The Natural Ear in Arabic Poetry vs. Stress in English Poetry

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ملخص البحث

يهدف البحث الى فحص كيفية تقطيع المستشرقين للشعر العربى حيث حاول الباحث أن يثبت أن هذا التقطيع واقع تحت تأثير طريقة تقطيع الشعر الإنكليزي والأوربي عموما الذي يتخذ من المقاطع أساسا له لما هو معرَّف في علم الفونولوجيا الإنكليزية والأوربية. ومعروف أن نظام المقاطع الأجنبي يقر بوجود بل يشرعن "عناقيد الحروف الصحيحة". consonant clusters وهذه العناقيد تعنى تماما اتحاد السواكن غير المسموح به في علم الأصبوات العربية. وبالتالي فإن تقطيع المستشرقين للشعر العربي يجعله ينوء بالسواكن وكأنه يسمح أصلا لهذه السواكن بالظهور بل يسمح بالإبتداء بساكن كما هو حال الكلمة الإنكليزية. وكانت مهمة البحث استعادة الإيقاعات الحقيقية التي طمسها المستشرقون وأضاف إلى تقطيعهم المتكلف حروف العلة والسكون لتصبح الكلمة الانكليزية ككتابة صوتية بالكامل تظهر فيها جميع المكونات الإيقاعية دون ظهور ساكنين كحد أقصى مثلما فعل المستشرقون قسراً ما لم يكن هذان الساكنان في نهاية البيت الشعري لإغراض الوقف ليس إلا. وأفرد البحث جانبا كبيرا للمدارس العروضية الانكليزية مع تركيز خاص على المدرسة التوليدية التحويلية بزعامة (موريس هاله) و(جي كيزر).ولم ير الباحث في تحليلهم ما يشير إلى إنشاء نظرية لاكتساب الوزن مثلما سعت نفس هذه المدرسة للتنظير لمدرسة جديدة في اكتساب اللغة أو النحو. وظهر للباحث أن نظرية العروض العربي تكمن فيها نظرية عالمية جديدة لاكتساب الإيقاع أو الوزن يستطيع العروضيون العرب تطويرها لتخليص العروض الانكليزي من غرائب متأتية أصلاً من نظام الكتابة الإنكليزية التي تعتبر ناقصة صوتيا بالمقارنة لنظام الكتابة العربي.

The Traditional Arabist Approach and How It Deviates from Natural Rhythms

The scansion of Arabic poetry is governed by fifteen (or sixteen) metres. The smallest unit in the Arabic line is the hemistich: one line being two

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repeated hemistiches. The smallest unit within the hemistich is the foot. A maximum of four feet in each hemistich form the "acatalectic" line. It is the sequence and number of "immediate constituents" within the foot throughout the whole hemistich that determine the name of a metre (Ar. *Bahr*). The Arabic foot, in its turn, cannot be best predicted unless its smallest units are singled out.

These units are of three types: the *sababs* (lit. cords) and the *watads* (lit. pegs) and the *fasilahs* (lit. intervals). Each foot cannot contain (in its original form) more than one *watad* and *fasilah* but may contain up to a maximum of two *sababs*.

One should not forget on this occasion to make mention of a major difference between the Arabic foot on the one hand, and that of Greek and Latin on the other. Also I would like to express my belief that this major difference has been completely ignored or overlooked for reason that may chiefly belong to the desire of the Arabists to equate the Arabic foot with its Greek "sister". Such a major difference is implied in the fact that the Arabic *sababs* and *watads and fasilahs* are no more than one and two and three vowelled consonants sealed by a *sukun* for each respectively: a process which clearly shows that the smallest units within the foot itself are reducible to consonants. On the other hand, the Greek and Latin foot is irreducible to units smaller than the short and long syllables.

The *watad* plays a crucial role in balancing each and every Arabic individual metre, but this opinion cannot be advanced any further for the time being.

