

TANAḤHALA AND INTAḤALA
A LEXICOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE

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The article examines whether there is any reason to assume that a difference existed between *intaḥala* and *tanaḥhala*, both verbs used in the sense of a poet's 'plagiarizing' or 'borrowing' a line or lines of poetry from another poet, and, if so, how this difference would have been defined, e.g. permissible against unacceptable. It also relates these two verbs to their 1st Form, *naḥala*.

We are all more or less familiar with the curious attitude of medieval Arab critics towards borrowing of lines of poetry by one poet from another. The term for this, *sariqa*, is somewhat misleading in that it can only be translated as 'theft', 'plagiarism', even though there are forms of *sariqa* that are considered acceptable, even praiseworthy. The result is a proliferation of subdivisions of *sariqa*, each with a separate term. In the case of the terminology presented by al-Ḥātimī (d. 388/998) in his *Ḥilyat al-muḥādara*, this is expanded to a point where it becomes a labyrinth in which it is difficult to find one's way; in the case of some others, it is limited to a few, generally well defined, terms.

al-Ḥātimī's terminology was criticized by Ibn Rašīq (d. 456/1063-64 or 463/1070-71). Ibn Rašīq is certainly correct when he says that al-Ḥātimī's terminology is *qarīb min qarīb, yusta'malu ba'duhā fi makāni ba'd* "[terms] close [in meaning] to [other terms] already close [in meaning], one [term] being used in lieu of the other". By this he means that terms are overlapping each other to the point that dealing seriously with al-Ḥātimī's terminology does not bring any benefit. Though I agree with Ibn Rašīq, I feel nevertheless that studying al-Ḥātimī's terminology and the critique of this terminology by Ibn Rašīq, is of considerable advantage to the contemporary scholar. We may speak of a paradox: The very fact that confusion over terminology existed, gave rise to attempts to clarify this terminology; and this, in turn, can lead us to a better understanding of the principles maintained by early critics on the

question of one poet taking over whole phrases from an earlier, or even a contemporary poet. Moreover, al-Ḥātimī was used to quoting stories in the form of traditions in which technical terms occur. There are even some examples of technical terms appearing in the poetry of the poets themselves.

One may ask oneself if the qualification 'terminology' is correct, 'terminology' seen as the deliberate choice of an accepted or well-known expression as opposed to the free choice of another expression which would be equally appropriate in the context. I feel that the discussions by early scholars over such questions as the difference between *iğtilāb* and *intihāl* justifies taking such terms as the stock in trade of 'Abbāsīd literary theory and criticism¹.

I will concentrate on two terms which seem to have been used, like *sariqa*, as generic terms, and may be the oldest, or among the oldest. In any case they have been used frequently in the earliest medieval texts down to the late middle ages. I mean *tanahhala* and *intahala*. I will also give some attention to the terms *nahala* and *anhala* deriving from the same root. Another reason why *tanahhala* and *intahala* merit a discussion is that, together with *iğtilāb* and *iğāra* they are among the few terms for 'plagiarism' used by the poets themselves, even the earliest.

Assuming, for a moment, that a late dictionary such as the *Lisān al-'arab*, incorporates all the findings by earlier lexicographers, let us first examine what this dictionary says:

From the entry *nahala* in the *Lisān* it is clear that, apart from *nahl*, 'bees', three basic meanings are associated with the root *nahala* which are best discussed by looking at the verbal forms: first 'giving', second 'being thin' or 'being exhausted', and third 'claiming'. These three associations, one would suspect, might well go back to the fourth/ tenth century *al-Muğam fī maqāyīs al-luġa* and *al-Muğmal fī l-luġa* both by Aḥmad Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004) whom we know to have systematically indicated, under each root, what he believed to be its basic meaning or

¹ For an example of the *sariqa* in Persian literary theory see, Šams ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī, *Muğam*, 464-476.

meanings. And indeed, turning to the fifth volume of the *Maqāyīs* we find: *kalimātun talāṭun: al-ūlā tadullu ‘alā diqqatin wa-huzālin, wa-l-uhrā ‘alā ‘atā’in wa-t-ṭālītatu ‘alā ddi‘ā’in*. He then illustrates these three meanings: The first is used when speaking of people exhausted by worries or when speaking of thin swords; the second in connection with terms such as *nuhlān* ‘gift’, *nuhl* ‘giving away without compensation’; and *nihla* in the special sense of ‘giving a bride her dowry out of the goodness of one’s heart without expecting compensation’, ‘allowing her to dispose freely of her dowry’, a term found in the *Qur’ān* 4.4: *wa-ātū n-nisā’ saduqātihinna nihlatan* “and give women their dowry as a present” (Ibn Fāris, *Maqāyīs* V, 402-403).

