

*QAD YAĞŪZ FĪ Š-ŠĪ'R:*  
ON THE LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND OF THE SO CALLED  
POETIC LICENSES IN SĪBWAYHI'S *KITĀB*

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1. *qad yağūz fī š-šĪ'r wa-huwa da'if fī l-kalām*

In Sībwayhi's *Kitāb* we frequently meet qualificatory expressions referring either to some linguistic data or the relevant grammatical rules. In a chapter dealing with adverbial constructions shifted to the beginning of a sentence in the nominative (*ibtidā'an*)<sup>1</sup>. The remainder of the sentence is built upon the inchoative (*mabnī 'alayhi*), there being in the second part a compulsory pronoun (the so called *damīr 'ā'id*) which refers back to the inchoative and binds the two parts of the sentence together. Without this pronoun the sentence cannot be considered as totally acceptable. "It is weak but allowed to occur in poetry" - says Sībwayhi (*Kitāb* (B), I, 57): "*lā yaḥsunu fī l-kalām 'an tağ'ala l-fī'la mabniyyan 'alā l-ismi wa-lā tağkura 'alāmata 'idmāri l-'awwali ḥattā taḥruḡa min lafzi l-'ī'māli fī l-'awwal ... wa-lākinnahu qad yağūzu fī š-šĪ'ri wa-huwa da'ifun fī l-kalām. Qāla 'Abū n-Nağm al-'Iḡfī:*

*qad 'asbaḥat 'ummu l-ḥiyāri tadda'f \* 'alayya ḍanban kulluhu lam 'aṣna'i.*"<sup>2</sup>

In this paper I will examine two expressions: the special possibilities of poetry and their relation to some linguistic usages considered extraordinary or weakly acceptable.

2. *naḥwa qawlika*

The organization of linguistic data in Sībwayhi's *Kitāb* is as follows:<sup>3</sup>

- (i)<sup>4</sup> Examples introduced by *qālika/naḥwa qawlika / ('innaka) taqūlu / 'idā qulta / ka-'annaka qulta /* (and some of the examples starting with 'in qulta) are the examples belonging to the foundations of *kalām*. These are examples reflecting the basic rules.

<sup>1</sup> "bāb mā yağf mimma yakūnu zarfan ḥaddā l-mağra", Sībwayhi, *Kitāb* (II) I, 84.

<sup>2</sup> as-Sīrāfi, explaining Sībwayhi's words, says the following (see 'Ibrāhīm 1983:39-40 where he quotes as-Sīrāfi from Durayd Muḥammad 'Abū s-Su'ūd's unpublished doctoral dissertation, *Šarḥ as-Sīrāfi, taḥqīq wa-dirāsa*): "ya'nf 'annaka 'idā ḡa'alta l-isma mubtada'an wa-ḡa'alta l-fī'la ḥabaran fa-l-waḡnu 'an tuḡhira ḡ-damīra lladī ya'īdu 'ilā l-ismi ḥattā yaḥruḡa min lafzin yu'mila fīhi l-'awwalu ya'nf 'annahu qabṭhun 'an taqūla: zaydun ḡarabū." aš-Santamarī's opinion (*Taḥṣīl* I, 57) slightly differs from that of Sībwayhi, because he considers the license to be the elision of the pronoun instead of the replacement of the accusative with the nominative: "yanbağf 'an yakūna qawlihu kulluhu lam 'aṣna'i wa-'in kāna qad ḥudifa l-ḥā' 'aqwa min qawlihi kullahu bi-n-nash wa-takūnu ḡ-darīra fīhi ḥadīf al-ḥā' id raf' kullī".

<sup>3</sup> This presentation does not aim at exhaustiveness. I have picked these types from randomly selected passages.

<sup>4</sup> *kamā kāna ḥaṣṣanū bi-ṣadrihi wa-ṣadr zayd waḡn al-kalām* (II I, 74); *wa-'alā ḥaddā l-ḥadd taqūlu ... fa-'in qulta ... raf'a'ta li-'annaka ...; ka-'annaka qulta 'alā t-taqdīm wa-t-ta'ḥīr ...* (II I, 78).

- (ii)<sup>5</sup> Examples that conform to the rule of *tamīl* but are not used in speech.
- (iii)<sup>6</sup> Uncertain (or tacitly rejected) examples of grammarians.  
*za'ama*
- (iv) Examples taken from actual speech or at least not from grammarians.  
*qawl al-'arab; qāla l-'arab*
- (v)<sup>7</sup> Forms that are divergent from the basic rules but are still accepted (due to frequent) usage.  
*ḥadāfū / istaḡnaw / 'awwaḏū* etc.
- (vi)<sup>8</sup> Forms that are not in general use and usually are of dialects.  
*qāla ba'duhum, qawl ba'd al-'arab, qawl man yaqūl, luḡat tamīm* etc.
- (vii)<sup>9</sup> Forms that are (sometimes) used in speech but are considered bad or ugly.  
*in qulta / law qulta ... kāna qabīḥan* etc.  
*wa-miṭla dālika law kāna ḥadā bi-manzilat ... la-mā ḡāza*
- (viii) Qur'ānic examples.  
*wa-miṭla dālika qawluhu 'azza wa-ḡalla* (H I, 37).
- (ix)<sup>10</sup> Poetic examples conforming to general usage and rules (*kalām*).  
*wa-minhu qawl aš-šā'ir* (H I, 37).

<sup>5</sup> *qawluka: mā 'aḥsana 'abdallāhi za'ama l-ḥalīl 'annahu bi-manzilat qawluka: šay'un 'aḥsana 'abdallāhi. wa-daḥalahu ma'nā t-ta'aḡḡub. wa-ḥadā tamīl wa-lam yutakallam bihi* (H I, 72).

<sup>6</sup> See the example in the fn. to (ii).

<sup>7</sup> *wa-'in qulta ... naṣabta 'illā ft qawl man qāla 'akalūn l-barḡūn 'aw taḥmiluhu 'alā l-badal ... ka-'annaka qulta ...* (H I, 78).

