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CENTRE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

## The Genius of

Usāmah ibn Munqidh: aspects of Kitāb al-I'tibār by Usāmah ibn Munqidh
by
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Occasional Papers Series
No. 34 (1987)
ISSN 03070654

(c) Centre for Middle Eastern \& Islamic Studies University of Durham, England, 1987

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\text { ISBN } 0 \quad 903011 \quad 17 \quad 4
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Series editors: John Devdney \& Heather Bleaney

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PREFACE

This study adduces evidence in support of the folloving assertions. The Arab conquests of the 1 st/7th century affected the development of both the vernacular and the formal mode of Arabic. Rhetorical theory of the $3 \mathrm{rd} / 9 \mathrm{th}$ century and arter leaves no doubt about the discrete nature of the latter. Modern linguistic theory that tries to do the same for the former is more speculative. Both forms are evident in Kitäb al-I'tibār by the 6th/I2th century Syrian vriter, Usämah b. Munqidh. They reflect his long and varied experience as a soldier and man of letters. His use of both of them in Kitabb al-I'tibär is perceptibly matched to his purpose, which is to provide moral instruction by means of illustrative example. This purpose is not immediately apparent in the vork, which seens to have begun as a conventionsl chronicle. The spoken language of the author's time provides the medium for his anecdotage. Formal rhetorical language is used to drav attention to the point of the anecdotes and thus gives structure and coherence to the writer's recollections. His povers as a storyteller are more inpressive than his subtlety as a philosopher. The range of his subject matter makes the work of lasting value as a windov on the uriter's times.

This work is based on the available published work of Usamah b. Munqidh, as vell as relevant rhetorical; literary and historical writing of his time. It also uses published material relating to wodern linguistic theory.

## ACKHOHLEDGEMEHT

I vould like to thank Dr. G. Rex Smith of the School of Oriental. Studies, Durham University, for his advice and assistance at all stages of this study.

1. INTRDDUCTTON

This study vill consider Kitäb al-I'tibär by the 6 th/12th century Syrian writer, Usamah b. Munqidh, from the point of viev of literary skill and style. Literary skill depends on innate ability in the chosen area of operations reflected in the content and form of the literary product. Biographical detail may shed some light on this aspect. Literary style is the writer's more or less conscious application of the intrinsic features of the language in which he writes. The accretion of history may have resulted in new ways of saying something being added to the already existing modes. His choice and use of language may reflect prevailing literary fashion, itself subject to historical influences, es well, of course, as being the expression of his own personality and background. Accordingly, the study will consider certain historical factors influencing the development of the Arabic language until Usamah's time, and their impact on the conventions of vritten Arabic. Then, in the light of biographical and historical rindings, first the content and form, and then the language of the work, will be examined.

## 2. THE AUTHOR

A varied life

Both ends of Usämah's long active life 488-584/1095-1188 vere devoted to letters. He recalls hov he studied gramar (nahv) under Shaykh Abü rAbd Alläh al-Ţulaytuli "in gramanar the Sibavayhi of his, time", after the latter had left the Där al'Ilm in Tripoli. This took place in $502 / 1109$ when Usãmah was fourteen. Then, at the end of his life, he taught badi', or the rhetorical science of embellishment, at the Hanifi madrasah in Damascus 569-79/1174-84. He was celebrated in his time, according to al-Dhahabi, for "knoving by heart aore than 20,000 verses of the poetry of the Jahiliyyah". At the same time, he was yell known as the author of a divan of poetry, of which Saladin was especially fond. Al-Dhahabì said of him: "And he vas a lion (usämah) like his name (Usämah), in the strength of his nathr ("scattering" or "prose") and his nazm ("order" or "verse").

His life as a varrior and hunter vas almost as long. In $501 / 1108$, at the age of thirteen, he took part in the defence of Shayzar, the seat of the Banu Munqioh on the Orontes, against Tancred, the Prankish prince of Antioch. Fron 523-32/1129-38 he vas in the aray of the Atēbak Zanki, and from $538-48 / 1144-54$, while in Egypt at the Fatimid Court, he took part in enterprises against the Franks. During $548-59 / 1154-64$ he was in the army of Nür al-Dïn Ibn Zankĭ. He vas as celebrated for his provess on the battlefield as he vas for his litergry activity : ahad abtā al-isläa, "one of the heroes of Islam ${ }^{6}$ By his orn calculation, he spent seventy years hunting.

His abilities early attracted the envy of others, engendering in him a capacity for survival in times thick vith intrigue. He vas tested in the first instance by the jealousy of his uncle
 lordship of Shayzar from his elder brother, Usëmah's father. The anecdote ${ }^{8}$ treating of this sinister development is reported by two sources: because of the eminence of the family and Shayzar's strategic importance as a crossing-point on the river,
the quarrel vas a cause celebre. His footwork was further io tried during his ten years in Egypt, when he vas involved ${ }^{10}$ in the wurder of al-i Adil b. al-Sallār by the latter's son-in-lay 'Abbäs, and 'Abbās' intrigues against the Caliph al-Zāfir, His declining years sav hin in and out of favour with patrons, including Saladin, who gave Usänah the governorship of Beirut, but then grev cold tovards him, perhaps because of nev information on Usāmah's relationships with the Fatimids in Egypt years before.

## Literary output

It was during such fallov periods of disfavour at the end of his life that Usämah wrote. Some, of his production survives, conveying the impression of vide learning. He produced a vork on rhetoric, Kitēb al-Badī ${ }^{t} \mathrm{fi}^{\mathrm{I}}$ neqd al-shi'r , (The Book of embellishment in the criticisn of verse), consisting of a distillation of previous rhetorical vork. The memory of the earthquake of 552/1157, which destroyed Shaizar and killed most of his relatives, prompted an anthology of verse and prose vith lament upon ruin as their theme = Kitāb al-Manäzil va-' 1 diyāT, (The Book of dvellings and abodes). hs curious vas another work : Kitab al-\&Aṣa (The Book of the staff), ${ }^{15}$ in which the motif of the ralking-stick forms a common thread for a collection of anecdates and verse. The Kitäb Lubäb al-ādāb, (The Quintessence of belles-lettres), is an assemblage of sacred and profane references to a variety of subjects, ranging from vills (vasāyä) to visdom (hikmah). Titles of vorks which have been lost ${ }^{17}$ include Ta'rikh al-qila ${ }^{t}$ wa-'1-husün, (History of palaces and strongholds), and Kitīb al-Navm va- 1 -ahläm, (The Book of sleep and dreams), to which Usämah refers in Kitäb al-I'tibär.

Kitḕb al-I'tibār, (The Book of instruction by example) is the author's most famous vork, and it vas vritten in Damascus when Usamah was ninety. He had fled his governorate of Beirut before the arrival of the Franks; Saladin's favour towards hin had cooled. In 1880, Hartvig Derenbourg discovered fragments of the work in the Escorial in Madrid, among hrabic manuscripts
relating to Spain and North Africa. He assembled them into order, and discovered that, vith the exception of the first twenty-one sheets, the vork vas complete, 20 , up to and including the colophon at the end. His edition of the vork vas superseded by that of Philip Hitti, ${ }^{2}$ upon which this study is based. The copy available to the yriter vas a 1981 Beirut printing of the 1930 edition. The pagination of either printing, hovever, does not correspond.

Notes

1 Usamah ion Munqidh, 1981, 267
2 Usämah, 1981, Introduction, f(
3 AI-Dhahabi in Usamah, 1893, 103
4 Abü Shämah, n.d., I, 97-98
5 A1-Dhahabï in Usāmah, 1893, 104
6 A1-Dhahabi in Usämah, 1893, 103
7 Usत̄ョah, 1981, 289
8 see below p. 12
9 Abü Shämah, n.d., I, 112; and Ibn al-Athïr, 1876, II,
part 2, 199, 200
10 Ibn al-Athir, 1872, I, 486
11 see belov p. 37
12 Usämah, 1981, Introduction, fā
13 Usämah, 1953. A1so partly in Usämah, 1893, 116-146
14 Usämah, 1965
15 Partly in Usämah, 1893, 7-50
16 Usämah, 1935
17 Usämah, 1981, Introduction, 'ayn
18 Usämah, 1981, 241
19 Usänah, 1981, Introduction, fā'
20 Usämah, 1886
21 Usämah, 1981
3. THE $\triangle$ RABIC L:NGUSGE
*Arabiyyah and the futung
"Arabiyyah, "correct language", or "the language of the Qurr $\bar{a}^{n \prime}$, begen as a spoken language in hrabia. There is a difference of opinion as to whether it vas supra-tribal, or belonged to a particular tribe, as, for example, Quraysh claimed. On the other hand, it is generally sgreed that this language, as it evolved, becane supra-tribal, dominating the broad division of dialect into Eastern (Gulf) and Western (Hijāz).