In discussing the third basic meaning, Ibn Fāris brings in *intahala*. He mentions in the first place *intahala* in the sense of *ta‘āṭāhu wa-dda‘āhu* which one could translate as follows: the first term, *ta‘āṭā* – limiting oneself to what seems relevant – by ‘taking’, ‘receiving’, ‘contending’, ‘pretending [to be a poet]’; and the second, *idda‘ā* by: ‘claiming’². Next he mentions the assertion of some scholars that *intahala* refers to a just claim (*muḥiqq*) and *tanahḥala* to a false claim (*muḥṭil*)³. This distinction, he feels, is nonsense. But is it?

I am not entering into the question whether ‘being thin’ and ‘being exhausted’ as well as ‘bees’ have to be brought under separate headings. The association of *nahala* with ‘giving’ may have to be brought etymologically under one heading together with the third meaning, ‘claiming’.

Leaving aside other terms derived from the root *nahala*, one notices from the examples quoted in the *Lisān* (651a) that both terms are applied to the technical terminology of poetry and used in the sense of

² See Lane 1863-93 and Dozy 1881, s.v.v. *ta‘āṭā*. As can be seen from these two dictionaries, it is difficult to base any conclusions on the first part of this paraphrase, the verb *ta‘āṭā*.

³ See also Ibn Fāris, *Muḡmal* III, 859: *intahala* in the sense of ‘just claim’, and *tanahḥala* in the sense of ‘fraudulent claim’, pointing out that the line by A‘ṣā (below, [9]) makes clear that the reverse is the case. See also Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Šarḥ* VI, 423, 427. The date of the passage can of course not be determined. See, the most recent article by Jebli 1992.

'making a false claim for a poem or a verse'. But the *Lisān* (651*b*) also warns us, quoting al-Azharī, that one should beware of misspellings such as *naḥala* for *naḡala*, 'to vilify'. To this we might add ourselves *tanaḥhala* from a root *naḥala* 'to choose'. Thus it becomes clear that, in order to determine the semantic spectrum of any of these terms in poetry, one needs to find them in a *qāfiya* with two rhyme consonants, the so-called *luzūm mā lā yalzam*, or in some other indisputable context. Unfortunately one never finds cases where the correct reading is absolutely beyond doubt, but there is a sufficient number of cases where assuming that another reading is more appropriate seems unreasonable. Let me quote a line by Saḥm b. Usāma b. al-Hārīṭ (as-Sukkarī, *Šarḥ* II, 523), which seems to confirm that *tanaḥhala* is being used in the sense of 'claiming for oneself poetry that was composed by others' and where substituting a different reading does not seem appropriate:

[1] *fa-zālat bi-Laylā mā ḥayītu qaṣīdatun*

turašṣahu lam tušab wa-lam tutanaḥḥalī

"As long as I live, there will be [my] *qaṣīdas* on Laylā, carefully composed, not part of other poems⁴, nor claimed [falsely] as my own".

In this context it is hard to imagine that *tutanaḥḥalī* would be a misspelling of, for instance, *tutanaḥḥalī* 'carefully chosen', from a root *naḥala* 'to choose', even though one cannot rule out that *tutanaḥḥalī* has to be translated 'openly borrowed', 'added in an acceptable way', as we shall see later.

Let me introduce some further quotes from early poetry, to see what information can be gleaned from them.

We have the following line by al-Farazdaq (d. between 110-114/728-732):

⁴ Other translations may be valid, e.g. 'not subject to blame', '*nicht gemengt mit Floskeln anderer Dichter*' (see Goldziher 1893:43 (= *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, 92), followed by Lewin 1978:8, s.v. 'š-b. Kraemer 1952:26 refers to ZDMG 54.160, and Abū Tammām, *Ḥamāsa* 624, v.4 [= al-Marzūqī (d. 421), *Šarḥ* 615, line 1-4). The other references in Kraemer's edition I could not verify. See also al-Mubarrad, *Kāmil* 404; *Naqā'id* 583.6. The translation by R. Abicht is not accessible to me.