<sup>8</sup> *qāla ba'duhum: ḡahabtu š-šama (yuṣabbihuhu bi-l-mubham ... wa-ḥadā šadā) → wa-miṭla dālika qawlu šā'ida b. Ḥu'ayya* (H I, 35); *wa-ḡad yaḡūz ḡarabtu wa-ḡarabān zaydan li-'anna ba'dahum ḡad yaqūlu ma'd ra'ayta 'aw qulta zaydan muntaliḡan wa-l-waḡḡ mā'd ra'ayta 'aw qulta zaydan muntaliḡan; miṭla dālika l-ḡawḏz ... wa-l-waḡḡu 'an taqūla; fa-'in qulta ḡarabān wa-ḡarabtu qawmaka fa-ḡā'iz* (H I, 79).

<sup>9</sup> *'a-lā tarā 'annaka law qulta: kāna 'insānun ḥalīman 'aw kāna raḡulun muntaliḡan kunta tulbisu ... wa-karahū ... wa-ḡad yaḡūzu ft š-šā'ir wa-ft du'f min al-kalām. ḡamalahum 'alā dālika 'annahu ft' l bi-manzilat ḡaraba ... wa-dālika qawl Ḥiddāš b. Zuhayr: # fa-'innaka lā tubāllī ba'da ḥawlin 'a- zabyun kāna 'ummaka 'am ḥimāru # (ism kāna nakira)* (H I, 48); *wa-huwa qabīḥ 'an taḡ'ala l-lafz ka-l-wadhīd ka-mā taqūlu huwa 'aḥsanu l-fityāni wa-'aḡmalu wa-'akramu banīni wa-'anbaluhu* (H I, 80).

<sup>10</sup> *qāla 'Umar ibn 'Abī Rabi' 'a ... li-'annahu 'admarā ft 'ahīr al-kalām* (H I, 78); *wa-qāla Imru' l-Qays ... fa-'innamā rafa'd li-'annahu* (H I, 79).

- (x)<sup>11</sup> Poetic examples corresponding to (v), i.e. which are divergent from the main rules but are evaluated neither with *qabīlī* nor *yağūz*.  
*wa-ğā'a fī š-šī'r min al-istiğnā' 'ašaddu min hādā* (H I, 74).
- (xi)<sup>12</sup> Accepted examples of poetry which are not considered to correspond to *kalām* forms but to forms from tribal dialects.
- (xii)<sup>13</sup> Forms unequivocally judged as bad (*qabīlī*) from the point of view of *kalām*, but are permitted in poetry (*yağūz fī š-šī'r*), corresponding to (vii) → these are the *par excellence* poetic licenses.

This grouping reflects the usual order of quoting the examples, i.e. first we find those abstract quasi-examples that have already been analyzed by the grammarians. (These are, however, not necessarily speculative examples, they can also be simplified and formulated examples taken from the actual language.) A special group of them is *tamīl/za'ama* which means possibilities provided by the rules but which do not have counterparts in the spoken language.<sup>14</sup> Then there are such abstract possibilities which are discarded by the linguist (in a large number of cases this dismissal reflects disputes and the rejection of other, unspecified grammatical views). Some of these are introduced by *law / 'in*. All these and many other things<sup>15</sup> point to that linguistics does not only (if at all) follow immediate practical aims but at the same time, worthily of a good science, it is saturated with the fulfilment of purely theoretic

<sup>11</sup> *fa-lammā ḥadafū harf al-ğarr 'amila l-fī'lu miṭla dālika qawī al-Mutalammis: # 'daytu habba l-irāqi ...yurid: 'alā ḥabbi l-irāqi* (H I, 38). It is explained but not evaluated. *wa-dālika qawī Qays ibn al-Ḥaṭṭin wa-qad istāshada Sībawayhi bi-hādā l-bayt wa-mā yalṭhi muqawwiyān li-mā ḡāza min ḥadīf al-maf'ūl alladī huwa faḍla* (H I, 74).

<sup>12</sup> *ladun bi-hazzi l-kaffi ya'silu matulu # fīhi kamā 'asala t-tarīqa t-ta'labu 'in šīra iqtasarta 'ild l-maf'ūl al-'awwal wa-'in šīra tu'addf 'ild t-tānf* (H I, 36).

<sup>13</sup> *wa-qāla l-Farazdaq: # 'a-sakrānu kāna bna l-marāğati 'id hağā \* 'a-sihrun kāna tibba # am ġunūnu # fa-hādā 'inšādu ba'dihim wa-'aktarūhum yanzubu s-sakrāna wa-yarjā'u l-dhira 'ald qaf'in wa-bidd'in* (H I, 49). There is another solution: to avoid poetic license with an *'inšād* that conforms to *al-kalām*. Cf. in Imru' l-Qays's *qasīda: fa-l-yawma 'asrab ġayra mustahqibin \* 'imān min Allāhi wa-lā wāğīli* where *'asrab* is in the indicative but with *sukūn*. See e.g. Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) IV, 204; (B) II, 297; cf. as-Sirāfi, *Šarḥ* II, 168; Jahn 1895-1900: 1/2, 42; Ibrāhīm 1983:64; Muḥammad 1983:22-3 where he cites an example for the use of this *darūra* as *šāhid* in the *qirā'at* literature). This is either explained as a license, or another variant containing no license is proposed with *'asqā* instead of *'asrab* (see e.g. Ibn Qutayba, *Muqaddima* 31 (*bāb 'uyūb aš-šī'r*) where he seems to condemn grammarians for having recourse to such 'faulty' forms. Notwithstanding, he cites this 'faulty' variant, i.e. with a license in it, when speaking about the poetry of Imru' l-Qays in a later chapter (Ibn Qutayba, *Šī'r* 42). For another example of this type see the quotation in the fn. to (vii).

<sup>14</sup> On *tamīl* see Ayoub 1990. The difference between examples called *tamīl* and examples "*mā yutakallamu bihi*" may be compared, to a certain extent, to the difference of competence and performance in modern linguistics, though the phrase "*hādā tamīl*" sometimes seems to have a negative connotation, especially when used together with "*za'ama*".