As a result of the conquests in the 1 st/7th century, ${ }^{t}$ arabiyyah, together with the tribal bedouin dialects asong which it was preweminent, cane into contact vith other Semitic languages, which had evolved differently from Arabic. The result vas the emergence of modified forms of speech, characterised by simplification of the alien complexities of Arabic. The bedouin tribal dialects, which did not change their fundamental character, influenced, and vere in turn influenced by, the non-Arab reaction to Arabic. They vere, nevertheless, regarded as exemplifying correct speech. ${ }^{1}$ Meanyhile, "arabiyyah became incressingly isolated, its pure form still evolving, its difficulty protecting it, and reserving for it the role of medium of literary expression for the Arab empire. By the beginning of the 4 th/10th century, it had becoae classic, susceptible of no more development, vith an archaic beauty that eclipsed its poor cousins, the bedouin dialects.

Observers noted the syaptons of the process of modification as it happened, vithout necessarily forming any theory on the basis of their data. In his Kitab al-bayän va-1 1-tabyīn, Bl-jăhiz ( $163-255 / 780-869$ ) provides a large number of examples of solecisms (1uhü) of different sorts, but not in methodical fashion. Likevise, he observed that some sounds of foreign languages could not be rendered into Arabic. Later, al-Muqaddasi (336-80/947-80) in his Kitāb Ahsān al-taqäsïm fí ma ${ }^{2}$ rifat al-aqāiñ,listed peculiarities
or Ianguage region by region. ${ }^{5}$
Their observations vere carried out fros the point of viev of ${ }^{\text {t arabiyyah, divergences fron which vere regarded as aberrations. }}$ By contrast, a nodern observer like Blau regerds the forms of speech that emerged from the linguistic encounters of the futüh as vernaoular tongues in their om right. The typological sinilarity of 'arabiyyah and the bedouin tribal dialects vas based on their being what Blau calls synthetic languages. They tended to express several concepts in a single vord, and possessed sinilar systems of conjugation and declension. The Semitic languages with which they came into contact vere what Blau calls analytic : they tended to use one vord to express one perception, and vera inclined to drop case and vord endings, when these hed been retained by the synthetic language. The distinct syntactic, morphological and phonetic characteristics which Blau maintains energed as a result, he calls Middle Arabic. He further sub-divides it according to the communal affiliation of the speaker : Judaeo-irabic, Christian Arabic and Muslim Arabic. Blau's theory would consider the nonclassical Arabic elements of a literary product of northern Syria in the 6th/12th century vith a viev to elassification in the latter category.

The developaent of ${ }^{\text {riln }}$ al-balaghah
Early orthodox Islanic attitudes discouraged the development of an Arabic science of rhetoric, that is, eloquence and elegance of language. In Sürat al-Shu'arár (the Poets), Muhamad is varned against poets : "Those who stray follow them. Do you not see that they wander about love-struck in every valley? And that they preach what they don't practice? ${ }^{6}$ The Prophet is reported to have said ; iyȳ̈kum va-saje al-kuhhān, "Avoid ye the rhyning prose of the soothsayers or diviners. ${ }^{n}$, Dislike of saje or rhymed prose vas based in particular on its being the medius of the utterances of kahanah or soothsayers in pre-Islawic tines. It vas also an indispensable ingredient of any occasion whioh required eloquence : satirical competition (muhājāh), legal
erguments and genealogical claims, for example. ${ }^{\text {a }}$ On the other hand, the captivating pover of this unsetrical poetry vas entirely appropriate to the $\mathrm{Qur}^{2}$ ann, which vas the vord of God, quite different from the ecstatic utterances of a diviner : "So announce the praises of God. For by the grace of your Lord, you are neither soothsayer, nor one possessed."

As Islam spread, the threat 10 of the pagan past receded, and rhyaed prose reasserted itself. ${ }^{10}$ Practical as vell as political reasons lay behind a gathering of interest in literary expression. Writing had anyway been a necessary skill among the merchants of the Hijäz. It was also essential for correct waintenance of the lists of fighting men in the amsarr and was in time further extended to the administration of conquered territories. The need to assert the cultural superiority of the Arabic language and at the same tiae to maintain clarity of communication in the official transactions of government, resulted in an art of letter-vriting, with the literary secretary (adib) as the chief practitioner. Thus it is said of 'Abd alHamid al-Kätib (d.132/750), the secretary of the 1 ast Umayyad ealiph, Marvan II, that "letters began vith him." ${ }^{12}$ There vere other factors which turned the Arabs' attention to the consideration of a science of expression. During the $2 \mathrm{nd} / 8 \mathrm{sth}$ century poets like Bashshēr b. Burd ( $d, 167 / 783$ ) and Muslim b. Bl-Walīd, sarír al-ghawāni" "smitten by the fair sex" (died 823) ${ }^{3}$ began to use rhetorical artifices on an unprecedented scale, and in a way which distinguished their language from that of the older poets. The nev use of imagery was regarded as badi' ${ }^{\text {t }}$, or innovatory, for the way it rejected the subject matter of traditional poetry, whioh was tied to the desert roots of the krab, and the pre-Islamic ideal of aurū'ah. The direat influence of Greek thought, via the aastern Hellenized cities, on the usp, of rhetorical devices by exponents of badi' , is disputed. ${ }^{14}$ Its indirect influence, hovever, on the 15 establishment of a science of rhetoric, is clearer. Mu'tasilite thought, under the stimulus of the Greek ratiocinative process, challenged the doctrine of the eternal nature of the Qur' ${ }^{\text {an }}$, and, instead, claimed that it vas created. Those vho maintained the eternal nature of the Qur's. B , held that its resultant ininitability (i'jaz)





-sutnopaq





















* भooq әч7











the basis for the Palkhis al-miftan of al-Qsavini (666-739/ 1268-1338).

The classification yas three-fold : silu alnazäni, corresponding to gramar and syntax; rila al-bayān, which deals with simile, metaphor and metonymy ; and 'ilm al-badir ${ }^{t}$, where the vord badi $t$ which previously slluded to a novelty of style, is now used to denote an effect, that of "erbellishment". Since Usêmah vrote a treatise on badīt, and lectured in the subject, one might expect to find evidence of its artifices in Kitāb al-I'tibär. A copy of Usēmah's Kitäb al-Badít fi naqd al-shi' ${ }^{2}$ is not available to this writer. In it, one vould find Usämah's own articulation of all the major devices of embellishment, equally applicable in the main to prose as much as to verse. But Usāmah's vork was in any case based on previous treatises of thetoric. ${ }^{22}$ We can therefore have recourse for theoretical exegesis to the Talkhis al-miftäh of al-Qazvini vhich has an isnād that goes back to Usämah's tise and before.

Hotes

1. B1au, 1965, 1-18
2. Fück, 1955, 131
3. Pück, 1955, 102
4. Fück, 1955, 98, 99
5. Fück, 1955, 163
6. The Qur'än, XXVI:224-227
7. Badī' al-Zamän al-Hamadhänï, 1915, Introduction, 8
8. A1-Ḩariri, 1867, Introduction, 49
9. Qur'ān, LII:29
10. Badī̆ al-Zamān al-Hanadhänī, 1915, 9
11. Sellheim and Sourdel, 1976
12. A1-ZirikII, 1954-59, IV, 60
13. Khalafallah, 1958
14. e.g. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjänī, 1954, Introduction, 3-4; Qudänah b. Jat far al-Kätib al-Baghdädi 1956, Introduction $30-44$
15. Schande, 1959
16. Khalafallahz 1958
17. Schaade, 1959
18. Von Grünebaum, 1959
19. Füick, 1955, 123-4
20. Bonebakker, 1960
21. A1-Qazvīnī, 1938
22. Usānah, 1935, Introduction, 26
23. ASPECTS OF KITIAB AL-I'TIBTR : CONTEKY AND FORM

A conventional beginning
The manuscript of Kitāb al-I'tibär begins at the close of the battle of Qinnasrin in $531 / 1137$. At this point, the vork is in chronicle form and there would seem to be no reason for not assuming that this vas also the form of the missing fortytwo pages. Events are recorded in the order of their occurrence until soon after the death in 549/1154 of ${ }^{2}$ Abbäs al-Afdal Rukn al-Din, and the capture of his son by the Franks at al-Muraylih. As Usämah looks beck over his life, it soon becomes clear that saall details have stuck in his mind, as well as matters of great historical moment. He describes, for example, the unsuccessful conspiracy organised by the Fatinid caliph al-Zäfir in $544 / 11502^{\text {against }}$ his vizier al-Malik al-'तdil, Sayf al-Din b. al-Sallär. ${ }^{2}$ Then follow two depiotions of other events in the same day. They both concern fugitives : one is a Sudanese, party to the plot who eludes his pursuers vith great energy, hurling himself from the roof of Usämah's house in Cairo on to a tree in the courtyard. The other is a forger on the run, who enters Usämah's house by the front door and engages hia in erudite conversation. The first shakes his pursuers off; but the second is peremptorily beheaded by, al-t Idil. Before returning to his account of chancellery affairs, Usänah contemplates the rugitives' different fates.