[2] *lan tudrikū karamī bi-lu'm abikumū*
*wa-awābidī bi-tanaḥḥuli l-aš'ārī*⁵

to which the commentator (as-Sukkarī?; 212-275/827-888) adds: *awābidī: qaṣā'idī l-ḡarā'ibu, ka-awābidī l-waḥšī; al-wāḥidatu ābidatun wa-tanaḥḥulu iddī'ā'u š-š'iri wa-stirāquhu.*

"Your father being as vile as he is, you will not attain my nobility; nor [will you equal] my outstanding verses by appropriating the verses [of others]".

This line is also quoted by al-Marzubānī (d. 384/994, *Murwašṣaḥ* 172) on the authority of Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (d. 188/804) and the first authority in the chain of transmitters is Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir (d. 280/893). The tradition ends as follows: *inna hādāyni l-baytayni li-r-Rā'ī*⁶ *wa-inna l-Farazdaqā ntaḥalabumā fa-šārā lahu.* We can be certain that the term *intaḥala* was considered to have an unfavourable sense, but, as in all cases where we have an *isnād*, we cannot be certain that the commentary reproduces the *ipsissima verba* of Ibrāhīm.

We also have an example which may contradict Ibrāhīm's explanation: al-Farazdaq, in a well-known poem from the *Naqā'id* in which he claims to have inherited the qualities of his predecessors, uses the term *tanaḥḥala* in a sense that need not necessarily be unfavourable (*Naqā'id* I, 201, poem 39, line 55):

[*wahaba l-qaṣā'ida lī n-nawābiḡu id madāw* (some names of poets follow)]

[3] *wa-ahū Banī Asadin, 'Abīdun, id madā*
wa-Abū Du'ādīn qawluhū yutanahḥalū

"And 'Abīd, the man from Asad – now that he has passed away – and Abū Du'ād, his words too are appropriated".

What is possibly intended by *yutanahḥalu* becomes clear from line 52 on the preceding page:

⁵ *Naqā'id* 325 (= no. 49, line 7); Lane 1863-93 I, 5c. See *Lisān*, III, 69a (bottom of the page); al-Ḥātimī, *Ḥilya* fol. 81a, line 7, (last line before the beginning of the chapter on the *intihāl*); Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Kifāya* 117.

⁶ See Weipert 1980:305-306 and the references quoted there.

[4] *wa-l-faḥlu ‘Alqamatu lladī kānat lahū
ḥulalu l-mulūki kalāmuhū lā yunḥalū*

“And the true poet ‘Alqama who was
dressed in kingly robes (?), his poems live on”⁷

to which the commentator adds⁸: *lā yunḥalu: ay lā yantahiluhu aḥadun, wa-yurwā: lā yanḥalu: ay lā yablā, wa-yurwā: kalāmuhu yutamattalu*⁹.

What the commentator seems to say is that nobody can appropriate lines by ‘Alqama – or perhaps: appropriate verses by ‘Alqama that have become proverbial –, since they would be recognized; or, reading *lā yunḥalu*, “without becoming old and weak” in the sense that the verses “live on [being proverbially quoted]”: Next the commentator quotes the interesting variant *kalāmuhu yutamattalu* “his words are quoted as proverbs”¹⁰. In line 54 on the same page there is question of two poets by the name of al-A‘šā, as well as the poets, Muraqqiṣ and Abū ṭ-Ṭamaḥān, whose poetry is being quoted proverbially:

[5] *wa-l-A‘šayāni kilāhumā wa-Muraqqiṣun
wa-Abū Qudā‘ata qawlubū yutamattalū.*

Another poet, aṭ-Ṭirimmāḥ (d. around 120/737-38), probably uses the term *tanahḥala* in an unfavourable sense, for the poem is clearly a lampoon. The line appears in the *Dīwān* (193, no. 68) in the edition of

⁷ Also quoted in *Aḡānī* XXI, 201 without relevant context.

⁸ This commentator is as-Sukkarī; or perhaps Abū ‘Ubayda (d. 209/824-25; born as early as 110/728), who prepared a recension of the *Naqā‘id*; or Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 245/860) who transmitted this recension; or even Abū ‘Abdallāh al-Yazīdī (d. 310/922 or 313), see *Naqā‘id* I, Introduction, xi and GAS II, 363. For various *isnāds*, see also the facsimile edition of al-Farazdaq’s poems: *Dīwān* I, title page.