First, let me provide some examples in support of my claim that the traditional Arabist approach is misleading even for those who have established themselves as sincere lovers of Arabic poetry. In his article in the *Journal of Arabic Literature*¹ (Leiden), T.J. Gorton proposes a "classical" approach for the metre of Ibn Quzman. I am not concerned for the time being with any details except rescanning the first line in *zajal* 3. The line says:

ma damat ad-dunya ^cizzak yadum

Gorton proposes the following scansion which is perfectly correct as far as the longs and shorts are wanted:

--u----u-(.)// 1234 56789 10(.)

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Because Gorton, unfortunately, has no natural ear for Arabic poetry - as his scansion, when arranged in feet, shows - he has to resort to his "fingers": a process leading him equally correctly, though theoretically, to identify the afore-mentioned line as of the *basit* metre and as such he gives his final scansion:

--u---- u-(.)// basit metre

When I recited the line and applied Gorton's scansion to my ear, which is my chief guidance before I resort to any other technique, this ear could not accept it as a *basit* and pressed on me that it was a *sari* $^{\circ}$ instead. In order to confront this ambiguity, I had to rescan the line purporting to adjust it, at the same time, in favour of my ear.

The difference between the two disputed metres above (i.e. $basit vs sari^c$) lies in reversing the last two feet provided that variations be crucially considered. Now, I have arrived at the following scansion:

--u-/-u-(.) // sari^c metre

1234 567 8910(.)

This scansion simply means that we have to try another five-consonant foot instead of Gorton's seven-consonant foot for the last one whereas the second should be exactly the reverse but it should be modified in my scansion, in favour of a six-consonant foot, unlike the scansion of Gorton who modified it in favour of a four-consonant foot.

This scansion can be further confirmed when we bear in mind that the $sari^c$ metres is more suitable for such popular poetry as that of Ibn Quzman that the *basit* which can never be, in my opinion, as common as the *sari^c* or the *ramal*. This view, once again, can further be confirmed when the second line is scanned.

Wantum 'ahl[i(a)]-l jah[i(a)] wahl[i(a)]-l ^culum

----- []--u(.)//

12345[6]78910(.)

This is my own reading and it is supposed to be a very accurate reading since I am a native speaker of both classical and colloquial Arabic. This reading, however, never modifies the original text nor does it assume any form of "classification": it only assumes that colloquial Arabic, as a corrupted version of classical Arabic and as spoken today, does not also tolerate consonant clusters except before a pause. This inevitably produces the following scansion that conforms to the *sari*^c more than any other "catalectic" metre.

- -- / -- [u] - / - u - (.) // sari^c metre

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1 2 3 4 5 [6] 7 8 9 10 (.)

But it should be noted here that the foot (- -) in this position is not allowed in classical Arabic prosody because the *zihaf* affects the *sabab* and not the *watad*. But since we are working on "popular" poetry, the *zihaf* can be extended to include the *hashw* at large. This is a very necessary step to relax the rules of Arabic prosody in favour of retaining the music of such a "popular" poetry.

I can safely say also that any Arabic or non-Arabic with a natural ear for Arabic poetry would agree with my scansion.

I am afraid that this very important work of Gorton ('*The Diwan of Ibn Quzman of Cordaba*: a metrical and Complete Critical Edition' 1976 Oxford D. Phill. Thesis) may demand now a metrical revision in view of what has been raised. This also proves that the study of the metre of Ibn Quzman and the *zajal* in general requires not only a theoretical knowledge of classical Arabic metrics but also an ear for Arabic "popular" poetry written in a dialect very close in the phonetic and morphological structure to the poetry of Ibn Quzman. Once again, I am quite sure that such a dialect does exist, maybe, in more than one part within the Arab World.

