All of us are familiar with the phenomenon of the author of a collection of poetry, or prose and poetry — a so-called adab book — making changes in a line of poetry. The fact is even more common among the rāwīs, the earliest transmitters of poetry. Such changes may result in what in western textual criticism is known as the lectio facilior, “the easier reading”.

Sometimes such interventions may be useful in the sense that they give us an indication of how the line of poetry should be interpreted, but it goes without saying that caution is necessary. The rāwī or the collector may have misinterpreted the line; or, what is worse, he may not understand the line and wilfully change a word or two to make the text intelligible to himself, or even to make it conform to his taste. This is, I think, what happened to two sets of two lines which I intend to discuss in this short note.

I

A. There exists a contemporary collection of poems by Ibn Rašīq (390-456 or 463/1000-1063/64 or 1070/71) which goes under the title Diwān Ibn Rašīq. It quotes the following two lines (basīt) (Ibn Rašīq, Diwān 24, no. 4):

B. Among as-Silafi’s (ca. 478/1086-576/1181) biographies of Spanish scholars and poets¹ we find a different text. The poem is again attributed to Ibn Rašīq:

The second line is the same in all versions I am going to quote. Its Biblical and Quranic allusions speak for themselves and need no further explanation. I will therefore limit myself from now on to a discussion of the first line.

¹ In the partial edition by Iḥsān ‘Abbās: as-Silafi, Mu‘jam 98, no 62.
C. In Ibn Dihya’s (d. 633/1236) *Mutrib* we find these two lines in the following form and once more attributed to Ibn Rasiq (Ibn Dihya, *Mutrib* 65):

> وأمر بعض الملوك ابن رشيق يكتب البحر فهذا الشعر،
> أمرتني برکوب البحر في عجيل غيري فاختصصه هذا الراة

Ibn Dihya does not specify to whom these lines were addressed. The editors quote, in a footnote, texts which claim that they were the poet's reply to a request by al-Mu'tamid b. cAbbad (d. 487/1095)2. Also interesting is another footnote by the editor which explains: *arrā' ay arrā'y*.

D. Ibn Hallikān (d. 681/1282) quotes the poem in the following form3:

> أميرتني برکوب البحر أقطعه، غيرى لك الخير فاختصصه هذا الراة

In Ibn Hallikān there is question of an invitation by al-Mu'tamid b. cAbbad addressed, not to Ibn Rasiq, but to two other poets, to the blind poet Abu 1-Hasan cAli al-Husri4 (420/1029-488/1095) who left Qayrawān, lived in Ceuta, later in Spain5 and died in Tangiers6, and to Abu l-cArab as-Siqilli (423/1032-after 507/1113). The above reply is attributed to al-Husri; Abu l-cArab sends his own reply. al-Husri’s story ends as follows:

> ثم دخل الأندلس بعد ذلك وامتدت المعتمد وغيره

It is worth noting, however, that in the edition by Ihsan c Abbas of the *Wafayat* (III, 333-334) the reading *بذا الراة* is adopted.7

E. We find the two lines of the *ra'* poem in ad-Dahabi’s (d. 748/1374), *Siyar* (XIX, 26-27) in the biography of al-Husri:

> وكان المعتمد بن عبيد، رد إليه خمس مئة دينار ليفد عليه فكتب:
> أميرتني برکوب البحر أقطعه، غيرى لك الخير فاختصصه هذا الراة

We have two more versions found in relatively modern collections which offer no further information. They attribute the lines to Ibn Hamdis and Abu Ishaq (sic) al-Husri.

F. In the *Tirdz al-magalis* (221) by a much later author, Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥafāği (d. 1069/1659)9, the *qiṣa* is attributed to Ibn Rasiq:

> وقد وصتني فاختص فذكر هذا الراة

G. In a modern collection (al-Azhari 1986 I, 13) we find the same lines, this time attributed to Ibn Hamdis (447/1055-527/1132) with the following introduction:

> قد وصتني فاختص فذكر هذا الراة

In a footnote the author observes that the two lines are not part of the *Diwan*; but the *Diwan* (533-534) quotes two other poems by Ibn Hamdis in the same vein as we shall see later.

H. Ibn al-Ḥatib (d. 776/1375) attributes the lines to Abu Ishaq al-Husri10:

> فقل للاي فذكر هذا الراة

In footnote 2 the author observes that the two lines are not part of the *Diwan* but the *Diwan* (533-534) quotes two other poems by Ibn Hamdis in the same vein as we shall see later.