⁹ Cf. also the facsimile edition: al-Farazdaq, *Dīwān* 185-186:
*taraktu lakum layyāna kulli qaṣīdatin
šarūdin idā ‘ārat bi-man yatamattalū
yurīdu: abqaytu lakum; wa-l-layyānu: aš-šadīdu ṣ-ṣa‘bu; wa-‘ārat: dahabat fī l-bilādi.*

¹⁰ See Lane 1863-93 VIII, 3017 and Dozy 1881 s.v. *tamattala* and cf. Ibn Rašīq, *Qurāda* text, 82-83, French summary, 33.

Krenkow who quotes Ibn Qutayba's (d. 276/889) *Kitāb al-ma'ānī al-kabīr*¹¹:

a-tahḡū man rawā ḡaza'an wa-lu'man
ka-sāqī l-layli min kadarin wa-šāfī
 [6] *tanahḡal mā stata'ta fa-inna šī'ri*
talaqqaha bi-l-qašā'idi 'an kišāfī

From Ibn Qutayba's commentary I quote: *yaqūlu: tatrūku man yaqūlu š-šī'ra fa-lā tahḡū(hu) wa-tahḡū man rawāhu li-ḡayrihi ḡaza'an minka wa-lu'man. Tumma šabbaha rāwiyata š-šī'ri min ḡayri an yaqūlahu bi-hādā l-ladī yasqī bi-l-layli ... tumma qāla: tanahḡal anta š-šī'ra fa-inna qašā'idi ta'tīka tatrā.*

The second line one could translate:

"Take from my poems as much as you can;
 for my poetic talent conceives poems one after the other
 (literally 'conceives again immediately after birth')."

But in case a poem is not clearly intended as a lampoon, can we be certain that we have to interpret *tanahḡala* in an unfavourable sense? An example would be the following line by Ibrāhīm b. Harma quoted in the *Lisān* and in the *Tāḡ al-arūs*:

[7] *wa-lam atanahḡali l-aš'āra fihā*
*wa-lam tuḡizniya l-midahū l-ḡiyādu*¹²

"And I did not borrow from others in this [*qašīda*, or: "when speaking in my poems about her"]

and making good poems of praise is not beyond my ability".

The poet could have meant *lam atanahḡal*, "[I am] not stealing"; but he might also have meant "borrowing" in the sense of being helped by another poet, or "borrowing" using a classical line by an older poet as a proverb, though "stealing" is the first interpretation that comes to our mind.

¹¹ *ḡarbī* for *šī'ri* = aṭ-Ṭirimmaḥ, *Dīwān* (ed. Ḥasan) 37-38 = no. 21, lines 25 and 29. Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ānī* II, 808 (*ḡarbī* for *šī'ri*).

¹² The context is apparently unknown, see Ibrāhīm b. Harma, *Dīwān* 98.

Turning now to *intahala*: At first sight there can be little doubt about the meaning of *intahala* in the following example by Ibn ar-Rūmī (d. around 283/896, *Dīwān* V, 1954, no. 1520, line 9):

[8] *in ṣahḥa 'ilmu n-nuḡūmi kāna lakum
ḥaqqan idā mā siwākumū ntahalā*

“If astrology is a true [science], then it belongs to you
and rightly so, when others claim falsely [to have competence],
even though here again one cannot rule out completely that *intahala*
means ‘following’, ‘imitating’, not ‘falsely claiming’.

An earlier poem, this one by al-A^cšā Maymūn¹³ (born before 570, d. around 6, 8, or 9 AH or after 625 AD), has the following line:

[9] *fa-mā anā am mā ntiḥālī l-qawā-
fi ba'da l-mašībi kafā dāka 'ārāl*

“Who am I? How would I appropriate verses

after having reached old age? Is there anything more shameful?”

This line may again not be acceptable as evidence for *intahala* in an unfavourable sense. For once more we cannot rule out that *intahala* means ‘legitimate borrowing’ and may possibly have this meaning here. Ibn Fāris (*Muḡmal* III, 859) uses a wording that differs somewhat from his statement in the *Maqāyīs* when he gives *intahala* in the sense of ‘just claim’, and *tanahḥala* in the sense of ‘fraudulent claim’, pointing out that this line by al-A^cšā makes clear that the reverse is the case: *intahala r-raḡulu š-šī'ra: idda'āhu. qāla l-A^cšā* (follows this poem with the variant: *fa-kayfa anā wa-ntiḥālī*, etc. *wa-qāla qawmun: intahaltu š-šī'ra idā dda'ay-tahu wa-anta muḥiqqun wa-tanahḥaltuhu idā dda'aytahu mubtilan wa-baytu l-A^cšā yadullu 'alā ḥilāfi ḥādā*).