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, the prescription of *'in + ġazm*, and the use of *'in + maddf* by Sībawayhi, as noticed in Dévényi 1988:22-3, and note 28. Even in the 8th century there is a significant gap between the actual use of *'arabīyya* in prose and the theoretical rules and possibilities attested and allowed by the grammarians.

tical tasks.<sup>16</sup> The origin of everyday examples (*taqīlu l-‘arab*, etc.) cannot be defined precisely, but most probably they reflect the views of *nawāt* (the so-called "bedouins") who were in connection with the grammarians. Their opinion was strongly needed also because the majority of linguists were of non-Arab origin. The two groups of textual examples (or rather examples constituting a given "corpus", since in their transmission oral and written forms were of equal significance) are the Qur'ān and poetry. I do not wish to treat here the relationship of these two, but there are two self-explaining facts: their ration in the *Kitāb*<sup>17</sup> and the fact that a lot of poetic lines are used for the explanation of the Qur'ān while the inverse is not typical. That the majority of examples are from poetry is indisputable and at the same time it is also the most ancient layer of linguistic material.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, it cannot be considered an unfounded assumption to say that *nahw* is primarily rooted in the analysis of poems and their comparison (assuming as I do that the 'arabiyya was primarily the language of poetry).<sup>19</sup>

### 3. Three introductory chapters

The problem how to interpret deviance and variance in linguistic data which the grammarians should be able to "handle" are treated in three introductory chapters of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb*. The first deals with accepted but accidental variants ('*a'rād*); the second evaluates the possible speech acts on a syntactic — semantic basis; and the third pays attention to a delicate question: What to do with the great number of forms collected in poetry which are (at least in the mirror of the grammatical rules) ungrammatical or "weak".

#### 3.1 *bāb mā yakūn fī l-lafz min al-'a'rād*

The key-word of the title is explained by as-Sīrāfī (*Šarḥ* 75 ff.) in the following way: "*qawluhu 'min al-'a'rād' ya'nī mā ya'rīdu fī l-kalām fa-yağtū 'alā ġayri mā yanbağt 'an yakūna 'alayhi qiyāsuhu*". These irregular or deviant forms are explained by Sībawayhi (*Kitāb* (H) I, 24-5) within his grammatical system by the expanded use of three basic rules: elision (*ḥaḍf*, e.g. *lam yaku, lā 'adri*), exception (*istiğnā'*, e.g. they use *yada'u* but not *wada'a*, instead of which *taraka* is in use) and compensation (*ta'wīḍ*, e.g. *'astā'a* instead of *'atā'a*). But these forms cannot be the bases of

<sup>16</sup> Ḥalaf al-Aḥmar (*Muqaddima* 3) recognizes this fact when he complains ironically that grammatical books are too long and exhaustive to be useful for the students and those thirsty for knowledge.

<sup>17</sup> There are more than 400 Qur'ānic and approximately 1050 poetic examples (*šawḥid*) in the *Kitāb*, see Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) V.(indices) and 'Ibrāhīm 1983:23-4. Cf. al-Ḥadīḥī 1980:18.

<sup>18</sup> On the importance or insignificance of the poetic *šawḥid* in the books of the grammarians see an interesting discussion in al-Ḥadīḥī 1980: 73-7, where the author falls victim of a circular reasoning not being able to decide between facts (the overwhelming employment of poetic examples) and theory (that *nahw* had come into being for the requirements of Qur'ānic exegesis or on the basis of the Qur'ānic text).

<sup>19</sup> If we discard that the 'arabiyya was a spoken language at the time of Muḥammad or at any other time, then we can assume that the beginnings of Arabic linguistic thinking go back partly to the diglossia situation and partly to the custom of discussing and later on explaining poetry. But this, just as its contrary, is only a hypothesis I do not want to treat here, and taking sides in this question is not important from the point of view of the poetic licenses.

analogical rules (*qiyās*, see as-Sīrāfi, *Šarḥ* 76-7) because they are simply coined on the basis of similarity (*šabbahūhā* says as-Sīrāfi, *ibid.*). Perhaps it is not only a coincidence that just the same word *tašbīḥ* is used by Sībawayhi in explaining the special license of poetic usage (though he himself does not use the root *š.b.h* in connection with '*a'rād* al-lafz).

These forms could not be simply refused by the grammarians because of their frequent usage.<sup>20</sup> Even so some critics, perhaps from the Kufan side, felt that Sībawayhi stigmatizes these data as being "*šudūḍ*".<sup>21</sup> And their arguments are full of Qur'anic *qirā'āt* which show the same grammatical phenomena. To silence the critical remarks as-Sīrāfi (*Šarḥ* 78) used the explanation Sībawayhi himself had applied many times in his Book: "*innamā 'arāda Sībawayhi fī hādā l-mawḍi' 'anna yubayyina 'anna kaṭṭran min al-'arab alladīna luḡatuhum 'itbāt al-yā' fī mitli hādā yahḍifūnahā min lā 'adri wa-luḡatuhum lā 'adri*". Thus - according to as-Sīrāfi - Sībawayhi only considered these words (e.g. *lā 'adri*, *lā nāštari* etc.) accidental variants ('*a'rād*) in connection with a dialect where otherwise the accepted forms are *lā 'adri* and *lā nāštari*, that is, he did not want to decide between (significant) tribal dialects or dialectal usages.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.2 *hādā bāb al-istiqāma min al-kalām wa-l-'ihāla*

In this chapter Sībawayhi characterizes speech acts according to their acceptability on syntactico-semantic bases, applying three distinctive features and some of their combinations. The features or attributes are:

(1)	(2)	(3)
+ ( <i>mustaqīm</i> )	+ ( <i>ḥasan</i> )	+ ( <i>ḡayr kadīb</i> )
- ( <i>muḥāl</i> )	- ( <i>qabḥī</i> )	- ( <i>kadīb</i> )

(1) selectional feature (syntactic deep structure)

(2) syntactic relations feature (surface structure, e.g. word order)

(3) semantic feature

By combining these features, Sībawayhi classifies speech acts or utterances into the following five groups (not exploiting all the possibilities):

(i)	1 (+) ^ 2 (+)	<i>mustaqīm/ḥasan</i>
(ii)	1 (-)	<i>muḥāl</i>
(iii)	1 (+) ^ 3 (-)	<i>mustaqīm/kadīb</i>
(iv)	1 (+) ^ 2 (-)	<i>mustaqīm/qabḥī</i>
(v)	1 (-) ^ 3 (-)	<i>muḥāl/kadīb</i>

<sup>20</sup> Cf. as-Sīrāfi, *Šarḥ* 78: *li-kaṭṭatihi fī kalāmihim*; and 77: *kaṭṭurat fī kalāmihim*.