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4 See *EP*, III, 640a-641a; Ibn Bassām (d. 547/1151), *Dahira*, VII, 245-283; 'Imadaddin (d. 597/1201), *Harida* II, 186-187 (no 40); ḥaṭil poem on Abu l-cArab as-Siqilli; as-Safādī (d. 764/1363), *Waft* XXI, 249-251. The monograph on al-Husri mentions the second of the two lines (al-Marzaqī & al-Ḥilālī 1963: introduction, 41), but the section on al-Husri's poetry does not have either of the two lines.
5 After 450 according to al-Humaydi (d. 488/1096), *Gadwa* 296.
6 Abu l-Hasan 'Ali al-Husri is not to be confused with Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Husri, the author of the *Zahr al-adab*.
7 as-Safādī (d. 764/1363) quotes the story from Ibn Hallikān (as-Safādī, *Waft* XXI, 250-251) and in his *Naqš* 214. The editors read in both cases *biṣ̄a ḍaḍa*.
C. In Ibn Dihya's (d. 633/1236) *Mutrib* we find these two lines in the following form and once more attributed to Ibn Rasiq (Ibn Dihya, *Mutrib* 65):

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Ibn Dihya does not specify to whom these lines were addressed. The editors quote, in a footnote, texts which claim that they were the poet's reply to a request by al-Mu'tamid b. cAbbad (d. 487/1095)2. Also interesting is another footnote by the editor which explains: *arrâ' ay ar-ra'y*.
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It is worth noting, however, that in the edition by Ihsan cAbbas of the *Wafayat* (III, 333-334) the reading *bi-da d-da'i* is adopted7.
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2 See EF*, VII, 766a-768a.
4 See EF*, III, 640a-641a; Ibn Bassam (d. 542/1144), *Dahr*, VII, 245-283; 'Imadaddin (d. 597/1201), *Harida* II, 186-187 (no 40); *hiğa* poem on Abu l-cArab as-Siqilli; as-Safadi (d. 764/1363), *Wafi* XXI, 249-251. The monograph on al-Husri mentions the second of the two lines (al-Marzaqi & al-Cilaii 1963: introduction, 41), but the section on al-Husri's poetry does not have either of the two lines.
5 After 450 according to al-Humaydi (d. 488/1096), *Cinqua* 296.
6 Abu l-Hasan 'Ali al-Husri is not to be confused with Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Husri, the author of the *Zahr al-adab*.
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E. We find the two lines of the *ra'a* poem in ad-Dahabi's (d. 748/1347), *Siyar* (XIX, 26-27) in the biography of al-Husri:

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We have two more versions found in relatively modern collections which offer no further information. They attribute the lines to Ibn Hamdis and Abu Ishaq (sic) al-Husri.
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F. In a modern collection (al-Azhari 1986 I, 13) we find the same lines, this time attributed to Ibn Hamdis (447/1055-527/1132) with the following introduction:

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In a footnote the author observes that the two lines are not part of the *Diwan*; but the *Diwan* (533-534) quotes two other poems by Ibn Hamdi in the same vein as we shall see later.
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G. Ibn al-Hatib (d. 776/1375) attributes the lines to Abu Ishaq al-Husri8:

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In a footnote the author observes that the two lines are not part of the *Diwan*; but the *Diwan* (533-534) quotes two other poems by Ibn Hamdi in the same vein as we shall see later.
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9 See EF*, IV, 912a-913a.
The translation (164, no. 671) agrees with this version. In the _fihrist al-qawafi_, however, we find _bi-da r-rā'y_.

I. But a third late text must also be considered, since its author is a famous scholar. This text is the _Tağ_ (I 256b-257a) by az-Zabidi (d. 1205/1791) which in the entry _ra'_ states the following:

"أمرني يرکوب البحر أركبه عقير لک الخير فاخصصه هذا الراى
فلئنما العقرب فأدرك الحسن على بن عبد العزيز الفهري المقرر الشرير أبي
 mũiق الحصري صاحب زهر الأدب وأما الرواية فإنما فاخصصه هذا الداء بالداء المهمله لا بالأراء كأزعمه شيختنا فيذكر عليه ما ماده

Possible translations of I

Before going any further we must decide which of the nine versions has the original text. This is not particularly difficult when it comes to the last word in the first line, _ar-rā'_ or _ad-da'_ The disaster — the _dā'_ — would refer to the dangers of the sea journey, and it is therefore easy to see that somebody would have preferred this as a better reading. On the other hand I do not find that the other variants, such as _fahushu_, change the meaning of the line materially.

1. The only variant of real importance, therefore, is the reading _bi-da r-rā'y_ which could, of course, simply be translated as 'this idea'. Indeed, the editor of the _Mutrib_ believes that _hāda r-rā'y_ stands for _hāda r-ayy_ 'this view' which, with some stretching of the usual translations ('opinion, view'), one could translate as 'this idea', 'this project'.

But I feel that one should also look for other interpretations of _ar-rā'_ which I strongly believe is the original reading.

2. It should be noted that both Ibn Manzūr's _Lisān_ and Zabidi's _Tağ_ quote the following observation by Abū 1-Haytam (d. 276/889): _ar-rā'_ _zabad al-bahr_, but then quote a line intended as a _sahīd_ for the term _ra'_ in the sense of 'foam on the mouth of a horse'. Does this mean that there is sufficient reason to consider seriously that _ra'_ stands for 'foam of the sea'? Would Ibn Rasiq or al-Husri, or whoever composed these two lines, have been aware of this meaning which clearly belongs in the _garib_ category? If so, would they feel inclined to use _ra'_ in the sense of 'foam' in a playful poem, a poem intended as a joke? Perhaps they would, but only if the joke were addressed to a poet-scholar (an _adib_ in the wider sense of the word) who was thoroughly familiar with the dictionary. If that were the case, we could consider the following translation: "Find somebody else to venture on that foam".