Moreover Ibn Qutayba (*Šī'r* I, 259)¹⁴ claims that al-A^cšā had offered to compose this poem in prison, because an-Nu^cmān b. al-Mundir

¹³ al-A^cšā, *Dīwān* text: 41, line 68, notes: 39. al-Aṣma^c'ī's commentary on this line, as quoted in the *Dīwān*, is not explicit: *yur'īdu annī āḥidun mina š-šī'ri mā urīdu wa-lā antaḥilu šī'ra aḥadin*. Goldziher (1893:43) translates: “Wie sollte ich ... die Reime anderer entlehnen”.

¹⁴ See also al-Baḡdādī, *Hizāna* III, 302.11-15.

suspected him of seeking help from others (*tasta'īnu 'alā šī'rika*). Still the form this help had taken is not specified. It may well have been of a legitimate kind; and with this story from Ibn Qutayba in mind we cannot claim to have convincing evidence that Ibn Fāris is correct. Let me introduce some further quotes to see what information, if any, can be gleaned from them.

[10] A tradition in *Agānī* VIII, 8: (al-Aṣma'ī, d. 213/828, speaking about Ġarīr) has it that Ġarīr showed his superiority over forty three poets, but was never able to outdo al-Aḥṭal and al-Farazdaq. Ġarīr however claimed that al-Aḥṭal was never alone when he prepared to attack him with his *hiḡā'*. He would assemble fifty poets at a drinking bout and they all would contribute lines to the poem which he would later give out as a composition by himself. Unfortunately this tradition makes no mention of a technical term for this unusual procedure; it simply says: *wa-yantahilu huwa l-qaṣīdata ba'da an yutammimūhā*.

[11] Demonstrating al-Farazdaq doing the same, but showing a less friendly manner, Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir (d. 280/893) has it that al-Farazdaq "drew his sword" (*yuslitu*) against other poets – this, no doubt, is intended as a figurative expression. Thereupon he would appropriate (*yantahilu*) their poems. He then would submit to *hiḡā'* whoever mentioned that he used *šay'ani ntaḥalahu awi dda'āhu li-ḡayrihi*. He would add that "the stray camels of poetry were dearer to him than the real stray camels" and that "the best form of theft was the one that did not entail the penalty of one's hand being cut" (al-Marzubānī, *Murwaṣṣaḥ* 168, cf. *ibid.*, 176). The passage shows clearly that in Aḥmad b. Abī Ṭāhir's time *intaḥala* was understood in the sense of plain plagiarism.

[12] Earlier, in the days of Abū 'Ubayda the same idea may have been attached to the term. In a story in the *Agānī* (II, 267), al-Farazdaq claims that two lines by Ibn Mayyāda (d. 136/754 or 149/766) could not possibly be Ibn Mayyāda's own work, since they were more fitting to his own, that is al-Farazdaq's own, poetry. al-Farazdaq then orders his *rāwī* to add Ibn Mayyāda's lines to his own repertoire (*udmumbumā ilayka*; cf. the story below, [14]). But what distinguishes this story from the preceding one is that Ibn Mayyāda remains silent (*atraqa*) and does

not protest; *fa-maḏā* [*l-Farazdaq*] *fa-ntaḥalahumā* (cf. al-Marzubānī, *Murwašṣah* 172).

In the following lines by al-Farazdaq¹⁵ we find *tanahhala* as a variant for *tanahhala*. If we read *tanahhala*, the term is used undoubtedly in an unfavourable sense, and therefore most likely means 'claiming falsely': [*qāla Abū 'Ubayda*]: *fa-lammā sami'a [al-Farazdaq] qaḥla l-Ba' iḷ:*

a-tarḡū Kulaybun an yaḡī'a ḥadīṭuhā

bi-ḥayrin wa-qad a'yā Kulaybun qadīmuhā

qāla l-Farazdaq:

[13] *idā mā qultu qāfiyatan šarūdan*

tanahhalahā bnu ḥamrā'i l-iḡānī

"When I compose a line of poetry that becomes widely known the son of the woman with the red perineum selects it [for his own poem]" (lit.: "appropriates the best of it").

The following comment is added to this last line: *qāla Abū 'Abdallāhi [Muḥammadu bnu l-'Abbās al-Yazīdī]* (d. 310/922, see *Naqā'id*, I, xi): *tanahhalahā ay aḥada hiyārahā wa tanahhalahā intaḥalahā*. Reading *tanahhalahā* one could translate the second hemistich:

"... then the son of the woman with the red perineum claims to have made it".

