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Dīwān of Abū'n-Nağm

Materials for the Study of Rağaz Poetry I.

Compiled and edited
by
Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila



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FOREWORD

The *Materials for the Study of Rağaz Poetry* (abbreviated MSRP) is a new series which will consist of 4-5 volumes, each containing reconstructions of the rağaz Dīwāns by the authors belonging to the genre of »artistic« rağaz (for the term, cf. below). These Dīwāns have, with the exception of those of al-‘Ağğāğ, az-Zafayān and Ru’ba, been lost; what remains is a considerable amount of fragments found in philological, especially lexicographical, literature. The series starts with a re-edition of the Dīwān of Abū’n-Nağm al-‘Iğlī, and the first volume will exceptionally also include his qarīd poems. The subsequent volumes will present only the rağaz poems. The reason for including qarīd verse in this volume is that, unlike the other rağaz poets, e.g. Ru’ba, Abū’n-Nağm also wrote qarīd poems which were highly valued in Mediaeval times, especially his poem in -āī, here published as no. 1, and of which there are extensive fragments in later literature.

MSRP concentrates on artistic rağaz, i.e. it will exclude the authors who only composed *ex tempore* poetry in the same metre. It also concentrates on the work of ruğğāz, i.e. poets who wrote exclusively or mainly in that metre. Historically, these two conditions limit the series mainly to the Umayyad period, the high season of rağaz. The Dīwāns of the following poets, among some others, are under preparation: al-Aghlab, Ġandal ibn al-Muthannā, Ḥumayd al-Arqaṭ, Dukayn al-Fuqaymī and Dukayn ad-Dārimī, Ghaylān ibn Ḥurayth, Abū Muḥammad al-Faq‘ asī (al-Ḥadhlamī), Manzūr ibn Marthad, and Himyān ibn Quḥāfa.

All volumes will contain the rağaz poems, a commentary thereto (similar to the one compiled for this volume, cf. below), a metrical analysis, and a lexical index to the poems. The last two are included to facilitate the identification of anonymous, or variously attributed, verses, and to serve as tools for further stylistic analysis and study of the development of the genre. The index will also, it is hoped, be of some value for lexicographical studies.

Until now, only the Dīwāns of al-‘Ağğāğ, az-Zafayān and Ru’ba have been relatively well known, thanks to the edition of Ahlwardt and later re-editions. The rağaz dīwāns of only these three poets have been preserved¹, whereas the work of the other rağaz poets is preserved only in scattered fragments, which has made it impossible to evaluate their work and to put it in its place in the history of Arabic poetry.

The emphasis which for these reasons has been given to the Dīwāns of al-‘Ağğāğ and, especially, Ru’ba, has also led to serious misconceptions about the whole genre; the baroque style of Ru’ba, one of the latest rağaz poets, has been taken as typical of the style. It is hoped that the collections published in the present series will do something to correct this picture.

As the life and influence of the rağaz poets as well as the development of the genre will be dealt with later in a monographic form, the text volumes of MSRP will

¹ The Dīwān of az-Zafayān is a late compilation.

not contain a study of the authors and their poems.

It is the hope of the editor that the present series will also provide a more solid foundation for aesthetical studies of the raġaz poetry, a field almost totally neglected both in mediaeval and modern times.

Acknowledgements. The present volume has profited from the kindness of several friends and colleagues. Mr. Kaj Öhrnberg, Phil. lic., has been most kind and generous in giving me books over our years of friendship; many an Arabic classic has found its way from his bookshelves to mine, and during the work on the dīwān they have yielded many valuable new verses. Prof. Heikki Palva was kind enough to let volumes of his copy of Tāġ al-‘arūs remain long at my disposal, and Mr. Faruq Abu-Chacra and Mr. Timo Paajanen have both lent and given me some books of value. Prof. Palva also read an earlier phase of the manuscript. My sincerest thanks go to all of them².

The staff at the Interlending Department of Helsinki University Library has been astonishingly patient in seeking tens if not hundreds of books with exotic titles for me. I remain grateful to them.

Mr. David Steadman, B.A., has checked the language of the manuscript, with the same care as always. Mr. Harry Halén, Phil. lic., has edited the manuscript for print. My warmest thanks to them both.

Last, but definitely not least, I wish to thank my wife Mrs. Virpi Hämeen-Anttila, B.A., for her perpetual support and encouragement. This book is dedicated to her, the poetry in my life. »ΖΩΗ ΜΟΥ ΣΑΣ ΑΓΑΠΩ».

JAAKKO HÄMEEN-ANTTILA

² The reader who is used to the collections in Germany, England or the USA, may sometimes find it odd that I have not always been able to use the best editions and have often been unable to use books that are commonplace in the larger libraries. This has been caused by the paucity of the Arabic collections in Finnish libraries; less than half of the books cited in the bibliography have been available in the libraries.