3. One could also argue that Ibn Rasiq (if he is indeed the author of the lines) vented his anger over the unwelcome invitation by vituperating the five _ra'_s in the first hemistich, if one reads _muṣṭariram_; or the two _ra'_s of _rañub al-bahr_ if one adopts one of the other readings, the more so since, whatever reading is correct, the second hemistich is a reply to the first and because this first hemistich, taken by itself, states the problem clearly. Unless _ra'y_ is intended as a synonym of _mar'an_ 'view' or rather ['frightening] view' — for which I have no evidence — I would translate the first line of _as-Silafi_ s version as follows:

"You ordered me to ride on the sea making me suffer [its] perils.

Find someone else! then order him to submit to [all these words with] the letter _ra'_

or:

"Find someone else; then order him to venture on that foamy seal!"

The theme of the poem is not unique; our _qī'a_ appears in the context of poems on the same theme by Ibn Hamdis (_Diwan_ 533):14

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14 The foaming of the sea appears as a simile in a line by Ibn Hamdis, _Diwan_ 141, 1. 2, no. 88.

15 There would be four if one reads _arkahwah_ with _l_.

16 For the reference to an _āya_ in the following poem, see Qur'ān 16:14, 17:66, 45:12.

17 See Ibn Ġubayr (539/540.634 / 1146-1218), _Rihla_ 315; al-Maqqari (d. 1041/1632), _Nafḥ_ 1, 33. This same _qī'a_, as well as the preceding one by Ibn Hamdis, appears in an-Nuwayri (d. 732/1332), _Nihāya_ 1, 255. Both Ibn Ġubayr and al-Maqqari give the line anonymously. In _al-Hafṣi_ s _Tirāz_ and Ibn Hamdis s _Diwan_, however, it is explicitly attributed to Ibn Rasiq.
The translation (164, no. 671) agrees with this version. In the *fihrist al-qawafî*, however, we find bi-dâr ar-râ‘î.

I. But a third late text must also be considered, since its author is a famous scholar. This text is the *Tâg* (I 256b-257a) by az-Zabidi (d. 1205/1791) which in the entry ra‘: wa-kâra‘ states the following:

> وَأَنْفِدْ شَيْخًا أَمْرُكَ بِلَقَٰمٍ أَرْكِبَهُ، غَرَّيْلَ كَلَّهُ الْخِيَرُ فَأَخَصِّصَهُ بِذِهَّلَ لِذَٰلِكَ الْحَزْرُ، فَقَلْتُ اَلْبَعْرُ لِأَنْفُسِي اَنْصَرْتُ عَلَى بَنِي عِدَّ الْأَفْلَحِ الْمُسْتَفْرَقُ الْهُذِئِ، قَضَى اَلْأَسْحَاقُ اَلْحُصْرِيُّ سَيَحْبُرُ ذِلِّلَ الْأَدَابِ، وَأَمَا الْرَّوَايَةُ فَقَامَهُ بِذِهَّلَ لِذَٰلِكَ الدَّاءَ بَالدَّاءِ المُهَمَّلِ لاَ بَلَاءَ، كَمَا زَمَهُ شَيْخًا فَتَرَّدَ عَلَيْهِ مَا زَاَدَهُ

Possible translations of I

Before going any further we must decide which of the nine versions has the original text. This is not particularly difficult when it comes to the last word in the first line, ar-râ‘î or ad-dâ‘î. The disaster — the dâ‘ — would refer to the dangers of the sea journey, and it is therefore easy to see that somebody would have preferred this as a better reading. On the other hand I do not find that the other variants, such as fa-*hubshu* change the meaning of the line materially.

1. The only variant of real importance, therefore, is the reading bi-dâ‘ ar-râ‘î which could, of course, simply be translated as 'this idea'. Indeed, the editor of the *Mutrib* believes that hadâ‘ ra‘î stands for hadâ‘ ra‘îyî, 'this view'11 which, with some stretching of the usual translations ('opinion, view'), one could translate as 'this idea', 'this project'.

But I feel that one should also look for other interpretations of ar-râ‘î which I strongly believe is the original reading.

2. It should be noted that both Ibn Manzûr's *Lisân* and Zabidi's *Tâg* quote the following observation by Abû l-Hayyam (d. 276/889): ar-râ‘î zabad al-bahr, but then quote a line intended as a *sâhid* for the term ra‘ in the sense of 'foam on the mouth of a horse'12. Does this mean that there is sufficient reason to consider seriously that ra‘ stands for 'foam of the sea'? Would Ibn Raśiq or al-Husri, or whoever composed these two lines, have been aware of this meaning which clearly belongs in the *garîb* category? If so, would they feel inclined to use ra‘ in the sense of 'foam' in a playfu poem, a poem intended as a joke? Perhaps they would, but only if the joke were addressed to a poet-scholar (an *adîb* in the wider sense of the word) who was thoroughly familiar with the dictionary. If that were the case, we could consider the following translation: “Find somebody else to venture on that foam”.