Though the reading *tanahhala* does not fit into the context, there may be other cases where we have to consider reading *tanahhala* for *tanahhala*. What is important in this passage is that it shows Abū 'Abdallāh al-Yazīdī attributing explicitly the same meaning to *tanahhalahā* and *intaḥalahā*.

We have to conclude that, so far, the poems themselves and the stories and interpretations accompanying them have not helped us to differentiate clearly between *intaḥala* and *tanahhala*. Traditions I found

¹⁵ *Naqā'id*, I, 125.1-6 (see *ibid.*, 124, the introduction of poem no. 31); az-Zamaḥṣarī, *Asās* II, 429 (*tanahhalahā*) attributes [13] to Ḡarīr; *Lisān*, XI, 651a (*tanahhalahā*), al-Ġumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt* I, 327 (*turaḡḡī ... tanahhalahā*); al-Āmidī (d. 370/981) *Mu'talif* 161 (*tanahhalahā*). As far as I can see the line does not appear in the *Dīwān* of al-Farazdaq.

in other texts dealing with poetry are not more convincing than those we have seen so far.

[14] An interesting example in al-Hātīmī's *Hilya* may be mentioned here (fol. 45a): °Alī b. Hārūn [al-Munağğim] (d. 352/963) quotes his father and his uncle, whom we can easily identify as Hārūn b. °Alī (d. 288/901) and Yahyā b. °Alī (d. 300/913). The story he reports on their authority is as follows: Ğamīl recites a line of his poetry to al-Farazdaq who then forces Ğamīl to yield this line to him: *la-tada'anna hādā l-bayta aw la-tada'anna 'irdaka fa-tarakahu labu fa-ntaḥalahu l-Farazdaq wa-adḥalahu fī qaṣīdatihi*, "Let this line go, or [else] you will have to let go your reputation. Thereupon Ğamīl left the line to al-Farazdaq who appropriated it and inserted it in his poem". This passage proves clearly that the term *intaḥala* was used in the time of °Alī b. Hārūn. Was it also used in the time of his father and his uncle? We cannot be certain; they may have used the term *adḥala* to which °Alī then added the more technical *intaḥala*¹⁶.

Some further information can be gleaned from al-Hātīmī's chapter on the *iğtilāb* and *istillḥāq* (fols. 88a-89a) where we find interesting notes on a line by an-Nābiga al-Ğa'dī (Nallino 1953:88 = no 6, line 37). These notes are presented on the authority of al-Ğumaḥī (139-231/756-845):

[15] *tilka l-makārimu lā qa'bāni min labanin*
šībā bi-mā'in fa-'ādā ba'du abwālā

"These are real noble actions, not two cups of milk
mixed with water which later become urine".

yarwīhi Banū °Amir b. Ṣaṣa'ata li-n-Nābigati wa-r-ruwātu muğmi'ūna
'alā anna Abā ṣ-Ṣalti bna Rabī'ata qālahu wa-aḥsabu l-Ğa'diyya ḡā'a bihi

¹⁶ Ğamīl, *Dīwān* 138; al-Farazdaq, *Dīwān* (ed. al-Hāwī) II, 127 (poem no. 350, line 100); *Naqā'id* II, 572; al-Ğumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt* I, 363. Cf. also the amusing story in *Ağānī* VIII, 96.

*mutamattilan. wa-qāla Yūnus: wa-hādā stilhāqun wa-laysa bi-ntihālin wa-ğayrubu yusamm ihni ntiḥālan wa-lākinnahu lam yuḥsini l-'ibārata*¹⁷.

Remarkable about this tradition by Yūnus [b. Ḥabīb] (d. 182/798) is that it mentions a case of a line being so famous that it justifies the practice of quoting it as a proverb. Moreover it leaves the door open for the suggestion, that *intiḥāl* was at some time, or by some critics, used in the sense of an acceptable form of borrowing, perhaps in the sense of borrowing of a line that had become proverbial, a practice suggested in lines I have quoted earlier ([4], commentary, and [5]).