The incompatability of Usämah's approach vith the conventional chronicle evriting of his era is evident from Abü Shämah's treatment ${ }^{3}$ of Usëmah's account of the killing of al-ZZ̈̈fir by 'Abbās in 549/1154. Abū Shämah preserves intact Usämah's account of the butchery, as vell as his sombre comment on the day : ${ }_{5}$ "one of the aost calamitous (ashadd)" he had ever spent. But Abü Shänah does not include Usänah's account of an eerie incident, a footnote as it vere, to the aajor event of the day: Alin al-Mulk, an old vatchman, $\sigma^{\text {is }}$ found dead behind the audience room door, key in hand.

The break betveen Usēmah and conventional historical yriting is soon complete. The account of the death of 'Abbäs is folloved by the recall of an earlier period, the viziership of Ridvän ${ }^{\text {Ib }}$ al-Walakhshï, vizier of al-Zäfir's predecessor al-Häriz. Then Usämah terminates the record with a brief mention of his leaving Egypt and going to Syria to the employ of the Zankid al-Nalik al-'Ādil Nür al-Din Mahnū̃ b. Zankiz He announces that henceforth he will present wonders ( ${ }^{\text {ajajr}}$, which he has vitnessed and experienced in corsbat.

Usämah as anecdotist
The contrast betveen the Sudanese's desperate ingress via the tree in Usämah's courtyard, and the forger's unhurried arrival by conventional means is the first example of a device Usämah frequently employs in his exposition of "wonders". He has a sure instinct for antithesis whioh heightens the dramatic effect of an anecdote. It can be more or less picturesque. For example, Usämah portrays the tableau of his triuaphant return after dark bearing a dead lion, to be met by his grandmother full of foreboding about how this vill excite the jealousy of his uncle, 'Izz al-DIn Abū '1-tAsākir Sulṭän.' More emphasis is laid on the antithesis of attitude in the (deathless) encounter between oriental pudeur and western impropriety in the bath-house at al-Ma'arrah. The Frankish knight not only exposes himself ; he does the same for his wife ${ }_{10}$ Salim the hammämi is too stunned even to take offence.

Usämah has an eye for circumstantial detail shich enhances his credibility as a chronicler. The reader is immediately struck by his care to mention (as vell as his ability to ramember) the names of the dramatis personae in his yarns : for example, that of the old yatchmar on the day of al-Zäfir's murder. Such details may be graphically described. We are told hov the Atäbak Trughdakin tucked the ends of his robe into his belt before leaving his tent and vine to gin outside and behead Robert of Saône, his prisoner. The reason is at once simple and convincing: were it not for this precation, the operation vould be
impeded. The circumstantial detail may be abstract. An Antiochene Frank offers Abü ' $1-$ Fath, a crafteman frou Shayzar, a cure for his son's scrofula, on condition that $k$ bū '1-Fath vill not sell the prescription to anyone else, ${ }^{12}$ The report of the boy's recovery is the more convincing in the light of the knowledge that the cure is protected by onth from comsercial exploitation.

Characterization is used to lend depth to an 日necdote. The characters may be historical, as in the case of Saladin, and, indeed, the yriter hiaself, and portrayal of character can be conveyed through dialogue. The exchange betveen Saladin, who vas forty years younger, and Usänah, concerns a trifling subject : Usāmah's preparedness for battle, and, in particuler, the sort of jerkin he vears. The conversation, hovever, conveys a poverful impression of the older man wavering betveen self-respect and $1 z^{\text {ave, }}$ against the taut unpredictability of the varrior, ${ }^{13}$ This is also suggested by means of a narrative, as for example, when Saladin orders a man to be cut in half at the siege or fims for doring to question a decision of his. Other, lesser characters are given life in the pages through a memorable line they are given to utter. The two brothers Banü al-Rutän, employed in carrying messages betveen Shayzar and Latakia, are spared oblivion in this vay. "Alright, he's done vell, but who's he boasting to nov", they say of a man who has just killed a lion, and nov seess to be posing motionless for an audience. Once down from the hill vhere they vere hiding, they find that he has been killed by a scorpion in his shoe. ${ }^{15}$ He uses pathos to rouse the pity or sadness of the reader. An old woman, whose two sons have been killed in Saladin's siege of the castle of Mäsurra in ${ }_{16}$ $527 / 1133$ vonders what remains to be inflicted on her. ${ }^{16}$ The Franks organise a race at Tiberias between tvo old vomen who stumble through to the finish where s prize of a pig, soalded, Usāmah tells us, to remove its hair, avaits the vinner.

A doxology concludes the description of the two arrivals on the day of the plot against Ibn al-Sallar : "I extol the perfection of the Decreer of Days (muqaddir al-araär) and the Appointer of Hours (nuraqqit al-äjāl)." ${ }^{10}$ Pre-determination is more closely examined in connection with the fate of Ridvēn. ${ }^{1}$ Good qualities mixed in him : rajulan kämilan kariman shujätan kätiban tärifan. But to no avail : one of his men outs him doun. As a line of Usāmah's verse has it:
"Were it not for what the quills of destiny had previously written,
The fool would not obtain favour before the vise. " ${ }^{21}$ Ridvān's death, Usämah says, provides an example (nu'tabar) and a yarning (w- $\overline{\mathrm{a}}^{\prime} \mathrm{iz}$ ). But then he adds a caveat : "Were it not for the execution of the divine vill,..." (1am $1 \overrightarrow{\mathrm{a}}$ nafädh al-mashi''ah). Ye must supply the apodosis :"man might be able to take more advantage of such examples." ${ }^{22}$ For, the imnutability of the divine vill takes precedence over any exemplary role it may have. Thus it is not granted to either ${ }^{\text {' }}$ Abbäs or his son liassir al-Din to take heed of the example of Ridwān. In addition, they are guilty of tyranny and ingratitude, for which they receive their just deserts.

The relationship of the divine vill to God himself is touched on in an observation on miraculous escape. The lord of Afāmiyyah, Sayf al-Davlah Khalaf b. Mulä'ib al-Ashhabi, vas transfixed by a spear because his attendant had failed to dress him properly for combat, but nevertheless, he recovered. Usämah observes that Sayf al-Davlah's escape was one of the vonders of the divine vill ; the vound, on the other hand, was what God was pleased to cause. The one represents a judgement on carelessness ; the other a limitation on the punishment to be suffered. Usämah enquires no further into the divine plan and its implementation. Instead, he places his faith in God's eventually bringing matters to a conclusion vith due mercy and kindness. As he comments on the 1055 of his books : "God, praised be He, recompenses according to His mercy and brings things to an end with kindness and
forgiveness." 25 Usämah's reaction to the inscrutability of God's design takes the form of stoicism : "If fate's vicissitudes overgome my riches, stout pstience on my part vill defeat it. " ${ }^{26}$

Praxis can make little headvay against this:
"I cannot avert vhat God has ordained, Nor can they do save what is decreed. " ${ }^{27}$
Prefacing an account of how a handful of men at Shayzar repulsed an army of Franks, he deprecates the value of organisation and planning in varfare. As his father tells him in connection with the same incident ; ${ }^{\text {MMy boy, var }}$ runs itself" " (al-harb tudabbir nafsahā).

And yet, despite these calls to negativism, fex lives can have been as full of action as Usämah's. ${ }^{29}$ In Kitäb al-I'tibär, almost as persistent as his reminders of the immutability of fate, are his regrets at old age dampening his zest for life. Old age is a central theme in his thought:
"Oh, you can see hov hoariness has dragged you, 30
The terms in which he conceives of existence are clearly those of the warld of men, rather than the realm of thought. In a discussion ${ }^{31}$ vith his teacher Ibn alMunirah on varfare, the shaykl: maintains that courage in battle and reason are mututally exclusive. If the mind considered the dangers to which it vas exposed in varfare, it would not fight. Usämah, by contrast, locates the springs of valour in a man's reasoned concern for his reputation. It does not occur to hiul that the self-esteem on which his argument depends is ultimately no more explicable in rational teras than is the capacity to court danger which Ion al-Munirah assigns to the irrational. Within the limits of psychology, hovever, his observation is acute, always coloured, of course by his valaes as chevalier sans peur et sans reproche. During 'Imäd al-Din Zanki's siege of Hiscn al-Savr in $527 / 1133$ a man from Aleppo called Ibn al-tArìq behaves with reckless courage. In his preface to the account, Usämah sees a man ss driven by
concern for his name, against the dictates of his lear, to feats in battle. Physical symptoms - shuddering and a change of colour $3_{2}^{-}$accompany the struggle in a soul poised for combat.