3. One could also argue that Ibn Raśiq (if he is indeed the author of the lines) vented his anger over the unwelcome invitation by vituperating the five ra‘î's in the first hemistich, if one reads maštarri‘an; or the two ra‘î of râ‘î zabad al-bahr13; if one adopts one of the other readings, the more so since, whatever reading is correct, the second hemistich is a reply to the first and because this first hemistich, taken by itself, states the problem clearly. Unless ra‘î is intended as a synonym of mar‘an 'view' or rather 'frightening' view' — for which I have no evidence — I would translate the first line of as-Silafi’s version as follows:

“You ordered me to ride on the sea making me suffer [its] perils. Find someone else! then order him to submit to [all these words with] the letter ra‘î”, or:

“Find someone else; then order him to venture on that foamy sea!”

The theme of the poem is not unique; our qit’a appears in the context of poems on the same theme by Ibn Hamdis (*Diwan* 533):

> لا أُرِكِبُ الْبَحْرَ غَوْفًا
> الْقَلاِعِينَ وَالْطَيِّبِينَ

and:

> وَأَحْضَرْ لَوَلَا أَيُّهَا الرَّبِّ
> أُرِكِبَةَ زَبَدُ الْبَحْرِ

Ibn Hamdis also lists, on this theme, a second qit’a by Ibn Raśiq14:

> الْبَحْرِ صَعَابُ المَدَاقِقِ مَسْرُ
> فَمَا عَسِيَ صَبَرُكَ عَلَيهِ

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11 See Wright 1962 II, 376B.
12 For Abû l-Hayyam (d. 276/889) see *GAS* VIII, 160-161. He seems to have been used by al-Azhari in his *Tabâ¡î*. The same observation appears in al-Âalîl, *Hafiz* 29: al-qurda‘ as-sagir [wa-r-ragul ad-da‘î] [wa-r-râ‘î zabad al-bahr], but the last of the three interpretations appears only in two late manuscripts of this brief treatise and may therefore be an addition of much later date.
13 *Zabad* is a common term for 'foam, froth, scum' that applies also to the foam of the sea, cf. Ibn Manzûr, *Lisân*, III, 193a.
14 The foaming of the sea appears as a simile in a line by Ibn Hamdis, *Diwan* 141, 1. 2, no. 88.
15 There would be four if one reads arkhahdu with l.
16 For the reference to an ََّا in the following poem, see Qur’an 16:14, 17:66, 45:12.
17 See Ibn 6ubayr (539/540-634 / 1146-1218), *Rihla* 315; al-Maqqari (d. 1041/1632), *Nihdya* I, 33. This same qit’a, as well as the preceding one by Ibn Hamdis, appears in an-Nuwaïry (d. 732/1332), *Nihdya* I, 255. Both Ibn Gübayr and al-Maqqari give the line anonymously. In al-Hâfiz’s *Tiraz* and Ibn Hamdis’s *Diwan*, however, it is explicitly attributed to Ibn Raśiq.
Further examples on the same theme by Ibn Ḥamdis and Ibn Raṣq may be found in al-Ḥafagā (d. 1069/1659), Tirāz (220-221) and Ibn Ḥamdis, Dīwān (8, no. 6).

By Abū l-ʿArab we have the poem already quoted; but in as-Silafi’s collection of biographies (Muʿjam 137-138) we have again by Abū l-ʿArab:

٤٠٤٧٣٤٥٣١٤٣٥٦٨٥٣٧٣

for which one should perhaps read: ممّا رماليّ بّي البحر ... followed by similar qiʿas on the theme of the first reading. What is interesting is that all three poets, Ibn Raṣq, Abū l-ʿArab and Ibn Ḥamdis are credited with poems about the miseries of sea travel.

Yet this may not exhaust the translations of ar-raʾi that could be suggested. I observed earlier that other variants such as faḥṣushu bi-daj r-raʾi ‘choose him for’, ‘select him for ...’ do not help us to determine the correct interpretation. I am not aware of any symbolic meaning of the raʾ, but this letter, as we will see next, is used in similes for something curved, by which ‘the waves’ may be intended. In Dozy 1925:493a one finds that the raʾ stands for ‘something bent’ (allusion à ce qui est courbe, [le] saumon). Could ‘something bent’ be a proverbial phrase indicating something unpleasant? Or could the raʾ be taken as a simile describing the curved waves of the sea? The term rukib ʿubābib ‘riding his waves, billows, or surges’ (cf. Lane 1863-93:1932)20 in the poem by Ibn Ḥamdis lends perhaps some support to this interpretation; but one could claim as well that it supports the interpretation of the raʾ as referring to rukib al-babr.21

II

We have a similar case in a poem found in at-Taʿalibī’s work (d. 429/1038) Mutrib22, where we read the following. The theme is now different, but in some respects more difficult. The poem is attributed to Ibn al-Muṭazz:

In the older edition of at-Taʿalibī’s work the editor offers in a footnote the following explanation:

٤٠٤٧٣٤٥٣١٤٣٥٦٨٥٣٧٣

The editor of the later edition does not agree; he repeats the explanation of the old edition, but adds: wa-ara annahu min raʾi bi. If one follows the suggestion by the first editor a better solution would be to think of the letter raʾ as the first letter of riqq, ‘slavery’, that is: “... the heart of his lover partakes of his status as a slave”.

I did not find these two lines in the partial edition of the Dīwān of Ibn Muṭazz by Lewin, nor in the old Cairo edition23.