The evidence from some later discussions of the verb *intaḥala* moreover, lends a measure of support to the thesis of apparently early scholars, older in any case than Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1004), that *intaḥala* was not synonymous with *tanahḥala*:

We see Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1023, *Baṣā'ir* VII, 251. 15-16) offering the following information on the two terms: *intaḥala fulānun kadā wa-kadā ay dahaba ilayhi wa-ṣtamala 'alayhi. wa-tanahḥala idā takaddaba fī d-da'wā. yuqālu: mā ntaḥala wa-lākin tanahḥala idā azhara ġayra mā admara.*

And again in the same work by Abū Ḥayyān at-Tawḥīdī (*Baṣā'ir* VIII, 150): *wa-ammā l-manḥūlu fa-min qarwlika: nahaltu fulānan kadā wa-kadā idā wahabtuhu lahu aw nasabtu ilayhi kalāman.* Abū Ḥayyān, in this last passage associates the root *n-ḥ-l* with 'gift', rather than 'claim' or 'wrong attribution'.

We now should take a brief look at the terms *nahala* and *anḥala*. The chapter on the *inḥāl* in al-Ḥātīmī, *Ḥilya* (fol. 82a) opens with a brief statement in which the author promises that he will explain the difference between *inḥāl* and *intiḥāl*. What follows, however, is not a

¹⁷ A similar observation by Yūnus appears in al-Ġumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt* I, 58 and is repeated by Ibn Rašīq, *Umda* II, 1042.

definition, but a series of anecdotes, from which it appears that *inhāl* is 'false attribution', 'falsely fathering'¹⁸.

So far I have only found one verse example which, however, has been handed down with variants. It is found in the *Dīwān* of al-Farazdaq (ed. aṣ-Ṣāwī, 720) as part of a poem from which I have quoted earlier (above [4]). I repeat the commentary: *lā yunḥalu: ay lā yantahiluhu aḥadun, wa-yurwā: lā yanḥalu: ay lā yablā, wa-yurwā: kalāmuhu yutamattalu*. If one accepts this interpretation of *yunḥalu*, one may be tempted to associate the root *n-ḥ-l* with the notion of 'inheritance' which may be implicitly derived, as part of the semantic spectrum of the root *n-ḥ-l*, from examples listed in the *Lisān*, such as: *mā naḥala wālidun waladan min nuḥlin afdala min adabin ḥasanin*¹⁹, and *anḥala waladahu mālan wa-naḥalahu: ḥaṣṣahu bi-ṣay'in minhu*. Unfortunately the lexicographers only relate these expressions to *nuḥl*, 'giving', but the notion of inheritance is well represented in other Semitic languages.

[16] So far I have found only one tradition that puts the term *naḥala* in the mouth of a poet. It is found in *Agānī* VIII, 57-58. The story is told by a son of Ğarīr. The poet Hišām b. Qays al-Mar'i hears a *hiġā'* poem addressed to him by *Dū r-Rumma*. He recognizes part of it as the work of Ğarīr, and so does al-Farazdaq. When *Dū r-Rumma* denies having been helped by Ğarīr, al-Farazdaq exclaims: *kadaba fūka! qad naḥalakahā ašaddu laḥyayni minka!* (*ibid.*, 58, line 5 from the bottom)²⁰. Is *naḥala* here 'falsely attributing' or 'giving'?

As long as there is no general dictionary available covering the roots of all Semitic languages, one may consult Koehler & Baumgartner

¹⁸ There may be a lacuna between the opening sentences of al-Ḥātimī's *inhāl* chapter, or al-Ḥātimī may be expecting his readers to draw their own conclusions. The second alternative is more likely, since Ibn Aydamur (*Durr*), who borrows frequently from al-Ḥātimī, does not offer a definition of the *inhāl* either.

¹⁹ Ibn al-Aḫīr, Mağdaddīn (d. 606/1210), *Nihāya* V, 29.6; Wensinck et al. 1936-88 VI, 378a. A detailed examination of *ḥadīṭ* literature may clarify this question.

²⁰ See Ğarīr, *Dīwān* II, 1029; *Dū r-Rumma*, *Dīwān* II, 1377-1379 and the references quoted there. Variant: 'alakabunna 'chewed them up'(?).