This behaviour tends to produce attitudes at odds with a determinist vien of existence. Usamah finds that, in spite of the unalterable decrees of fate, resolve can achieve surprising results. The Isä̈'ili fortress of al-Khirbah (al-Khuraybah) was seized single-handedly from "Īsä al-Häjib, governor to Saladin. Usämah observes that Heñ , once they brace themselves to a purpose, carry it out. On the ather hand, audacity should be teapered with prudence. An attempt to capture caravan thieves outside Damascus fails because Usäah ${ }^{1}$ s friend and patron Mu'in al-Din Anar ignores Usamah's advice to take troops with them. In certain $H_{4}$ situations, excessive pluck can be disadvantageous. Metaphysical speculation might discount the value of planning in the affairs of men ; but experience finds reason to be a human being's greatest asset. "It is praised by ignorant and intelligent ${ }_{5}{ }^{\text {alike }}{ }^{n} \quad$ (wa-hume mahmüd 'ind al-' $\mathrm{B} q \mathrm{q} i 1$ wa-' 1 -jāhil).?

Homogeneity and continuity

Usamah is concerned to pass on the fruits of his experience. His advice may be speculative :
"Bevare of the vorld!
Be deceived not by ileeting life:" 36 Or it may be more practical :
"Bevare of shameless company!
Nothing causes one to repent more than the company of evildoers?"
His instructive purpose lends homogeneity to his presentation, in the way he repeatedly refers the reader to aspects of his experiential philosophy and behavourism. These referemces often take the form of a doxology. A recurring theme, of course, is the immtability of destiny. Thus, mare or less the same formula that concluded the first anecdote in the book, 38 is found again in a comment
on a miraculous escape during the Ismä'inlĭ attack on Shayzar in 529/1135: fa-tabāraka Allāh Muqaddir al-aqdär ya-muwaqqit al-ajā̄1 wa-1-a'mär. ${ }^{39}$ The inexplicability of the divine plan calls for another formula. After an anecdote recounting the curing of an eye affliction as the result of a blov received in an engagement, ${ }^{40}$ God is praised as the source : "It is possible that youl may dislike something which is nevertheless good for you . $n^{41}$

Another way of doing this is by means of an epitome. This may concern itself vith philosophical speculation, or with humbn behaviour. It may precede, or follow, the anecdote to which it refers. Usämah prefaces a story of hopeless courage during a joint attack launched by the Franks and the Atäbak Trughdakīn in Shayzar in 509/1115: "If your time is up, neither courgge nor strength can help you." An epitome follows the story of the seizure of Hissn al-Khuraybah : "Men ${ }_{43}$ once they put their minds to something, will do it."

The technique is extended especially to the second group of anecdotes at the end of the book, which denl with the hunt. Although both sections are ostensibly about notable hunters - prominent figures in Syria, Egypt and Iraq in the first, and Usämah's father in the second - they really concern the behaviour of pursuer and pursued in the animal world, especially trained raptors and their prey. Usämah epitomizes the point in the same way as he does for the anecdotes illustrating the behaviour of human beings. For example, the attachment of an Arab mare to its rider is contrasted with the unruliness of a birdhawn or hack. Usämah concludes ${ }_{4}$ i "Hacks are more $^{2}$ akin to a wild beast than to horses. ${ }^{44}$ Fate embraces all living creatures. Prefacing an account of the unexpected deaths of two birds of prey, the writer observes that animals meet their destinies (manāyä) in different ways.

Having forsaken the chronicle form for that of the illustrative anecdote, Usämah has to find a thread upon which to string his collection, in place of the continuum provided by time. A remarkable memory recalling the events
of a long and varied life, places a good store of tales at his disposal. This means, in the first place, that he cen illustrate one point with several anecdotes. It also enables him to follow one anecdote by another which, although sharing some circumstantial detail with the first, illustrates a different point. He can thus change the subject rithout the reader experiencing too much of a jolt. For example, the account of the siege of Hiss al-Șavr is concerned with the extremes to which a man will go to live up to his reputation. It is folloved by the story of another siege by átäbak Zankī, that of Hisār al-Bäri'ah, illustrating the same point. ${ }^{4}$, The next story concerns the investment of Hins ; but it is Saladin who $\frac{1}{48}$ mounting it, and the burden of the story is his cruelty. Usämah was present at enough such military actions to be able to provide two further examples of the siege as an occasion for Saladin to display his ruthlessness : a place called Mäsurra ${ }_{50}$ in Kühistän, ${ }^{49}$ and al-Karkhīnĭ near Irbil in Syria, The effect of a continuum based on the association or ideas is considerable thematic variety in a limited space without prejudice to continuity. This is apparent in the group of stories illustrating remarkable cures. Each anecdote has enough in common with the preceeding one to alloy the reader to pass easily from one to another. Thus, anecdotes one and tro have accidental eating as their common theme ; anecdotes two and three, vipers; anecdotes three and four, vinegar; anecdotes four and five, the physician Ibn Buţlän, and so forth. A conversational tempo is lent to this process by Usamah's frequent use of phrases like " A similar thing which happened to me was", or "Something rather similar happened to me when ...". Sometimes, he apologises for what might be considered an unsuitable illustration : the intrusion of an anecdote concernigg a falcon among some examples of unexpected human oures; or too abrupt a change of subject : the progression from the story of Buraykah, a possessed voman, to that of a heroine $\frac{9 f}{3}$ the Shayzar camp during an Ismāili attack in 502/1109.

## Notes

1. Usämah, 1895, Introduction
2. Usänah, 1981, 10
3. $A b u ̈$ Shëmah, $n=d_{21}$ I, 97-98
4. Usämah, 1981, 25
5. Usämah, 1981, 27
6. Ibid.
7. Usäwah, 1981,40
8. Usämah, 1981, 46
9. Usämah, 1981, 162
10. Usämah, 1981, 175
11. Usämah, 1981, 154
12. Usämeh, 1981, 171, 172
13. Usämah, 1981, 128
14. Usämah, 1981, 202
15. Usämah, 1981, 140
16. Usämah, 2981, 204
17. Usämah, 1981, 38
18. Usämah, 1981, 11
19. Usämah, 1981, 41-42
20. Usēmah, 1981, 38
21. Usämah, 1953, 247
22. Usämah, 1981, 42
23. Usämah, 1981, 37
24. Usämah, 1981, 67
25. Usämah, 198I, 45
26. Usämah, 1953, 231, S. 348
27. Usümah, $2953,242,5.379$
28. Usämah, 1981, 190
29. Kỉปอ̄ที้, 1982, 236
30. Usämah, 1953, 264, 5,444
31. Usämah, 1981, 109, 120
32. Usämah, 1981, 199
33. Usāmah, 1981, 102
34. Usämah, 1982, 196
35. Usämah, 1981, 112
36. Usämah, 1953, 281, S.481
37. Usämah, 1953, 237, S. 367
38. See above, p. 14
39. Usämah, 1981, 210
40. Usāmah, 1981, 97
41. Qur'ēn, II:213
42. Usäsah, 1981, 117
43. See above, p. 16
44. Usämah, 1981, 275
45. Usämeh, 1981: 284
46. See above, 0.15
47. Usämah, 1981, 201
48. See above, p. 13
49. Usämah, 1981, 203
50. Usämah, 1981, 205
51. Usämah, 1981, 235-242
52. Usämah, 1981, 79
53. Usämah, 1981, 158

## 5. ASPECIS OF KITAB AL-I'TIBAR : LAMGUAGE

Classical Arabic (CA) and Hiddle Arabic (MA)
The language as vell as the innovatory ${ }^{1}$ form of Kitäb al-I'tibär has attraotad attention. Crities have been puzzled by the discrepancy botveen Usämah's reputation as a writer of belle-lettres, and the inaccuracies, or at least departures from CA usage, to be found in the text. Mödeke offers a siaple explanation of this : Usänah vas writiag as he used to speak, Any inconsistencies in the blend of solecises and correct usage he lays at the door of the copyist yho added his own inaccuracies to the author's. Landberg thought that Usänah had dietated the work in accurate CA. A copyist vas then responsible for the inaccuracies which, nevertheless, reflect the vernacular of the time. It is from the point of vier of this last aspect that Sehen approaches the question of the language or Kitāb al-I'tibar. As a proponent of the Middle Arabic school of theory, he is concerned to assemble evidence of a taxonomically distinguishable dialect. To appreciate his worit fully, it is necessary to have a further look at Blau's theory.