B. However, Ibn Abī `Awān, Taḥḥābat 98, likewise attributes the lines to Ibn al-Muṭazz, but he reads: qaṭl muḥibbin min daʿī bi for qaṭl muḥibbin min raʾi bi. Of course this may be an error on the part of a copyist. If one reads min daʿī bi the phrase could mean: “The death of his lover will be brought about by love sickness for this beloved dressed in blue”. Another variant is ulbista laum sanāʾi bi. The following quotations show more such variants in the second line; they do not significantly change the meaning of the qiʿa and can therefore be disregarded. Invariably the lines are attributed to Ibn al-Muṭazz.

C. A late author, al-Muḥibbib (1061-1111), Naṣfa I, 303, reads qaṭl for qaṭl and wa-ba-naṣaṣqī l-lawām, but lets the line end on min raʾi bi. The context deals with the colour of the sky. A footnote refers to Ibn Bassām (Dahīva, ed. al-ʿAbbadī & al-ʿAzāzī, I 2 37) where it ends on min dābībi (= min daʿī bi) and min saḥābī bi thereby completely altering the sense of the two lines. Both variants clearly show that even in the Middle Ages the first of the two lines was considered unintelligible by some philologists.

18 See also as-Silafi, Muʿjam 68: One “Abdallāhīm b. Muḥammad b. al-Balārī meets as-Silafi in Alexandria; after stating that he was born in 487, and was ḥabīb in Tilīmān, he mentions that he met Abū l-ʿArab in Majorca; the note on p. 137-138 mentions that al-Walīd b. Ismāʿīl b. Gafiqī met Abū l-ʿArab in Spain and heard him recite two lines of poetry, the first of which was the line quoted here.

19 See az-Zabādī, Taḡ III, 300b-301a: waʾfi i-Taḥṭāb: al-ʿubāb muʾsam as-sayl wa-qīla ʿubāb as-sayl irtfāʿuhsa wa-khatṣuhsa wa ʿubābkuhsa mamḻuḥi.

20 An interesting example of curves appearing on the surface of the sea in a different way is Ibn Ḥanī, Dīwān 818 quoted from an-Nuwayrī, Nahāyāt 11, 257.

21 at-Taʿalibī, Mutrib 87, ed. al-Malāḥīmī, I, 127.

22 So far I have not found the poem in other texts by at-Taʿalibī.

23 But in the appendix of the edition of as-Samarraʾī (Ibn al-Muṭazz, Shīr) we find the following: wa-qīla šī ṣulam ʿalayhi diḥāb ġarmī ... Follows the text as in al-Ṣuṣī (see below).
Further examples on the same theme by Ibn Hamdis and Ibn Rašq may be found in al-Hafagl (d. 1069/1659), biographies on the theme of the first reading. What is interesting is that all three poets, Ibn...

... followed by similar qī'as on the theme of the first reading. What is interesting is that all three poets, Ibn Rašq, Abū l-Arab and Ibn Hamdis are credited with poems about the miseries of sea travel.

Yet this may not exhaust the translations of ar-rā'i that could be suggested. I observed earlier that other variants such as fa-ḥuṣu bi-ḏā r-rā'i 'choose him for', 'select him for ...' do not help us to determine the correct interpretation. I am not aware of any symbolic meaning of the rā', but this letter, as we will see next, is used in similes for something curved, by which 'the waves' may be intended. In Dozy 1925:493a one finds that the rā' stands for 'something bent' (allusion à ce qui est courbe, [le] saumon). Could 'something bent' be a proverbial phrase indicating something unpleasant? Or could the rā' be taken as a simile describing the — curved — waves of the sea? The term rukšub 'ubšuq 'riding his waves, billows, or surges' (cf. Lane 1863:93:1932) in the poem by Ibn Hamdis lends perhaps some support to this interpretation; but one could claim as well that it supports the interpretation of the rā' as referring to rukšub al-babr.20

II

We have a similar case in a poem found in as-Ta'ālibī (d. 429/1038) Mutrib,21 where we read the following. The theme is now different, but in some respects more difficult. The poem is attributed to Ibn al-Mutazz:

\[\text{... and can therefore be disregarded. Invariably the lines are attributed to Ibn al-Mutazz.}\]

A.

... Follows the text as in as-Sarisi (see below). The editor of the later edition does not agree; he repeats the explanation of the old edition, but adds: wa-ārā annahu min ra'yihi.

If one follows the suggestion by the first editor a better solution would be to think of the letter rā' as the first letter of riqq, 'slavery'22, that is: "... the heart of his lover partakes of his status as a slave".

I did not find these two lines in the partial edition of the Diwan of Ibn Muctazz by Lewin, nor in the old Cairo edition23.

B. However, Ibn Abī 'Awn, Ta'ābībīt 98, likewise attributes the lines to Ibn al-Mutazz, but he reads: qatil mubībihi min da'ibi for qatil muḥībībi min ra'ibi. Of course this may be an error on the part of a copyist. If one reads min da'ibi the phrase could mean: "The death of his lover will be brought about by love sickness for this beloved dressed in blue". Another variant is ulbista larum samā'ī. The following quotations show more such variants in the second line; they do not significantly change the meaning of the qī' and can therefore be disregarded. Invariably the lines are attributed to Ibn al-Mutazz.