<sup>21</sup> as-Sīrāfi, *Šarḥ* 78: *fa-'in qāla qā'ilun: lima ḥaṣṣ Sībawayhi hādā l-ḥarf bi-š-šudūḍ*.

<sup>22</sup> Sībawayhi, as is reflected in the whole book, tries to be very cautious and unbiased in the question of different tribal and dialectal usages. For the question how Basran grammarians generally relied on some tribal dialects and tribal reciters, excluding others, see al-'Azzāwī 1978: esp. 38 ff.

There are some accepted dialectal features which, though it is not stated clearly, more or less "remain within" the concept of *kalām* in some well-defined fields, mainly in pause e.g. final gemination (as in *sabsabbā*, Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) I, 29) and in the case of the shortening of final vowels (*al-qāḍi*, *al-nuḥḍā*; cf. Carter 1990). If they are employed in other territories of the language (*tašbīḥan*) then it can only be a special *ḡawḍ* for the poet, this is the case e.g. if the previous examples are used in *waṣf* instead of *waḡf* (*sabsabbā* ^ ... Jahn 1895-1900: 1/2 30) and (*qāḍi Baḡdād* Jahn 1895-1900: 1/2 39-40).

For us primarily the *mustaqīm ḥasan* vs. *mustaqīm qabīh* pair is interesting (it is also in the forefront of the interest of *naḥw*), since the *kalām* counterparts of the poetic licenses are mainly described as such.

### 3.3 *ḥādā bāb mā yaḥtamil aš-šī'r*

Let us examine the short introductory chapter of Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* (H I, 26ff) where he treats the question of poems. From among the short general chapters in connection with the evaluation of linguistic data it is the most important since these few pages, even according to Sībawayhi, relate to a lot of data.<sup>23</sup> It does not give an intensive definition, but a survey with examples of linguistic phenomena permitted in poetry but not elsewhere. Here Sībawayhi calls our attention to that not all the poetic examples (*šawāhid*) can be utilized in the course of the formation of grammatical rules. The authority of a grammatical rule (*qiyās*) is *kalām* (not defined). He does not really define the scope of the extra-possibilities of poetry, nor does he give a clue why poetry enjoys these possibilities. Sībawayhi enumerates the basic phenomena together with an illustration of one or two examples:

*šarf mā lā yašarif*  
*ḥaḍf mā lā yuḥḍaf*  
*rubbamā maddū [al-maqšūr]*  
*wa-qad yabluḡūna bi-l-mu'talli l-'ašla (yuḡrūna fī-l-waṣl 'alā ḥālihi fī l-waqf)*  
*yaḥtamilūna qubḥ al-kalām ḥātā yaḍa'ūhu fī ḡayri mawḍi'ihi*  
*ḡa'alū bi-manzilāt ḡayrihi*

This does not mean, however, that the special allowances or possibilities of poetry (or rather the poets) would be inexplicable and unaccountable for. Since during the enumeration he points out that these show two types of regular divergence from *naḥw*:

1.) *tašbīḥ*, i.e. recourse to the principle of similarity (*yušabbihūna bimā qad ḥudifa [fī l-kalām] wa-stu'mila maḥdūfan*), which in other words means that, quite wrongly from the point of view of grammar, they extend or change the sphere of authority of a rule, but for some reason or other this has to be accepted from the poet. This reason may most probably be that these lines of poetry exist, they are propagated and the grammarian's work is to describe and not to judge the data from a normative point of view.<sup>24</sup> Besides *tašbīḥ* and its derivatives the term *manzila* is used for the explanation of licenses, e.g. Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) I, 31-2: *ḡa'alū mā lā yaḡṛf fī l-kalām 'illā zarfan bi-manzilāt ḡayrihi min al-'asmā' (min sawā'inā, min sawā'ikā)*.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *wa-mā yaḡtūzu fī š-šī'r 'aktaru min 'an 'adkuruha laka ḥāhunā* (Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) I, 32, (B) I, 13).

<sup>24</sup> On normativity see Dévényi 1991. For a treatment of *kalām* see Talmon 1988.

<sup>25</sup> The relationship of *tašbīḥ* and *manzila* may best be characterized by that of the general rule and concrete morphological or phonological form. For the meaning of *manzila* see Versteegh 1978.

2.) Bringing a form back to its origin(al form) (*yabluġina bihi al-'aṣla*, or at other places: *'aḡrawhu 'alā l-'aṣl*: Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) III, 312-3, (B) II 58-9).<sup>26</sup>

The poet according to Sībawayhi does not only have the possibility (*yaġūz*) to use deviant forms but sometimes he is also compelled (*yudṭarru*) to have recourse to them. The use of two forms is not separated sharply, generally we have to do mainly with possibilities rather than constraint (*idṭirār*). However, it is important to emphasize that Sībawayhi never uses the word *ḍanīra* itself, although later it became the popular term for poetic license.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, he uses the verbal form, the

<sup>26</sup> Cf. al-Ḥadīṭī 1980:112 ff. This was called later *ar-radd 'ilā l-'aṣl*. But for Sībawayhi it does not mean the same as for later grammarians. He uses it only in a narrower sense, and so it can be considered to be a special case of *taṣbīḥ*. Eg. the form *rādid* does not mean a return (*ruġūʿ*) to the original, but the *kasra* gets back to this form through its comparison to the many existing *faʿīl* forms. It means that a (theoretically existing) original form \**rādid* is a necessary but not sufficient condition. If such forms did not actually exist (like *ġālis*), then the *kasra* would not get back to this form either. This is represented by Muḥammad (1983:50) as follows: *rādid* → *rādd* →

*rādid*  
*ġālis*  
*dāhib* etc.

So it means that *rādd* is made similar to *ġālis*, without simply returning to a (theoretically existing) original.