An analytic language assigns one concept to one vord. Consequently, the inflexes, which, in a synthetic language, modify and alter the concept of a word, are alien to an analytic language. MA, Blau considers, under the influence of this characteristic, tends to dispense vith case endings. Initially, the final vovels of the CA singular, sound feminine plural and the broken plural, vere replaced with pausal forms. But this process of eliminating the distinction between endings vas extended to case endings whose final vovels vere identical, but which evinced differences in the penultimate syllable of the word. The outcome vas the retention of only the oblique case in the dual and sound plural. An important consequence of the loss of case endings yas the adoption of a more rigid vord order, to distinguish cleariy between subject and object. The tendency is tovards a preverbally situated subject, rather than the CA word order of verb
folloved by subject. Another syaptom of the need to distinguish the subject of a verb by meabs other than the suffix of a synthetic language, is the use of separate personal pronouns, before or after the verb of which they are the pronominal subject. From the point of viev of the need to distinguish the object, MA shows a tendency to use the preposition, which Blau calls "the true analytic expedient to distinguish objects as against subjects." The disappearance of case endings is matched by the disappearance of mood endings. A consequence of the resultant loss of mood, Blau finds, is the use of the imperfect to express the imperative. Likevise, the negative particle me, used in CA vith the imperfect to denote the present, can be used in $M A_{7}$ to negate the future, in place of lan with the subjunctive. An effect of the suppression of both case and mood endings, combined vith a phonatic tendency to alter the ' $\mathrm{a}^{\mathrm{t}}$ sound to 'i', is to subnerge the differences betveen anna, inna and an- The (nominal) subject after anna/innaloses its distinguishing accusative case indicator, and the verb after an, the inflexion which marks it as being in the subjunctive,

In addition to these differences that can be attributed directly to a reduction of inflexion, Blau finds o category of adjustments that reflect part of what he calls "B general drift". It is reflected in $M A$, as it was much earlier in some aspects of old Semitic languages Iike Hebrev and Aramaic, while leaving CA unscathed. By contrast vith its characteristic, as a synthetic language, of assigning several concepts to one vord, CA limits a particular syntactio structure to one partioular use. ${ }^{10}$ For example, an asyndetical clause in CA must have an indeterminate antecedent ; on the other hand, the relative clause of a determinate antecedent aust be introduced by a relative pronoun. Mh does not use asyndetical and syndetical relative clauses strictly in regard to the definiteness of the antecedent. The relative pronoun Blladhi could thus introduce a clause defining an indeterainate antecedent, and even be used as an indeolippble subordinate conjunction with the meaning of "because", The divergence from CA
syntax was extended in MA to the use of asyndetical co-ordinate clauses, as well as asyndetical subordinate olauses. The CA syntax of the numerals was especially exposed to the effects of the drift. Their apparent anomalies "vere ${ }_{12}$ not protected by analogy, but often even opposed to it. ${ }^{12}$ The CA (and, in this case, unaltered 01d Semitic) rule of designating the masculine cardinaz numbers 1-10 with the feminine ending for example, may be reversed, or, at least, inconsistently applied. Morphological consequences of the general drift include the discarding of the CA dual of the substantive, adjective, pronoun and verb, and its replacement by the plural. As a result of the general tendency in Semitic languages to abandon the use of the passive formed by internal vopel changes, and replace it by a reflexive form, the VII form replaces the passive first form. The same blurring of sounds which submerges the distinction between inna and anna results in the replacement of the perfect of the Ivth form of, in particular, the hollow and the doubled verb, by the first.

These categories, amongst others, vere applied by Schen to $\frac{\mathrm{his}}{13}$ examination of the language in Kitab alI'tibar. For, although Blau's work is based on JudaeoArabic, the various forms of MA - Christian Arabic, Judaeo-Arabic and Muslim Arabic - have many basic features in common.

On the one hand, Schen found a paucity of a number of non-Classical usages which Blau regarded as symptomatic of MA. The particles anna, inne and an remain distinct from one another, "thus confirming the basically CA nature of its sentence structure." ${ }^{15}$ The oblique case of the dual instead of the nominative occurs three times ; that of the oblique sound plural in place of the nominative, four times. "It will be noticed how infrequently this typically MA feature occurs= ${ }^{17}$ Deviations from the CA occur : sometimes a noun is put in the plural, although the sense indicated the dual; a dual may be folloved by a sound plural; a plural pronoun may refer to a dual ;
and the dusl may be construed vith a plural verb. But Schen points out that, in viev of the fact that what he calls "the disintegration of the dual" is so charactertistic of MA, it is remarkable that there are so fer divergenoes from the CA rule regarding the dual. Likevise, there are fev nop-CA numeral forms, "in a text abounding in numerals." ${ }^{19}$ Three examples of the VII ${ }^{\text {th }}$ form for the internal passive of the first form are noted. As it is characteristic of MA, Schen finds its rarity surprising. 20 The preposition li is found to mark the direct object twice, when this does not precede the verb.

On the other hand, non-CA word order was evident, especially in direct speech. Here, the subject often precedes the verb. Unemphatic separate personal pronouns frequently occur with finite verbs, again especially in direct speech. The verb form ghära (I) ("reid") recurs for aghära (IV). ${ }^{24}$ Another frequent. divergence froil CA syntactical usage is the asyndetical clause. Such clauses seera to occur more often in narrative. Asyndetical co-ordinate clauses often follow a verb of mation, with a finite verb of the same person and in the same tense, unconnected by any coordinating conjunction. Subordinate asyndetical clauses containing a finite verb follow verbs in the main clause like amare ("order") and arāda ("vish"). In CA, such clauses would be introduced by the particle an, and contain a verb in the subjunctive mood. In addition, Schen finds two asyndetical relative clauses following a determinate antecedent. In $C A$ they vould be joinged to the main clause by means of a relative pronoun.

Blau sees several justifications for the study of MA beyond mere linguistic study. It can tell us about the cultural setting of the Jevs in their Arab environment. The relationship of MA to CA corresponds to that of Aramaic and Hebrey to the Old Semitic language ; MA can therefore shed light on the evolution of Aramaic and Hebrev. As a missing link between Classical Arabic and Modern Arabic dialects, it can tell us about the history of Arabic as

E whole, as vell as contribyte to the proper understanding of Modern Arabic dialects.

Since the existence of, to borrov Blau's tera, Nuslia Middle krabic, is critical to the pursuit of these aims, it follovs that it should be distinguishable frow other spoken forms of Arabic, as vell, of course, as being demonstrably characteristic of the Middle Ages. We are not, hovever, here concerned with whether this has been done, or is, indeed, even possible, beyond taking note of Schen's own observation, that $2 B^{n o n-M u s l i m ~ M A ~ h a s ~ r e c e i v e d ~ t h e ~ b u l k ~ o f ~}$ recent attention. Equally, supposing that there is a Muslim MA, ve are not here concerned with whether Schen has conclusively proved that Kitäb al-I'tibär is an example of it. Hevertheless, what Schen has to say about the uneven distribution of non-Classical usages is of interest, ${ }^{29}$ not lesst because the integrity of the concept of Muslin Middle Arabic vould seen to depend upon a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon.

In the first place, he attributes the prevalence of Classical ysages to the attentions of a copyist or copyists. But, he adds, the copyist vould not have altered the syntax of the sentences. His findings on asyndeta, indeed, accord with this. He goes on to say that the copyist vould not have altered non-Classical usages in the dialogue to the same extent as elsevhere, ${ }^{31}$ for their inclusion among the utterances of speakers would not detract from Usämah's literary standing. Hovever, the circumstances, for example, of the old voman's remark to Saladin at Mäsurra ${ }^{32}$ are at odds vith her correct usage of the dual nomigative and the dual pronoun. Schen notes it himself. Are ve then to understand that this and other unexpected classicisms constitute examples of the copyist ${ }^{3} \frac{5}{4}$ failure to "restrain his vell-meent impulse"?

Blau deals vith this sort of contradiction more explicitly. He considers that pressure on a yriter to conforn to the standards of the "language of prestige (Classical Arabic)" causes him to refrain from using
vernacular forms, even where the latter might be more appropriate. Indeed, Blau says, medieval vriters go beyond the requiremengts of Classical Arabic and employ hypercorrect forms. A psychological explanation of this sort, envisaging a tension between considered and instinctive modes of expression, can exist independently of any linguistic theory purporting to identify a discrete mode of speech and then associating it with a particular historical stage.

