:489).

§22.11 “**Monopoly**”: *lā tghaljah* lit. “you do not close, shut, lock it” (CA *ghalaqa*); *ghalj* “difficult to understand”; *ghalij* “locked, bolted”;⁵ *ghalij* “impossible to deal with, refractory.”⁶ “**Tough love**”: *ṭibah ‘asrah*, lit. “a good turn that is very hard (on the receiver).” “**Daughter**”: *salaglag*;⁷ *walad as-salaglag* “a daughter’s son born out of wedlock, bastard son”;⁸ “the son of your son is your son, but the son born out of wedlock is a mark of disgrace” (*walad wildik waladk w-walad as-salag laq*), explained as “grandsons are your sons, but a son born out of wedlock, that is a *salaq laq*, is a stain on your honor.”⁹ Other versions have the more neutral “daughter’s son,” which corresponds to the tribal facts of the area. “**Grows**”: *yingiḍ*; “he made hair grow on the bald pate of So-and-So; he made hair grow on the inside of a hand,” expressions of effusive praise for people’s beneficence¹⁰ (CA *anqadat al-arḍ* “plants shot up from the ground”).

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:304.

2 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 123.

3 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 491.

4 Tibbetts, *Navigation*, 524; al-Rūmī, *Mu‘jam*, 45–46.

5 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:128.

6 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 255.

7 Alameemi, *Ibn Zāhir*, 178.

8 Thānī, *Ibn Zāhir*, 598.

9 Ḥasan, *‘Ādāt*, 129.

10 Dhū l-Rummah, *Diwān*, 1166.

- §23.1 **“Well”**: *ṭiwī*, a frequent designation in the Emirates for “water well”; *ṭiwīy*, *ṭiwāh* pl. *ṭwāy*, *ṭwīyyāt* “a well with stone-covered walls or with a wooden casing.”¹ **“Character”**: lit. *hab hayyin*, “not simple; complex.” **“Skin”**: *‘ičč*; dimin. of *‘ikkah/‘iččah* “skin for water, milk, similar to *girbah* and *jūd/yūd*”² (CA *‘ukkah* “small receptacle, skin, for clarified butter”); “Lukayz are not the owners of a skinful of clarified butter” (*wa-anna Lukayzan lam takun rabba ‘ukkatīn*) in a derogatory sense, i.e., “Lukaiz are not traders in clarified butter, but warriors.”³ **“Camel racing track”**: *mirkād* (CA *rakaḍa* “to race, gallop”). **“Miḥḍāb”**: the meaning of the name is “a sand hill with (young) *ghāf* trees,” see n. 435.
- §23.2 **“Eaten”**: *lijih rām*, *mākiltinnah ad-di‘nah*, *at-trāb*, *mākiltinhā ar-rimmah* “he found that it had decomposed, been eaten by the earth, eaten by the worms”; *da‘nah* “ground, earth. It is said: *ḥiṭṭ li-ghrād ‘al da‘nah* “put the things on the ground.” Or to a child that runs around too much: *yā-walad šikk ad-da‘nah wlā titharrak* “Boy, sit on the ground and don’t move around!”⁴ (CA *ramma* “to decay, rot”; *rimmah* “cadaver”; *ramīm* “old, decayed bones”; *marammah*). **“Not decomposed”**: *lā ‘awwalat* (CA *awwala* “to return to its original state; change in consistency, curdle”). **“Slabs of stone”**: similar to the instructions given by Dhū l-Rummah for his burial, see n. 458.
- §23.3 **“Low hill”**: *rijibah/rigībah*.
- §23.5 **“Have known it”**: *yihīdūnah*; *ḥād*, *yihīd* “to remember, to know for sure.” **“His name is invoked”**: *rā‘ī nakhwah*; *nakhwah* pl. *nakhāwī* “war cry; war cry of a kin”; an oppressed man *yankhā*, when he shouts the war cries of some prominent men, calling them to his aid.⁵
- §23.6 **“In the morning”**: *yōm ‘addāh bi-bākir aṣ-ṣibḥ*, see §21.17. **“Rekindle”**: *labbag* “to kindle”; *lubag* “to catch fire, start burning.”⁶ **“Roof made of palm-leaf”**:

1 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 428.

2 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 465.

3 Lyall, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, 1:603, 2:240–41.

4 Ḥanḏal, *Mu‘jam*, 243.

5 Musil, *Rwala*, 503.

6 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 288.

simmah pl. *smām*, *smīm* “palm-leaf matting (often used as a roofing material).”¹

“**Palm-branch hut**”: ‘*arīsh* pl. ‘*urūsh*, coll. ‘*irsh*;² a hut made of palm fronds (*sa’af*), palm leaves (*khūṣ*), and mats, pl. ‘*irshān*.³ “**Sackcloth**”: *yūniyyah/jūniyyah* “gunny sack, especially used for rice.”⁴

§23.7 “**Famous place**”: *miṭrāy*, lit. “frequently mentioned,” *ṭarā* “to mention, be mentioned” (CA *ṭara’a* “to occur to s.o.”). “**Strike a match to rekindle it**”: *shakhaṭ*, (CA *shakhaṭa* “to shout, bellow”); *milbag*, *labbag bi-d-ḍaww*; *labag/labak* “to catch fire”; *mlabbig* “match”;⁵ *milbagah* “matches, a lighter”; *lubgat an-nār* “the fire was lighted, flames shot up.”⁶

1 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:248.

2 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:345.

3 Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 453.

4 Holes, *Dialect*, 1:96.

5 Al-Maṭrūshī, *Lahjah*, 288.

6 Ḥanzāl, *Mu’jam*, 595.