<sup>27</sup> The origin of the word *ḍanīra* is usually brought into connection with jurisprudence, cf. al-Ḥadīṭī 1980:93-4. Versteegh (1977:25, fn 42) connects the term *ḍanīra* with *necessitas* found in the classical literature. as-Strāfi, who uses exclusively this word in commenting on Sībawayhi's *Kitāb* wrote a long chapter (amounting to a short book) on this topic under the heading *ḍanīra* (for a linguistic analysis of as-Strāfi's collection see Iványi in print). This word, the usual term for poetic licenses up to our days, does not occur in the *Kitāb*, but occurs four times in the *Maʿānī l-Qurʿān* of al-Farrāʿ (I, 125: *'illa ft š-šīr li-ḍanīratihī*; I, 162: *'illa ft ḍanīrat aš-šīr*; I, 315: *wa-ḥaddā ft š-šīr yaġūz li-ḍanīrat al-qawāfi*; and II, 321: *li-ḍanīrat aš-šīr*), according to Dévényi (*Farrāʿ-Index*, under preparation). Sībawayhi, however, uses other derivations of the same word: *udṭarra*/*yudṭarru* and *idṭirār*. as-Strāfi (Jahn 1895-1900: I/2, 27-55; as-Strāfi, *Ṣarḥ* II, 95-256) gives a complete definition of the word, the essence of which is that the poet employs license (*ḍanīra*) to preserve the proper metric arrangement of the verse: *aš-šīr ... usuġūza fīhi li-taġwīn waznihi min ziyāda wa-naqṣān wa-ġayy dālīka mā lā yustaġāzu ft l-kalīm miḥluhu*. But he adds in the end (not leaving doubt about what is the most important thing for a *naḥwī*) that a wrong usage of the *ʿrāb* cannot be considered to be *ḍanīra*: *laysa ft šayʿin min aḍ-ḍanīratī raf ʿu mansībīn wa-lā naṣbu mahfūdīn wa-lā lafẓun yakūnu l-mutakallimu fīhi l-dhānīn wa-māda wuġida ḥaddā ft š-šīrī kāna sādātān mutarāḥan wa-lam yadḥul ft ddb ḍanīratī š-šīr* (Jahn 1895-1900: I/2, 27). From later times three compendia have become known on poetic licenses: Ibn ʿUṣfūr's *Dardīr*, al-Qazzāz's *Mā yaġūz* and al-ʿĀlūsī's *Dardīr*. Rhetoricians and literary critics also treated the problem of poetic licenses, see e.g. Ibn Rašīq, *ʿUmda*: *'bdb ar-ruḥaṣ ft š-šīr*.

European Arabists have considerably neglected the treatment of this phenomenon. For some references see (in chronological order) Birkeland 1940:29, 106; Rabin 1951:89, 131 and 1955:30-1; Fleisch 1961:276-80 and 1968:38-40; Corriente 1976:70 ff; Zwettler 1978:106, 110-1, 171, 177 n.41; and Fischer (ed.) 1982:42. The only valuable European consideration in this field is due to Wright (1898-99: II, 373-90) who gives a rather taxonomic but nevertheless comprehensive presentation of the theme.

*mašdar* and the participle, even if not very numerously.<sup>28</sup> It means that, though not exclusively, he uses the concept itself, but does not use the term created from it.<sup>29</sup> Besides a long list of verses he has only two short sentences in the form of a quasi-definition:

- (1) *yağūz fī š-šī'ri mā lā yağūz fī l-kalām*

This contains two important points:

- (i) the possibility (*yaḥtamil* in the title of the chapter, while here *yağūz*)  
 (ii) and the contrasting of *šī'r* and *kalām* (whatever this latter means at Sībawayhi).

The field of poetic freedom is quite large, almost unlimited. There is only one thing restricting it: Even if poets do not employ the relevant rules, they have to employ some grammatical rules (*wağh*): *wa-laysa šay' yuḍḍatarrūna 'ilayhi 'illā wa-hum yuḥāwīlūna bihi wağhan*. It is only this point that grammarians are interested in — the actual linguistic data can be divergent from what is considered to be regular, but the system of rules cannot be injured.<sup>30</sup>

- (2) *laysa šay' yuḍḍatarrūna 'ilayhi 'illā wa-hum yuḥāwīlūna bihi wağhan*.

This also contains two important points:

- (i) The poet acts (can act) under constraint. Sībawayhi mentions here *idīrār*<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> According to Troupeau (1976:128) these forms are used 77, 13 and 6 times respectively, although his data at least in connection with *idīrār* are inaccurate, because he does not mention the first occurrence I found to be at I, 72 (ed. Derenbourg = (B) I, 86 = (H) I, 169) and that makes altogether 14 occurrences.

<sup>29</sup> Later grammarians in general became more rigid in their approach to these *darā'ir*, so e.g. we find al-Mubarrad saying (*Kāmil* I, 213): *laysa 'aḥad min an-naḥwīyyīn al-muḥtāṣiṣīn yuğūṣ miḍā ḥadā fī ḍ-ḍarā'ira li-'annahu 'idā nuwwina l-ism lam yattasīl bihi ḍ-ḍamḥ*. For Sībawayhi, these poetic licenses became acceptable as far as they can be explained with his methods. He says e.g.: *wa-ma'nāḥā munawwana 'aw gāy munawwana sawā' li-'annahu law ḡāza fī l-kalām 'aw uḍḍurra šā'ir fa-ḡāla ṭaldṭaun 'abwāban kāna ma'nāhu ma'nā ṭaldṭau 'abwābin*. His two methods used in explaining licenses are the very same methods which he uses in establishing correlations between the forms of the accepted speech, *al-kalām*: 1.) *tašbīḥ* and 2.) bringing back a form to its 'aṣl. But this 'aṣl differs basically from the 'aṣl of later grammarians. as-Sīrāfi: *šarf mā lā yansarif wa-huwa ḡā'iz fī kulli l-'asmā' muṭṭarid fīhā li-'anna l-'asmā' 'aṣluhā š-šarf wa-duḥūl al-tanwīn 'alayhā* (or: *radda l-kalām 'ilā 'aṣluhā*). Sībawayhi's 'aṣl is a form which the *kalām* left for some good reason and to which the poetic (or dialectal) form now returns such as *ḡanīnā* instead of *ḡannīl*.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Dévényi 1991 arguing for the rule-normativity of Arabic grammar versus its data-normativity.