Likewise, an equally unassuming literary explanation can be accepted, vithout, again, necessarily endorsing any linguistic theory. Schen's orn explanation of the peculiar nature of the language of Kitäb al-I'tibär is partly Iiterary. He is as concerned as Noldeke or Landberg to explain the prevalence of non-Classical usages in the work, as compared with historical and biographical texts of the same period, especially in viev of Usämah's reputation as a man of letters. He attributes it principaliy to the
 the recognizea categories of interature.

It is within this sort of area, rather than that of linguistic theory, that Blau's identification of points of divergence, and Schen's application of then to the work, produce findings whioh in some sense accord with What has been said about the content and form of Kitab al-I'tibār.

The main conclusion drawn by Schen from his noting of the frequent use of asyndeta is that they are evidence of the work having been dictated : "Por it is characteristic of spoken language that verbal links betveen olauses are liable to be dropped. " ${ }^{37}$ This certainly accords with the continuur of the asssociation of ideas noted above. It has the effect of taking the narrative continually forvard. There are hardly any references in the work to what has already been said. This suggests a mind concerned principally with shedding memories, realised most easily through talking. At the same time, as we have seen, it is not an aimless meandering. The anecdotes quickly get to
the point and deliver it succintly. In this connection, two further observations by Schen are significant = that the asyndeta are usually to be found in narrative, and that the asyndetical co-ordinate clauses are usually associated with verbs of motion. ${ }^{38}$ The effect of placing verbs together in this vay is to reduce in importance any interval between the two sctions described. A co-ordinating conjunction, on the other hand, creates a hiatus. To dispense with it is s useful expedient in story-telling, when it is desirable to convey a sense of swiftly unfolding events. For example, in his account of Ibn al-'Arïq's daring at the siege of Hiṣn al-Șavr, Usēmah says : ${ }^{j \overline{a^{\prime}} \text { a rajulun }}$...talata f $\bar{i}$ tilka 'l-thughrah. "A man came ... climbed through that breach."39 (An asyndetical relative clause interposes betveen the two verbs, in accordance vith Classical Arabic usage when the antecedent is indeterminate, as here.) The advantage of brevity possessed by asyndeta is shared by the subordinate conjunction alladhi. Usāmah uses it when he concludes the account of mistaken identity in battle which nearly ended in tragedy. "I praised God ... because (alladhi) no injury befell him on account of that trust." ${ }^{40}$ The origins of alladhi in the relative pronoun are clear from its expanded meaning : "for that which happened whereby". It seems rather similar to the mä al-maşdarīyah. Hitti equates it vith the modern Syrian vernacular illi, meaning "because".

By contrast with co-ordinate asyndeta, subordinate asyndetical $\frac{c l}{42}$ auses occur mainly in direct speech after modal verbs. ${ }^{42}$ This presumably reflects spoken practice of the time. Of course, Usäah's employment of everyday language in direct speech is a necessary component of his anecdotist's skill. For example, in the first group or stories concerning renarkable cures, ${ }^{43}$ a guest at a drinking party, suffering fron a carbuncle, inadvertently svallovs an entire plateful of rav eggs. The host refuses the demand of the other guests that he replace the aggs. Wa-'11ähi mā aftal he says, vith the strength
of the Classical Arabic lan affala, "I shan't". ${ }^{44}$ (There is also omission of the direct object, which Schen finds characteristic of the text : "Such ellipses are only to be expected in a dictated narrative"). In viev of the sufferer's subsequently being cured of the carbuncle, the adamant refusal has the effect of turning the hungry drinkers' deprivation into a worthwhile and even necessary sacrifice. The refusal thus points the moral. Given the circurstances of its delivery, the host's refusal yould not be appropriate in anything but the spoken language of the time, whether or not Usämah has recalled his exact vords. The conclusion that mä plus the imperfect represents the vernacular vay of denying the future cen be drawn thus on the basis of Usamah's intention in recounting the anecdote. Another example is less critical to the anecdote in which it occurs, but equally dependent for its (vernacular) meaning on the internal logic of the story. When Usamah recalls an order he gave to a soldier - tasrut tutarrif ("Hurry up and inform"), ${ }^{46}$ the imperfect in which it is couched must reflect a common usage of the time. Their relative positions and the circusstances preclude its being the polite order or request that Classical Arabic allows in the imperfact. The impression of a routine comand is strengthened by the asyndetical linking of the imperatives. At the same time, there are frequent examples of the imperative being used in direct speech. ${ }^{47}$ If we are to accept Schen's clain that the copyist vould have left the dialogue uncorrected, then these must represent Usamah wearing his other cap - that of the man of letters.
'IIm al-badǐ'

The anecdotist has two main concerns. He needs to depict place and action as convincingly as possible in order to obtain the reader's confidence and as sviftly as possible, in order to maintain his interest. Use of the vernacular
can further both purposes. In the first, it lends verisimilitude to both dialogue and description; in the second, it invests the written word with the natural economy of speech. Usänah exploits both these qualities in his use of the spoken language of his time. The conscious moralizer, by contrast, is concerned with epitomizing the lessons of experience. What he has to say is axiomatic ; his impact lies, not in what he has to say, but, rather, hov he says it. The language becomes an end in itself, the words selected for their memorability as much as for their sense. The anecdotes in Xitäb al-I'tibär are demonstrably harnessed to Usāah's instructive purpose. Where this is explicitly articulated, then, he is as concerned with the form of the word as with its content. As a theoretician himself of 'film al-badit, he vas val equipped to employ the science of embellishment in the pronouncement of hiknah.

Noldeke remarked on Usänsh ${ }^{2}$ s use of rhymed prose in Kitäb al-I'tibär. Saje falls within the category of artifices dependent on distinctions of form for their effect - Lafzi. "It is," says al-Qazvini, "the sating in concert (tavätu') of two clauses (fāsilatayn) on the basis of a common letter. This is what al-Sakkäki means when he says that it is to prose what chyme (qäfiyah) is to verse. " Among the different forms of saji he distinguishes mutarrar (literally "pointed"). In saj" mutarrar, the symmetry of the two clauses is limited to the syllable or syllables at the end of the last word in either clause, as dictated by the form of the rhyme. The vain or paradigm of the last word need not be the same. Al-Qazvini gives an example of saje mutarraf from the Qu' an, Sürah LXXI : 13 and 14 :

("What's the matter with you? Why don't you hope for kindness from God? For he has created you, after a variety of stages of existence"). The wain of the last word of the first fasilah is fat lan ; that of the second, nf ${ }^{t} \bar{B} 1 a n$. The basis of sajt in the Our ${ }^{3}$ Bn, or course, meant that its use elsewhere would strike a familiar note. Of the says used in Kitāb al-I'tibär, mutarrar predominates. The epitomes before and after anecdotes are usually couched in sajt, as well as being in the "faultless Classical Arabic" which Schen notices. For example, the fates of beasts are neatly summed up in a preface to an anecdote ;

("of varying hue are the destinies of beasts.") 54 The distinctive style of language complements the other functions of the epitome. As well as being an axiom, it also marks the start of an anecdote.

Another form of say ${ }^{\prime}$ distinguished by al-Qazvinn is sajt mutaybazin (literally "balanced"). The symmetry of the clauses is extended beyond the rhyme to a egpformity in measure of the last words of either clause. An early example of this sort of sag is the premonition of the breaking of the dan at Märib by Tarifah al-Kähinah, wife of Agr b. "Amir Muzayqiyā, the ruler:

("I've never seen anything like I say today. It drove sleep from be. I say a cloud which sent out bolts of lightening. It progjead thunder for a long while, and then struck down,")

The constraint of an identical vain makes sajt mutavazin less frequent than mutarraf in Kitāb al-I'tibār. When it does occur, it makes for a sonorous pause to the
narrative, as in the following instance, when $j$ it prefaces the account of an Isma'inj attack on Shayzar:

 x لا لا لآلـة
(Mere hearts to be cleansed of the soil of their sins, and entrusted to him who knows what is to come, they would realise that to court the danger of vars does not shorten the decreed span.")

The doxology which concludes the anecdote is also couched in sade mutayäzin. It has already been given in transliteration ;

("Blessed is God, the Ordainer of Destinies, and the Appointer of Hours and Days.")

This neatly rounds off the account.
Another rhetorical device Usämah employs is jinäs (akin to the English paronomasia, the playing on words which sound alike). Like sajt, it falls within the category of lafzi. Al-Qazvini : "It consists of a resemblance in articulation. It is designated complete (tam) if the consonants, their number, vovelling and order, are identical. Further, if they are the same part of speech, they are called analogous (mumäthil)". ${ }^{\infty}$ It occurs in Our' ${ }^{\text {an }}: ~ X X X: 55$

("On the day when the Hour of Reckoning will be established, sinners will swear that they haven't tarried for more than a hour.")