C. A late author, al-Muḥībbī (1061-1111), Naṣṣaḥ I, 303, reads qatil for qalb and wa-ba-nafṣaṣi ī-l-awami, but lets the line end on min ra'ibi. The context deals with the colour of the sky. A footnote refers to Ibn Basām (Dabīhī, ed. al-'Abbādī & al-'Azzām, I/2 37) where it ends on min dābībi (= min da'ībi) and min sahābīi thereby completely altering the sense of the two lines. Both variants clearly show that even in the Middle Ages the first of the two lines was considered unintelligible by some philologists.

18 See also as-Silafi, Mu'tafram 68: One 'Abdalhamid b. Muhammad al-Balagiatan Alexandria; after stating that he was born in 487, and was ḥātib in Tilimsan, he mentions that he met Abū l-

19 See az-Zabīdī, Tāf III, 300b-301a: waṣi i-Tāfāhī: al-ubāb muṣām as-sayyīl wa-qīla 'alab as-sayyīl irtifā'uha wa-katratuha wa 'alababu manafilha. An interesting example of curves appearing on the surface of the sea in a different way is Ibn Hānī, Diwan 818 quoted from an-Nuwayri, Nahāyāt II, 257.

20 at-Ta'ālibī, Mutrib 87, ed. al-Malīḥī, I, 127.

21 So far I have not found the poem in other texts by as-Ta'ālibī.

22 But in the appendix of the edition of as-Samarra'i (Ibn al-Mutazz, Šīrī) we find the following: wa-qīla fī gulas 'alayhi dibšāq garmi... Follows the text as in al-Šūrī (see below).
D. The edition by Ihsān ʿAbbās of the *Dahira* of Ibn Bassām again reads *qatlu mubīb-bīhi min rāʾībi*.

E. In al-Šarṣī’s (d. 620/1222) *Šarb* (ed. Ḥafṣī I, 62) the author quotes the first line in the following way:

omitting the second line.

F. In al-Šarṣī, *Šarb* (ed. 1306, I, 43) we find:

Possible translations of II

One could suggest the following translations of the second example, some of which may be worth considering, while others may be too far fetched to be worth mentioning:

1. Again I feel that one must think first of *min rāʾībi* as another way of writing *min raʿyīhi*, a *darūra*, the pronoun of *raʿyībi*, referring to *b ansafāṃiyi t-tawbi* and interpret:

   There is this beloved clad in a violet coloured garment (or: Oh you, my friend draped in a garment colour violet!) From (that is: as a result of) seeing him [thus attired], the heart of his lover [feels/thinks]:

   Now you have become the full moon [your face being like the full moon] since you are cloaked in its blue sky, or:

   The heart of his lover, following what it sees, [thinks, that is: says, prompted by his imagination]

   But taking into account the perplexity of the mediaeval scholars over the idiom *min rāʾībi*, there are other possibilities that may have to be considered.

2. Again: *min rāʾībi* stands for *min raʿyīhi*, that is: *min raʿyi qalbi muhibbihi*.

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24 Vol. III, 231 of the same edition quotes the second of the two lines in the context of verses on the moon contrasting with the bluish sky.

25 I owe these references to my colleague, Prof. G. J. Kanazi.

26 Or, reading al-buta, “Now you have become/have been transformed into the moon since you have been made to wear (i.e.: you are dressed in) the colour of its sky.”

27 For *min* in the sense of ‘as a result of’ see Nöldeke 1963:143b, additions to 54, 1, fn. 56.

28 al-Azdi (*Garaʿib* 150-153) mentions ar-rāʾy, a fish found in the Nile. As far as I know there are no similes relating this fish to part of the human face. For Persian literature, see Zand 1977.
D. The edition by Ihsan 'Abbas of the Dalīra of Ibn Bassam again reads qatlu mubīb-bibi min rā'bihi.

E. In al-Sarisi's (d. 620/1222) Sarḥ (ed. Hafagi I, 62) the author quotes the first line in the following way:

وَبِنَفْسِيَ الكُرْبِ قَتْلٌ مَحْيِيٌّ مِنَ الحَالَّا

omitting the second line.

F. In al-Sarisi, Sarḥ (ed. 1306, I, 43) we find:

وَبِنَفْسِيَ الكُرْبِ قَتْلٌ مَحْيِيٌّ مِنَ الدَّارَ

لَا نُصْرَ الْبَدْرِ إِذْ أَلْبَسَ لَوْنَ سَمَاءَ

Possible translations of II

One could suggest the following translations of the second example, some of which may be worth considering, while others may be too far fetched to be worth mentioning:

1. Again I feel that one must think first of min rā'bi as another way of writing min ra'yīhi, a darura, the pronoun of ra'yibi referring to banafsagiyi t-tawbi and interpret:

There is this beloved clad in a violet coloured garment (or: Oh you, my friend draped in a garment colour violet!) From (that is: as a result of) seeing him [thus attired], the heart of his lover [feels/thinks]

Now you have become the full moon [your face being like the full moon] since you are cloaked in its blue sky, or:

The heart of his lover, following what it sees, [thinks, that is: says, prompted by his imagination]

Now you have become...