<sup>31</sup> Sībawayhi uses a great many times the term *idīrār* and even more times *yağūz fī š-šī'r*, but does not differentiate sharply between the two. There are only a few cases where he states that some irregularities of poetry are unnecessary because there was no *idīrār* for the poet. Otherwise he uses the two without special rules. Later on this gave rise to a long lasting debate and discussion concerning whether the poet's being in a position of necessity (*lā mandāha lahu*) is an unavoidable prerequisite of the *darā'ira* or not (on whether Sībawayhi considered necessity as a prerequisite for using licenses or not see e.g. 'Ibrāhīm 1983: 41-45). Once the grammarians had given a deviant linguistic form the status of *ḡanīra* it could be used in poetry without further necessity. The former view was held e.g. by Ibn Mālik (see e.g. Ibn 'Aqīl, *Šarḥ* I, 156-8) while the second one by the so called *ḡumhūr* (or: *ḡumhūr al-baṣīyyīn*) i.e. the majority, it was considered (and is still considered) as the consensus (see Ibn al-'Anbārī, *Insāf* 151, 316, 522; Ibn Ya'qūb, *Šarḥ* III, 144; al-'Ālūsī, *Darā'ir* 6; al-'Hādī 1980:100-4; 'Ibrāhīm 1983:31 ff; cf. al-'Hasūn 1983:7 ff).

This view is reflected in Ibn 'Uṣfūr's definition (*Darā'ir* 6) where he gives all in all the same definition as as-Sīrāfi, leaving out, however, as-Sīrāfi's clause concerning *'rāb* and putting in a new

without giving any explanation as to its nature, but from this sentence we can assume that it was a well-known notion at that time, and even that there could be some discussions about it among grammarians (or grammarians, poets and *rāwī's*).

(ii) The poet's constraints or rather possibilities have their limits, this is the *wağh*, which in a much simplified way means that the linguistic phenomenon under question (even if it belongs to an acknowledged dialect) is regarded regular in a certain environment or context (e.g. in *waqf* or in *wasl* etc.), but it is not in this environment that it occurs in the given poem (in *wasl* instead of *waqf* or the other way around).<sup>32</sup>

This restriction is very important, since by it the sphere of the grammar's and grammarian's authority is secondarily extended over the deviant poetic material, which is, nevertheless, for some reason or other deemed acceptable.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, grammarians were (and became in the century after Sībawayhi even more) sensitive for *'rāb*-faults not to occur among licenses.<sup>34</sup> There is an interesting and well known case showing how grammarians made efforts to keep up right *'rāb* endings in poetry. The somewhat extraordinary forms *bakur/an-naqur* and *bakir* (instead of *bakru(n)/an-naqru* and *bakri(n)* respectively) are allowed by Sībawayhi.<sup>35</sup> This *ḍamma* and *faḥa* are considered as *'rāb* endings shifted from the end of the word to the place of the *sukūn*. He does not, however, allow *bakar* (instead of *bakran*), because the indefinite accusative (*naṣb*) ending is not to be lost even in pause. Similarly, *ṣuqur(ā)* and *ḡilid(ā)* are not regarded as such and are handled and explained differently because these plus vowels before the last consonant do not reflect *'rāb* (though from a strictly linguistic point of view the two phenomena seem to be very similar to each other).

What does it mean then that the poet "yuhāwīlu wağhan" or what was said earlier that with *radd ilā l-'aṣl* or *taṣbīḥ* he creates forms which "yağūz fī ṣ-ṣīr" but "lā yağūz fī l-kalām"? There is no answer, and in the first part there are no allusions either, to the question where the poet gets his permission from and why he is in need

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sentence: *uḍḍarra ṣ-ṣā'ir 'aw lam yuḍḍarr*. And he gives an explanation which fits well into the methods of Arab grammarians: *li-'annahū fī mawḍi' 'ullifat fihī d-dar'ir*, it is a customary place for *ḍarīra*. From this time on there is no need to distinguish between "necessity" and "possibility", the two notions (which were even originally, at Sībawayhi, very much connected) now fell completely together.

<sup>32</sup> Sībawayhi (*Kitāb* (H) I, 85), in discussing the verse \**alayya ḍanban kulluhu lam 'asna'it* - cited above - remarks that this usage, although "weak", cannot be regarded simply a phenomenon of the poetry since it occurs outside poetry too, and in the same (linguistic) environment: "*fa-haddā ḍa'if wa-huwa bi-manzilatihī fī ḡayr aṣ-ṣīr*". Strāfi comments it as follows ('Ibrāhīm 1983:39-40, where he cites Strāfi from 'Abū s-Su'ūd's dissertation quoted earlier): "*wa-huwa ma'a qubḥihī ḡā'iz fī l-kalām*".

<sup>33</sup> From collected and recognized poetry which was accepted as such, but could not be fitted into grammatical rules.

<sup>34</sup> Although the words denoting linguistic fault or false usage (*lahn*, *ḥata'*, etc.) rarely occur in the *Kitāb*, which fact, too, points to the basically descriptive character of his grammar.

<sup>35</sup> See Sībawayhi, *Kitāb* (H) IV, 173-4; (B) II, 284; aṣ-Ṣantamarī, *Tahṣīl* II, 340; on the Kufan and Basran controversy on this issue see Ibn al-'Anbārī, *Inṣāf* II, 731-6, N° 106.

to turn to such special solutions.<sup>36</sup> But we can reverse the question and ask whether it is really the poet who does all this (*yaruddu / yušabbihu / yuhāwīlu*)? Is it rather not the grammarian who attaches to the *nahw* the linguistic data that he could not primarily embrace?<sup>37</sup>

#### 4. *yağūz fī š-šīr wa-lā yağūz fī l-kalām*

The following question arises in connection with the role of poetic *šawāhid* in Arabic grammar: How did they evaluate and on what basis did they select the poetic examples in the first century of grammar when we cannot speak of a normalized Arabic language and a normative grammar. In a simpler way: if *nahw* relies (as I believe) mainly on poetic examples in the evaluation of 'arabiyya, then how does it say which are the poems or poetic lines that have to be excluded (totally rejected or marked as special) at the definition of the foundations of 'arabiyya.<sup>38</sup> So poems provide the basis for *al-ʿarabiyya*, some poetic examples are, however, still discarded from "good Arabic" and these can enter only with special "permits", i.e. *licentia*.