The word $\frac{s a^{\prime} \text { ah }}{}$ is used in the first instance metonymically and in the second, literally. It is
otherwise one and the same word. Usanah uses this form of paronomasia (jinäs tam mumäthil) in a line of his verse which he includes in a passage on old age:

("I go forth in robes of Dabīqǐ ling, after the armour
 who translates halal as fabrics in both instances.) hl-Qazwini continues : "But, if the two words are different parts of speech, it is called (as vel as complete) fulfilled (bustaurfan) -" He gives as an example a line from Abü Tamaăn :

("Whatever the liberality of the time which has perished, it lives on at Yahyā b. 'Abd Allah's.")

Here, while the appearance of the word yanyä is the same, in the first instance it is a verb, and in the second a proper name. Usāabh uses jinãs tam mustavfan in a similar sort of way. He has recounted a story of how a man called Jawäd gave a good account of himself during an Isar̈rīII attack on Shayzar. ${ }^{64}$ The story concludes with Usânah's report of Jawäd's visible deterioration, when Usämah visits him some years later in Damascus, where Jawäd is nov a fodder-dealer. This prompts e reflection on old age which Usämah prefaces kith :
هوت كجو اد الـعلاف لا الـجو ادد الـمتلاةف
("I have become like Jared the fodder-dealer and git like the generous man (jauäd) who spends wastefully-")

This display of verbal dexterity is a statement by the writer that he belongs to the quadrangle, as well as to the market place. At the same time, it carries the reader smoothly across the divide between the two.

Homophony can be exploited to enhance the meaning of words. A sub-category of jinās is created by the use of unidentical vords sharing a common root. Al-Qazvini gives an example, Qur'an $X X X: 43$ :

("Turn towards the true religion.")
The IVth fora of the root q-v-घ means "set", wheres the adjective qayyim means "true" or "straight". This device is known as al-mulhaq bi-'1-jinäs, "that which is attached to paronomasia* ${ }^{n 66}$ Usänah uses it in a prayer with which he concludes the account of noteworthy cures. He asks for good health during his remaining time, and "aercy and favour when death cones" :

The employment of waft ("death) immediately after nuräfäh ("arrival") constitutes what al-Qazvinnī cells aukarrar or "repeated", the uninterrupted sequence of words containing the elements of paronomasia, ${ }^{68}$ Here, the effect of the juxtaposition is to emphasise the mysteriousness of the moment of death.

Employment of rhetorical devices relying for their effect upon distinctions of meaning (an'navǐ) lends itself to the epitomisation of more complex ideas than, for example, the immutability of fate. Usamph uses the device of uushäkalah, a species of zeugmas, ${ }^{69}$ to point the difference between the usual meaning of a word, and a restricted, figurative use. Al-Qazvini gives as an example Qur'än III : 54 :

("The unbelievers sppemed, and so did God. And God is the
best of schemers.")

Makara has a different meaning then used of God, from that when used, perjoratively, of man. The purpose of the device is to infora the audience of the figurative meaning of a yord, by contrasting it with the literal meaning. Usämah uses this device when 92 touches on the relationship of God and the divine will :

("The reasons for the escape vere due to the working of the marvels of destiny ; the vound was because of what God, praise be to Him, had ordained by way of recompense." $)^{7}$

The workings of fate appear as marvels ('ajab) to man. But the causes of things are net hidden from God, so they cannot appear vonderful to him. Consequently, when the nord 'ajab is attributed to God, it means his state of being pleased to do something $t$ in this case, the infliction of a wound on the lord of Afämiyyah in judgement of his attendant's carelessness. The subtlety of the device is appropriate to the fineness of the distinction betveen the two uses of the vord 'ajab.

Antithesis is on essential ingredient of Usămah's anecdotage. He also employs thy rhetorical device of antithesis (mutabaqah or tibäq) ${ }_{2}$ in places where he yants to concentrate the mind of the reader on the point at issue. The subtlety of the antithesis used varies with the complexity of the idea concerned. For example, Usāmah prefixes some anecdotes illustrating the contrasts in the human and animal vorlds, with a string of five pairs of contrasting adjectives describing the form such contrasts take. These ere intended to do no more than convey an idea of the variety of God's ereation- The antithesis becomes more couplex when phrases are contrasted, a device knom as nuquabalah or "comparison". As an example, a 1 -Qazuini gives $\mathrm{IX}: 82$;

("Let then laugh a little, then, let them veep a lot.") ${ }^{78}$ The first concept in the first phrase ("laugh") is contrasted with the first concept in the second phrase ("weep"), and likevise the second concepts in either phrase ("a little" and "a lot"). Concluding a story about the exceptional resilience of a young Frankish knight, Usämah observes :
لا لاقّد الألا
("Drawing back no morn, postpones fate, than courting hazard advances it.")

The antithesis may be less obvious when a concept is contrasted, not with its precise opposite, but with the cause of the latter. ${ }_{80}$ The antithesis is then called sababī or dhū tasabbub. Al-Qazvini gives as an example Qur'ān : XIVIII : 29:

("Muhammad is the Messenger of God. They who are with him are hard on the unbelievers, but compassionate among themselves.) ${ }^{81}$ Ashidda', "severe", is contrasted with ruhamā , "compassionate", although the precise opposite of the first is the result of the second : ayin $\overline{\mathrm{B}}$, or "soft". Usämah uses this sort of antithesis in E pronouncement on men's supineness before fate. Prefacing his thoughts on old age, ${ }^{82}$ he says :

("No one should think that courting dangers will advance death, or that excessive caution will deloy it.") ${ }^{8}$

Rukūb al-khatar ("the courting of danger") is contrasted with shiddat al-hadhr ("excessive caution"). Its exact opposite would be the consequence of excessive caution, that is, ihjäm, or "holding back".

Rhymed prose evokes the Qur'än principally by means of sound. A device which does the same through meaning is iqtibäs or adaptation, whereby familiar turns of phrase from the Qur' ${ }^{\text {an }}$ or hadith are incorporated into prose or verse, but not in direct quotation. Al-Qazwini says :"It is that the words contain something from the Quran or hadith, without it being indicated that it is from the $\langle u r$ 'an or hadith". 85 Thus, introducing the list of contrasting adjectives ${ }^{85}$ which are a prelude to anecdotes about differences in the human and animal vorlds, Usämah says :

("God, to whom belong might and majesty, has made his creation in different sorts and conditions." $)^{86}$

Here, Qur'ān Surah LXXI : 14 has been adapted to Usämah's requirements. The effect is two fold : first, it forms an immediately familiar (and unanswerable) base from which to proceed with his purpose, which is to show hov living creatures differ from one another; secondly, it constitutes a display of credentials, placing the writer firmly within the tradition of Arabic letters. Usämah can use iqtibās in this val equally of a character in his anecdotes about himself. The first of the stories about holy meg $7_{7}$ is given the stamp of authenticity in this val. "Subsist only on what is lawful", the ascetic al-Başri admonishes the voman who has unfittingly wrapped up some sweets in her dowry certificate, which she believes she has lost.

The use of embellishment in Kitäb al-I'tibar in doxologies, axioms and reflective utterances, is
deterained by the internal logic of the book. It is also used in another way which recalls the precarious political life of the time, in which ornate comounication could be used to disguise the facts, or appease the poveriul.

In the chronicle portion at the beginning of the book, Usämah couches in sajs a plea he claims to have addressed to "Abbēs al-Afdal Rukn al-Dīn, to mollify the latter, ; Abbäs was angry at his son, Näsir al-Din, whom he suspected of conspiring with al-Zäfir against him. As a result of this address, Usămah says, "Näşir al-Dïn's father left him alone, and his son heeded what I'd told hims " ${ }^{87}$ The ornateness of the address is perhaps more to conceal what vas said betveen Usämah and 'Abbās, rather than faithfully to record it. For tvo sources have Usämah, less creditably, telling 'Abbās that the caliph was 90 having an unnatural relationship vith Häşir al-Din. ${ }^{90}$ This vas to provoke the vizier to aurder the caliph. For notables, jealous of 'Abbās' pover, and Usänah's closeness to 'Abbās, had turned the caliph against Usāeah.