2. Again: min rā'bi stands for min ra'yīhi, that is: min ra'yī qalbi muhibbihi.

3. Keeping in mind that blue is a colour associated with sadness:

There is this beloved dressed in a violet coloured garment. The heart (that is: the mood) of his lover, as a result of seeing his [blue] garment [becomes sombre and thinks]27.

Since you have become the full moon being cloaked in its blue sky [I have lost you forever].

4. Ibn 'Abdrabbih (Iqd VI, 475) quotes a line by an anonymous muḥdāt poet in which the 'lock of hair', the sudg, is compared to the rā'28:

ماَهَا التَّعِيْمُ بُوَجَهَهُ مِتَحَيْيِّرٌ

وَاَلْصِّدَغُ مَنْهِ كَمْطَعَّ الْرَّاءِ

With this in mind we could translate our line:

... The heart of whose lover belongs to, depends on, (that is: the lover admires) his lock of hair [and thinks]:

Now you have become...

5. A free translation following the same interpretation would be:

... The heart is in love with him because of his lock of hair [and thinks]:

Now you have become...

6. Finally one may think of the rā' as a letter that a slave born in a foreign country cannot pronounce and therefore neglects or replaces with other letters. This would yield the following:

... The heart of whose lover is attached to his slave's rā' which has become a cause of endearment (or: which he has come to like), or even:

... The heart of whose lover is attached to [something missing that is:] the letter rā'. [Not seeing his slave he thinks]:

Now you have become...

Strange though this last interpretation may seem at first, it is nevertheless supported by examples in Ibn Bassam's Dalīra (I, 308-309), Ibn Hallikan's Wafayat (ed. 'Abdālhamid, V, 61-62, VI, 226 = ed. 'Abbas, VI, 8-9, VII, 227), and as-Safadi's Nusrā (240).

24 Vol. III, 231 of the same edition quotes the second of the two lines in the context of verses on the moon contrasting with the blush sky.

25 I owe these references to my colleague, Prof. G. J. Kanazi.

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27 For min in the sense of 'as a result of' see Nöldeke 1963:143b, additions to 54, 1, fn. 56.

28 al-Azdi (Gara'ib 150-153) mentions ar-rā'y, a fish found in the Nile. As far as I know there are no similes relating this fish to part of the human face. For Persian literature, see Zand 1977.
I limit myself to an example by ar-Ramādī where the *rā'ī* stands apparently for the slave himself:

and a line on the next page of the *Dāhibra* by Abū l-Qāsim b. al-Ārifī (d. 395/1004)³⁰ said to be inspired by ar-Ramādī and again addressed to an al-taqū (I quote the second of three lines):

Since I do not find enough evidence to support any of the above interpretations, I have been wondering if, after all, the reading *qatlu muhibbihi min dd'ihi/min ra'hi* is not the correct reading. As I argued above, if one adopts this reading the line could mean:

... the death of whose lover will be brought about by sickness caused by him (or by his *rā'ī* which is dear to him). "Now ... etc.", the death of the lover being, as it were foreshadowed by the blue colour of his beloved's garment, since blue is the colour of sadness.

The correct interpretation of the two sets of two lines may yet be determined when we are lucky enough to chance upon convincing parallels or a convincing explanation. The number of collections of poetry available has increased dramatically in the last decennia, but it seems hardly worth while to make an exhaustive search for the sake of two fragments that cannot be said to represent the most attractive in Arabic poetry. The above therefore may only serve, at this time, to add to our inventory of medieval themes.

A brief glance at the indexes of Ibn Bassām's *Dāhibra* reveals that the influence of Ibn al-Muctazz in Spain was considerable³¹. Could the following lines by ar-Ramādī quoted in Ibn al-Kattāni's (d. before 420/1030) *Tasbihah* (134, no. 251) have been inspired by the line attributed to Ibn al-Muctazz?²⁹

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²⁹ Ibn Hallikan, ed. 'Abdalhamid, V, 62, VI, 226; ed. 'Abbas, VI, 9, VII, 227; as-Safadi, *Nura* (238) by an anonymous:


³¹ According to the *Fihris* of Ibn Ḥayy (d. 575/1179), 404-405 the poetry of Ibn al-Muṭazz was introduced in Spain by Abū 'Ali b. Ahmad al-Qālī al-Baghdādi. See also, e.g. al-Qādī 'Iyād (d. 544/1149), *Gumya* 165.
I limit myself to an example by ar-Ramāḍī where the ṭāʾ stands apparently for the slave himself:

لا الراء تطبع في الوصل ولا أنا فيك في كنتي منتبخت أنا والرآء

and a line on the next page of the Ḍāḥira by Abū ʿI-Qāsim b. al-ʿArīf (d. 395/1004)¹⁰ said to be inspired by ar-Ramāḍī and again addressed to an ʿaltāq (I quote the second of three lines):

فلكئا معدب دون شبي

Since I do not find enough evidence to support any of the above interpretations, I have been wondering if, after all, the reading qatlu muhibbihi min dd'ihi/min raʾihi is not the correct reading. As I argued above, if one adopts this reading the line could mean:

... the death of whose lover will be brought about by sickness caused by him (or by his raʾ which is dear to him). "Now... etc.".