It is *al-kalām* in relation to which *ğawāz aš-šīr* or later *ḍarūra* is defined as something basically different from *al-kalām*. It seems at first sight (or rather it is suggested by later grammarians and some modern publications) to be a static notion, referring to an almost homogeneous and stable linguistic state. In this case we would

<sup>36</sup> Knowing the tribal-communal role of pre-Islamic poetry, and especially in case of the forms that are more archaic than the 6th century *qaṣīda*, namely e.g. *rağaz* and *sağʿ* it would be highly peculiar to suppose that the poet would *individually* depart from the linguistic expectations of his community, whether they relate to the spoken idiom, the tribal language, or to a solemn (poetic) language. For a connection between *rağaz* and *ḍarʿ* see ʿAbdarraʿūf 1977:117 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Reading the Arab grammarians' works one can never know whether a tribal dialect or the usage of one group of the Arabs deviates from a really existing Arabic koinè or it is only an average or common part of the different tribal usages on which the grammarians base their rules. How could such poets of the *ğāhiliyya* as Labīd or Imru' l-Qays have wanted to aim at a *wağh*, i.e. a regular form of *kalām* (recognized by the linguists as such) which may not have existed at all. There are two conceptions concerning the linguistic situation in pre-Islamic times: the 'arabiyya was either a spoken language or a high variant of the spoken tribal dialects. In the first case it could not be uniform, in the second it could only be based on the poems and so it would be difficult to understand how so many poems could contain "deviant" forms — and deviate from what.

<sup>38</sup> One may answer to my question by simply saying that on the basis of everyday usage or on the basis of introspection, inner knowledge of the language. But why then the poetic *šawāhid* in the books of grammar? And we also know that Arabic grammar was from the very beginning corpus orientated and to a large extent descriptive. As concerning everyday usage, even if 'arabiyya had been a spoken language in the 8th century (even among the bedouins), they could not speak one and the same variant of this language. What was the basis of selection among data coming from various sources then? What linguistic feeling provided the basis for the distinction; what were the phenomena considered to be restricted to poetry? At the same time we have to take into consideration that the 'arabiyya did not and could not be absolutely different in all of its aspects from the spoken language, but only in certain special features (which, nevertheless, seemed decisive for the grammarians), and so they could rely upon the native speakers' linguistic instinct as well. We know from later sources many stories telling us which tribes were considered reliable in their usage by the Basrans or the Kufans, but in my opinion it belongs more to the domain of social history than to the history of language and linguistics. This, at the same time, provides a possibility for *total* dismissal, as well, though Sībawayhi does not furnish a lot of examples for it. He, as we shall see, is very lenient and avoids categorical decisions.

have *kalām* on the one hand and some anomalies called *qad yağūz fī š-šīr* (i.e. licenses, *qarā'ir*) on the other hand, which are allowed in poems but considered as secondary to *kalām*. The poet, for some reason or another, makes use of these deviant forms, which are allowed to him, but his decision seems to be arbitrary and individually motivated. This formula can be largely debated after analyzing Sībawayhi's book.

What is then *kalām* at Sībawayhi? It is surely not *prose* as is generally conceived by as-Sīrāfi<sup>39</sup> and later authors. To cite only some examples: *lā yağūz fī l-kalām 'illā fī š-šīr*; or at al-Farrā' (*Ma'ānī* I, 126) *miṭluhu min al-kalām fī š-šīr kaṭīr*. In these examples *kalām* is a general category, which partly overlaps *šīr*, while *šīr* forms part of *kalām*, but there are some places in poetry, which cannot be wholeheartedly called *kalām* - these are the licenses. Even those are not always altogether rejected as non-*kalām* (sometimes qualified as *qatīl* or *qabṭī*), but it is said occasionally that this or that linguistic solution of the poetry cannot be accepted as *kalām*, *lā yağūz fī l-kalām*.<sup>40</sup>

If we really want to understand the meaning of the *kalām* concept in this early period Arabic linguistics we have to take into consideration *all* of its occurrences and should try to understand why the grammarians did not use different words for the different "meanings" of one and the same category (and I think not only of *kalām*, but many other terms as well, such as *'atqal*, *'ahaff*, *ziyāda*, *naqṣ* etc.). In respect of poetic licenses it is not only the general term *al-kalām* that is significant but also its modified variants: *fī kalāmihim* (where *hum* means a tribe or group of people and not *al-'arab*); *fī kalām ba'd al-'arab*; *kalām man yaqūl* or *qawl man yaqūl*. In these cases *kalām* means variant or dialect or something like that - although one feels throughout the book that *kalām* always means one and the same thing - only in a very vague, indefinite way: (in a smaller or larger community) acceptable speech. So *kalām* has manyfold usage, it has only two main references:

- 1.) When operating *inside* language: acceptable speech act of any length.
- 2.) When referring to an *outside* level: an acceptable linguistic form of a community.<sup>41</sup>

Now let us take again *kalāmuhum* (as contrasted with *al-kalām*), *qawl ba'd al-'arab*, etc. which always refer to dialects (or language variants other than *al-kalām*). The occurrence of these terms are usually accompanied by qualifications such as *kaṭīr* vs. *qatīl* or *ḥasan* vs. *da'īf/qabṭī* and last but not least *šādā*. And it is at these points that we read: *wa-lākin yağūz fī š-šīr*. E.g. *qatīl fī l-kalām*; *fī kalām*

<sup>39</sup> To be exact, as-Sīrāfi, too considers *kalām* to be a general category when he speaks about (*Šarḥ* II, 95) *kalām manzūm / kalām manzūr*.

<sup>40</sup> Even in cases when *šīr* and *kalām* are opposed to one another (*yağūz fī š-šīr wa-lā yağūz fī l-kalām*) it is better not to use the word *prose* in translating *kalām* (for a more detailed account of *kalām* and related terms and the question of their translatability see Iványi 1992). Anyhow, in the early Abbasid period when Sībawayhi's grammar was in formation one cannot really see what should be understood under *prose* - certainly not the religious literature which is referred to as *Qur'ān*, *qir'āt*, and *ḥadīṭ*.

<sup>41</sup> All Sībawayhiian categories behave in this peculiar way: *ziyāda / naqṣ - ḥadīf - 'ahaff / 'atqal 'ašbah*, or the explanation of phenomena within *kalām* and for the connection of phenomena outside *kalām* with *kalām*. All have twofold references and are very vague - but there are no equivalents in European languages. So we do not feel inclined to translate them in many different ways.