1983:648a-650a and the more detailed work by Runngren et al. (1986 V, 342b-359a)²¹. I have not yet had an opportunity to consult other handbooks. The entry *n-h-l* does not afford many new insights, apart from the association of the root with “in Besitz nehmen/als Besitz erhalten”, “besitzen”, “schenken”, associations with “Erbesitz” and, finally, “abmagern”, the last, as we have seen, also found in the Arabic dictionaries. However these various meanings could well lend support to the suggestion that older associations of *tanahhala* and *intahala* existed in Arabic which, if applied to poetry, had nothing to do with ‘plagiarism’ in our sense of the word, but rather with borrowing somebody else’s poem or – much more likely – fragment of poem, inserting it as a saying that had become proverbial, had become part of common literary heritage, in other words what al-Ḥātimī would term *iğtilāb* or *istilhāq*. One may also think of ‘borrowing with the permission of the author’, and even of ‘receiving help from another poet’ which – again in al-Ḥātimī’s terminology – would be *murāfada*, a term which, like *nahala*, is connected with ‘giving’. Finally, one should also think of inheriting from an older poet in the capacity of a *rāwī*.

I came across a story in the chapter on Salama b. ‘Ayyāš (end 1st-beginning 2nd cent.?) in *Ağānī*, XX, 295-296) in a section attributed to Abū l-Farağ al-Iṣfahānī, but not considered authentic. Salama recounts how he visits al-Farazdaq in prison and finds him engaged in a poem beginning with:

*inna lladī samaka s-samā’a banā lanā
baytan da’ā’imuhū a’azza wa-atwalū*

Since al-Farazdaq is unable to continue (*uṣḥima*), Salama b. ‘Ayyāš offers help (*a-lā arfiduka?*) and continues as follows:

*baytun Zurāratu muḥtabin bi-finā’ihī
wa-Muğāšī’un wa-Abū l-Fawārisi Nahšalū*

al-Farazdaq, though irritated, accepts the line which becomes once more part of a *hiğā’* poem. This story, as well as the observations in various

²¹ I owe these references to my colleagues in Los Angeles, Professors R. Hendel and S. Seegert.

dictionaries and vocabularies, indicate that the root *rfd* is connected with giving, thus showing a remarkable similarity with part of the spectrum of *nahala*. This lends some further support to the assumption that the original meaning of *intahala* was 'to acquire as a gift' and the original meaning of *tanahḥala*, perhaps, 'to pretend that one has acquired as a gift'.

At some time the term *tanahḥala* seems to have fallen out of use. al-Ḥātimī (*Ḥilya*) has no separate chapter on the term, though dictionaries, such as az-Zamahṣarī's (d. 538/1114) *Asās* continue to mention *tanahḥala* along with *intahala*²². Whether a distinction between *intahala* and *tanahḥala* ever existed, at least in the *sariqa* terminology, may be difficult to prove. If it did, one can explain the need certain scholars felt to distinguish between these terms, and think up other terms, as evidence that the critics recognized the strength of ancient and even more recent tradition and its consequences. They were ready to give a prominent place to tradition, and did not wish this to be seen as slavish imitation. They even recognized that it was difficult to avoid following established traditions. This appears from a thesis by Ibn Abī Ṭāhir and from the existence of the term *tašbīḥāt 'uqm* 'barren similes', 'similes that have found no imitators'²³. The very fact that confusion over terminology existed gave rise to attempts not only to explain the terminology, but also to bring clarity to the critics attitude. As I said earlier, we may speak of a paradox: despite the confusion over terminology, intelligent studies such as we find them in the 'Umda of Ibn Rašīq and in his *Qurāda* leave little doubt on the principles maintained

²² See II, 429a: "... wa-qāla šīran fa-nahalahu gayrahu wa-ntahala šīra gayrihi wa-tanahḥalahu". Compare also, for the *sariqa* in Persian literary theory, Šamsaddīn ar-Rāzī (see note 1) and Rückert & Pertsch 1966:187-190, 363-365, neither of which mentions the term *tanahḥala*.

²³ See Bonebakker, 1975:68-72; see also Ibn Rašīq, 'Umda I, 504-507, Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Kifāya* 167. For Ibn Abī Ṭāhir see al-Ḥātimī, *Ḥilya* fol 80a-b, and Ibn Aydamur, *Durr* 116-117 = fol. 73b-74a. I have quoted the passage in a forthcoming more detailed publication under the title 'Nahala and Saraqa'.

by these critics²⁴, even though we can only agree with Ibn Rašīq, at the end of his chapter on the *sariqāt* in his *ʿUmda* (II, 1059) that *fī aqalla mim mā ḡi'tu bibi minhu kifāya!*

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²⁴ See also Ibn Rašīq, *Qurāda* 54-120, which, to a large extent, illustrates these principles; cf. pp. 22-23 of the French introduction and *ibid.*, 30-40 for a summary in French.

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