The correct interpretation of the two sets of two lines may yet be determined when we are lucky enough to chance upon convincing parallels or a convincing explanation. The number of collections of poetry available has increased dramatically in the last decennia, but it seems hardly worth while to make an exhaustive search for the sake of two fragments that cannot be said to represent the most attractive in Arabic poetry. The above therefore may only serve, at this time, to add to our inventory of medieval themes.

A brief glance at the indexes of Ibn Bassām's Ḍāḥira reveals that the influence of Ibn al-Muʿtazz in Spain was considerable. Could the following lines by ar-Ramāḍī quoted in Ibn al-Kattānī's (d. before 420/1030) Taʾlīḥāt (134, no. 251) have been inspired by the line attributed to Ibn al-Muʿtazz?²⁹

Can we trust at-Ṭaʿalibī, as-Sīlahī, Ibn Dīhya, and Ahmad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥafaghī against other authors I quoted when they attribute the first set of two lines to Ibn Raṣīq? I have no doubt that we can, but answering this question in detail would require more space than can be justified for a brief note and needs a separate communication. The authorship of the second set of lines has, as far as I know, not been disputed. Again I would need more space to argue that the poet was indeed Ibn al-Muʿtazz.³⁰

²⁹ Ibn Hallikān, ed. ʿAbdalhamid, V, 62, VI, 226; ed. ʿAbbas, VI, 9, VII, 227; as-Safādī, Nuṣra (238) by an anonymous:

وأما رأيت الشهب راءً يعارض
توافت أن الوصل لم نأخذ واصل
وعبد الوصل بواصلة يمزق القلب بإلا مواءد أن يتعبها جدلا وادلا الراء.

On the same page the Nuṣra quotes the above line by ar-Ramāḍī which, he says, is fi malīḥ.

³⁰ Ibn al-Farāḍī (d. 403/1012), Tarāḍī ḏ. 134-135.

³¹ According to the Pibrīṣ of Ibn Ḥayr (d. 575/1179), 404-405 the poetry of Ibn al-Muʿtazz was introduced in Spain by Abū ʿAli b. Ahmad al-Qāfī al-Baghdādī. See also, e.g. al-Qādī ʿIyād (d. 544/1149), Gāmuṣa 165.

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²⁹ Not in the partial editions known to me.
³¹ Unless Abū Ḥafṣ b. Burd is meant which is less likely since the alternative is Ibn ar-Rūmī.
³² Ḍāḥira I, 137, no 100 (first and third lines; taken from Ibn Bassām's Ḍāḥira).
³³ Ibn al-Kattānī, Taʾlīḥāt 142 (no. 275) also offers an example of a lady clothed in a ḏanafṣagī garment:

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showing that the colour of the violet may also be associated with brightness.

³⁴ I also feel that to justify to the full extent some of the arguments I have suggested in support of different interpretations of the two qīrāʿas would require extensive footnotes or appendices: Again these have to wait for another occasion.
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IBN TABĀTABĀ ON THE PERCEPTION AND INFLUENCE OF POETRY

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The famous book of Ibn Tabātabā al-alusawi1 (d. 334/933) from tenth-century Isfahān, titled ‘jār al-‘awr (The Standard of Poetry), has a special place in the history of Arab criticism. In this work Ibn Tabātabā analyses the main elements of literary communication: the author, the literary work of art and the perceiver (actually, the sāmi’, hearer). Ibn Tabātabā describes the literary process as a complete unit and at the same time he demonstrates its main elements in progress, in statu nascendi. He is the first author in the history of medieval Arab criticism who studied systematically the perception of literary work and its effect on the perceiver. The purpose of this paper is to outline Ibn Tabātabā’s concept of this perception and his ideas on the effect of the literary work.

The book has a short theoretical introduction4, and, for the greatest part, it contains practical criticism and stylistics (Ibn Tabātabā, ‘jār 25-219). If we are to understand Ibn Tabātabā’s idea, we have to follow the main issue of the theoretical introduction.

Ibn Tabātabā’s work is poetics, a systematic doctrine of poetry in the classical meaning of the word. This conception states that “poetry cannot be anything except: 1) poems which ‘narrate’ (yuqṭasṣ) things (aṣyā‘) already present (qa‘īma) in men’s souls and minds (an-nufūs wa-l-cuqūl)..., 2) poems which ‘give’ wisdom (bikmā), and 3) poems which contain truthful descriptions (ṣifāt sādiqa), suitable similes (tasbihāt muwāfiqua) and appropriate parables (amāļ muṭābiqa), or poems which contain these elements”5. Keeping in mind these general statements concerning the content, the author defines poetry as: kalam maiziðum ḥāna ‘an al-mansūr... hi-mā ḫusṣa bihi min an-najm (Ibn Tabātabā, ‘jār 5). This definition and its background constitute the most important side of Ibn Tabātabā’s concept in examining the author’s activity.

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2 There is only one copy of this work in the Library of the Escorial (No. 327, 22-57). al-Ḫaṣṣī and Salām edited it from a photocopy in 1956. The revised version was produced by Salām in 1980 from the same source. The last and the most reliable edition by al-Mānī’ appeared in 1985.

3 For an evaluation of this work see Heinrichs 1973.

4 We used al-Mānī’i’s edition. Further references are to this edition. The introduction covers pp. 5-24.