*ba'd al-ʿarab* → *wa-yağūz fī š-šīr* (and sometimes: *ʿinda idtirār; ʿidā udturra*). So now we are at the source of these special *iḥtimālāt* or *idtirārāt* (later called *ḍarāʿir*). According to Sībawayhi these are forms, mainly coming from those dialects or speech variants, which are not altogether accepted by the grammarians or by those on whom this *iğmāʿ* had been founded.

Later sources are not eager to mention how *ḍarīra* is connected to dialectal variations but they are not always silent on this issue either. *Ḍarīra* or in Sībawayhi's language *mā yağūz fī š-šīr* then sheds light on the making of *ʿarabiyya*. Making — not in that much disputed way that they had invented forms but in gathering materials, deciding on their evaluation and selecting among them *kalām* forms, separating them from existing but not totally acceptable speech forms or variants. These are called *qalīl* or *šādd*, but could they be really *qalīl* if they occurred in the dialect of a whole tribe or tribes? They are surely not individual variants (it is not said about them and we can assure of this by ourselves, comparing them to the dialectal forms of our days) and they are not called *faults* (*lahn /ḥataʿ*) either. But there are limits to the possibilities of *šīr*. Sībawayhi says: *ʿa-lā tarā ʿannahū lā yağūz laka ʿan taqūla: lam yaʿlam an-nās lanā mašraʿ fa-taḥḍifa l-ʿalifa li-anna ḥāḍā lā yakūn fī l-kalām fa-huwa fī l-qawāfī lā yakūn*. It is possible, however, to elide the verbal plural *-ū*: *samiʿtu mimman yarwī ḥāḍā š-šīra min al-ʿarab yunšiduhu: .... mā šanaʿ* instead of *šanaʿū*.

There is just one interesting question which I would like to point out. Why is there a sharp difference in the handling of *qāfiya* and the other parts of the verse? I think first of all of the question of the so called *poetic pause*.<sup>42</sup> Sībawayhi does not call them *iḥtimāl aš-šīr*, he simply says: it is used in *ʿinšād*. as-Sīrāfī, on the other hand, classifies the endings of the so called *qāfiya muṭlaqa* as "possibilities" of *ḍarāʿir* of the poetry while later *ḍarīra* handbooks return to Sībawayhi's standpoint and do not mention the lengthened vowels as *ḍarāʿir*. So it cannot be said (which is often said in the relevant Arabic literature) that *ḍarīra* is the differentiating factor between the language of prose and poetry. But why is *qāfiya muṭlaqa* not considered *ḍarīra* or something specially permitted, although it contradicts the grammarians' principles? The reason seems to be its general acceptance. Here we can see the limits of the grammarians' activities — they simply could not and did not want to refuse widely accepted forms, whereas in case of the peculiarity of a single dialect or dialect group they can have their voice, evaluating it, but permitting its use in poetry — which anyhow did exist without them as well.

### 5. *yağūz fī šīr wa-huwa qalīl fī kalāmihim*

The poetic licenses (i.e. *mā yağūz fī š-šīr*, or *ḍarāʿir*) can be shown to occur almost always together with expressions referring to dialectal usages (*kalāmuhum, qawluhum, luḡat man yaqūl*) and evaluating words such as *qalīl, lā takṭur, šādd*, and all this shows that Sībawayhi was well aware of the sources of some poetic deviances

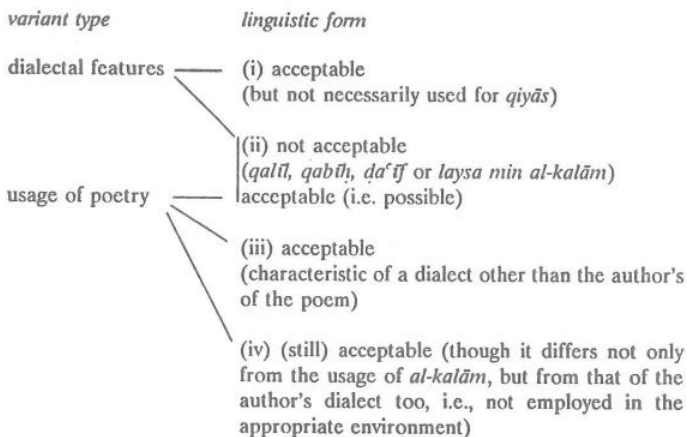
<sup>42</sup> For Sībawayhi's views see *Kitāb* (H) IV, 202-16 on *al-ʿisbāʿ* and *wuḡūh al-qawāfī fī l-ʿinšād*. Cf. Wright 1896-98: II, 368-73; Fleisch 1961:190-3.

from the accepted speech, *kalām*, these were good Arabic (mainly spoken) forms excluded from *al-kalām* by 'iğmā' but still acknowledged as valid in poetry.

There are two scales or factors according to which one judged poetry and any other linguistic material at that time:

(i) An inner scale — how they fit into the system of grammatical rules (*wağh*/*qiyās*) that was formed on the basis of linguistic material of different origin.

(ii) An outside scale — whether there is an 'iğmā' regarding their acceptability. The correlation between dialectal features and the usage of poetry may be presented in the following simple way:



Finally, I would like to return to the title of my paper: *qad yağūz fī š-šī'r*. We can notice that Šībawayhi's remarks concerning the language of poetry and poetic data in general are always expressed in a modal language, which means the prefixation of *qad* in most of the cases to the evaluating sentence, e.g. *qad yağūz fī š-šī'r wa-fī ḍu'f min al-kalām* (*Kitāb* (H) I, 48). Similar expressions are: *wa-qad yurfa' hādā fī luğat banī tamīm* (*Kitāb* (H) I, 384); *wa-qad takūn fī š-šī'r: hādā ḥātīm ṭay' ... mustakrahan* (*Kitāb* (H) II, 24). On the contrary, he is always decisive in judging an utterance in respect to *kalām*, or evaluating a grammatical quasi-example beginning with *qawluka*, *taqūl*, and the like, or deciding what is to be considered *wağh al-kalām*, i.e. a correct usage based on a grammatical rule.

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