The possible wrath of a living dictator vas perhaps a more immediate problem than uneasy memories of dark events long ago, but a similar strategy vas indicated. Usämah delivers an ornately couched panegyric on Seladin. It follows too close upon the anecdotes about his cruelty for one not to suspegt that it is a precaution egainst being misunderstood. ${ }^{91}$

## Hotes

1. Brockelmann, 1898, I\% 320
2. Möldeke, 1887, I, 242, and in Schen, 1972
3. Von Landberg, 1888, p-30 in Schen, 1972, 225
4. Schen, 1972 and Schen, 1973
5. Blau, 1965, 78-90
6. Blau, 1965, 81
7. Blau, 1965, 108
8. Blau, 1965, 101-110
9. Fück, 1955, 3
10. B1au, 1965, 91
11. B1au, 1965, $88 \mathrm{n}-2$
12. B1au, 1965, 101
13. Schen, 1972, 3
14. Schen, 1972, 219
15. Schen, 1973, 93
16. Schen, 1973, 75
17. Schen, 1973, 76
18. Schen, 1973, 73
19. Schen, 1973, 76, 77
20. Schen, 1973, 69
21. Schen, 1973, 86
22. Schen, 1973, 96
23. Schen, 1973, 86
24. Schen, 1973, 67
25. Schen, 1973, 90
26. Schen, 1973, 89-92
27. B1aut, 1965, 114-122
28. Schen, 1972, 220
29. Schen, 1972, 224
30. Schen, 1972, 231, 232
31. Schen, 1972, 232
32. See above, P. 13
33. Schen, 1972, 221
34. Schen, 1972, 232
35. Blav, 1960, 310
36. Schen, 1972, 222
37. Schen, 1973, 89
38. Schen, 1973, 90
39. Sea above, p. 15
40. Usämah, 1981, 81
41. Usämah, 1981, Introduction
42. Schen, 1973, 91
43. Usäsah, 1981, 235-242
44. Usämah, 1981, 236
45. Schen, 1973, 89
46. Usämah, 1930, 41

47．e．g．Usämah，1981， 128
48．See kbove，p．2
49．Schen，1972， 224
50．See above，p． 9
51．A1－Qazvĩni，1938，359－60
52．Ibid．， 360
53．Schen，1972， 228
54．See above，p． 17 and Usämah，2981， 284
55．A1－वдzwīnī，1938，360
56．AI－Mas＇üdi， 1983 ，II， 167
57．Sea above，p． 17
58．Usämah，1981， 210
59．See above，p． 17 and Usämah，1981， 210
60．Al－Qazwīnī，1938，349－350
61．Usämah，1981， 209
62．Usämah，1929， 191
63．A1－Qazvini，1938， 350
64．See above，P． 17
65．Usämah，1981，207．This does not cover the full meaning of the Arabic；of ．Lane， 1980 sub t－1～f， mitlaf，＂a man of courage and liberality，who makes what he takes as spoil，of the property of his enemies，to supply the place of that which he consumes by expenditure to satisfy the clains of his friends＂．
66．A1－Qazwïnī，1938， 354
67．Usämah，1981， 24 ？
68．A1－Q8zMi゙ni゙，1938， 354
69．A1－QAZvīnz，1938， 321
70．Von Mehren，1970， 103
71．A1－Qazuinī，1938， 321
72．See above，p．p．14－15
73．Usämah，1981， 67
74．Lane， 1980
75．See above，$D=12$
76．A1－Qazuīni゙，1938， 310
77．Usämah，1981，134

## 78. A1-Qazvinĩ, 1938, <br> 317

79. Usämah, 1981, ..... 90
80. A1-Suyūțī, 'Uqṻd al-junãn fí '1-astēnī va-'l-bayānin Von Mehren, 1970, 103
81 K1-Qazwïnī, 1938, 317
81. See above, p. 32
82. Usämah, 1981, ..... 211
83. A1-Qazvīnī, ..... 1938, 379
84. See above, P. 3
85. Usämah, 1981, ..... 134
86. Usämah, 1981, ..... 221-229
87. Ibid-, ..... 222
88. Usāmah, 1981, ..... 24
89. Abū '1-Fidā', 1872, I, 30 ; and
Ibn s1-Athir, 1872, I ..... 492
90. See above, p. 1

## 6. COHCLUSION

It is interesting to coapare the sinimal obtrusiveness with which Usäaah harnesses sakhif and jazl to his thene, vith other writers styles. Recourse to jazl might be lacking altogether. Buzurg b. Shshriyār al-Rämhursuzī, e E pariner from the Persion Gulf, vrote his Kitäb iAjälib al-Hind soon after $341 / 953$. The subject of the work the seafaring of the writer's time - is interesting enough for its unconscious vulgarity to be overlooked. Sakhilf might be deliberately introduced, as al-Harïri ( $446-516$ ) 1054-1122) does in the thirtieth maquamah, where he uses the language of the undervorld to enhance his picaresque setting. Alternatively, the rhetgrical mode could completely dominate a vriter's expression, as in the case of the secretary 'Inād al-Dīn al-Kätib (519-97/1125-1201), where the untidiness of war is forced into the elegance of rhywing favāsil. 'Inâd al-Dīn uses then for a purpose : to convey official information. But rhetoric and, in particular, the artirices of 'ile al-badi', could become an end in themselves, as at places in the Maqämēt, where Harīrĭ carries out orthographic tours de force of ultimately pointless brilliance.

On the one hand, Usamah was quite aware of the difference between correct and incorrect usage: "One can distinguish in the speech of God's creatures eloquence (baläghah) from inadequacy of expression ('iyy), and correct (fasähah) from incorrect (1akan) usage." ${ }^{3}$ On the other hand, he has no interest in correct official form, save in one or two places, where an old variness stirs. He is not concerned vith the use of vernacular language to convey the atmosphere of a particular class of society, although he night use it to encapsulate an occasion or a relationship. His faults of gramaer are sins of onission and not commission. The flov of menory will not allov hin to stop and correct them. Where he does use jazl, it is to point the norsl, vhich lends fora to the content. Dvertly, the book's
instructive role is its raison d'être. One wonders, hovever, whether it might not have been as wuch a pretext for the old man's rummaging.

At all events the reader is not greatly burdened with metaphysical propositions. Chenery maintains that "uniformity of type 6 is one of the characteristics of Arabic literature". This applies at least to the philosophical content of Kitāb al-I'tibär, if to nothing else. One or two themes are endlessly repeated. But the very magreness of such fare is in a way responsible for the enduring interest of the book. For all sorts of material from Usāmah's long life, observed with such acuity and recounted so tellingly, can be used to illustrate his simple hikmah. It cuts right across the divisions to which less flexible, if more profound, literary forms confine themselves, and in so doing, provides us with a unique picture of the places and times in which he lived.

## Notes

1. Buzurg b. Shahriyär al-Rāmhurmuzi, 1883-86
2. Al-Harïri゙, 1847-53
3. Usämah, 1935, 328
4. See above p. 37
5. See above $p .27-28$
6. Al-Harīri, 2867, 59

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The International Migration Project was a study commissioned by the International Labour Office, Geneva, as part of the World Employment Programme. The project was co-directed by Drs J.S. Birks and C. A. Sinclair. The following working papers have been prepared

## COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

The State of Kuwait, July 1977
The Sultanate of Oman, July 1977
The State of Qatar, February 1978
The Arab Republic of Egypt, March 1978
The Democratic Republic of the Sudan, March 1978
The Republic of Tunisia (A. Findlay), March 1978
The Republic of Turkey (W.M. Hale), March 1978
The State of Bahrain. May 1978
The United Arab Emirates, June 1978
The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, July 1978
The Yemen Arab Republic (with J. A. Socknat). Sept 1978
The Syrian Arab Republic (M.E. Sales). Oct 1978
The Democratic Republic of Algeria (R.i. Lawless). Oct 1978
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, November 1978
The Kingdom of Morocco (A. Findlay, A. Findlay E R.I. Lawless),
Oct 1978
The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, March 1979

TOPIC PAPERS
A Study of International Migration in the Arab Region - An Outline of the Aims, Scope and Methodology of the International Migration Project, Commissioned by the International Labour Office, April 1977

Outline for Working Papers of Country Case Studies, May 1977
Movements of Migrant Labour from Part of the North of the Sultanate of Oman. May 1977

Aspects of the Demography of the Sultanate of Oman, Sept 1977
Migration for Employment Abroad and its Impact on Development in the Yemen Arab Republic, July 1978

Spatial Dimensions of Tunisian Emigration to Libya (A. Findlay) Dec 1978

## CURRENT BRITISH RESEARCH IN MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

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## MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS

Arab Architecture: Past and Present.
An Exhibition presented by the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce at the Royal Institute of British Architects (24th January - 17 February 1984) Editor A. Hutt $£ 5.50$ (inland) $£ 6.00$ (overseas)

Training Seminar for Engineers
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs Municipality of Jeddah. Training Seminar for Engineers, 13-15 February 1984.

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