I would like also to cite more examples taken this time from Hispano-Arabic classical poetry known as the *muwashshah*. Professor James T. Monroe has scanned, as the text shows, the genre in accordance with the rules of the Romance syllabic prosody: a prosody which "measures only the number of syllables per line: hence the term 'number' frequently used as a synonym for 'versification'"². I cite below line 1 and line 8 from the poem of Al-'A^cma at-Tutili included in his Hispano-Arabic poetry: A Student Anthology:

Line 1. dam^cum masfuhun wadulu^cun hirar // Scansion:

----- u u --- u - // 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Professor Monroe assumes, as I think, that this hemistich should follow the Romance syllabic scansion since it comprises eleven syllables³. If a reader with a natural ear for Arabic poetry is exposed to the irresistible "flow" of the sari^c metre, he will instantly dismiss the above scanned hemistich as absolutely unmetrical: a judgment which can be easily verified when the above syllables corresponding to the words are arranged in feet: an arrangement which never produces the pattern of the sari^c metre prevailing throughout this poem:

---- U U - U - (.) // * sari^c metre

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12345 6789 1011(.)

If we have to adjust the metricality, if such a metricality does exist at all, in favour of the *sari*^c metre, we have to "repair" the second word in the hemistich. The first vowelled consonant to this world i.e. *masfuhun*, should be vowelled now. This word shall be scanned as U - -.

Now if all the syllables are arranged in feet, we obtain the pattern peculiar to the $sari^c$ metre:

- - u - / - u u - / - u - (.) // sari^c metre

234567891011

It would be significant to recall that Sr. Garcia Gomez has also "repaired" the same hemistich, more accurately the same word, exactly as I have already done; but it should equally be noted that this modification and mine are inevitably moving in opposite directions. The modification made by Sr. Garcia Gomez is superfluous and has no value indeed as far as the Romance syllabic prosody is intended, for it does not have the slightest bearing on the number of the syllables; rather it expressly reflects the dualistic thinking of the Romance prosodist who cannot completely free himself from the "Arabic metrical complex" on scanning Arabic poetry. On the other hand, my "repair" is crucial because it "stabilizes" the metricality of the hemistich in favour of the overall metricality of the poem.

Line 8: Ahlan wa in ^carada bi lilmanun // Scansion: --u-uuu--u-(.) // 1234567891011 (.)

This hemistich is "almost" unmetrical unless the word ^carada (U U U) is modified in favour of ^carada (- U U): a modification which never affects the number of the syllables. After this "repair" the hemistich can be scanned as follows:

- - u - / - u u - / - u - (.) // sari^c metre

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (.)

Another similar example will be taken from the study published in *Al-Andalus*, Vol.39, 1974 of Professor Garcia Gomez in which he believes that he has introduced a "nueva sistema de notacion ritmica"⁴. Professor Gomez leaves no doubt in this study that he has no natural ear for Arabic poetry: a reality which one should have the courage ti urge against him apart from the vast knowledge of this eminent honourable scholar. Indeed, one can come across many lines whose natural metricality has been twisted in favour of an unnatural alien metrical system. The converse is also true. Below I cite one example from his study:

Wa – taqul 'inni fi hubbi mudda^ci.

According to Professor Gomez 's scansion, this line is metrical because its transcription conforms to what he calls "*el Endecasilabo Anapestico*" rhythm. But I am quite certain that this line naturally conforms to the Arabic *ramal* metre. Despite the artificial transcription of this line as well as the preceding lines, any reader with a natural ear for Arabic poetry can easily and "automatically" retain the original Arabic rhythm.

A natural sensitive ear should replace Gomez's long i in fi with an Arabic natural short i, a change which should inevitably result, for metrical purposes, in introducing the preposition bi instead of the preposition fi. Therefore, we have to transcribe the line as follows:

wataqul 'inni bihubbi mudda^ci which shall scan as:

wataqul'in / nibihubbi / mudda^ci

uu-- /-u-- /-u- // *ramal* metre

If we have accepted this, then Professor Gomez's "theory" must be no longer valid. Also one can deduce that the unnaturalness of his method contradicts his assertion that it is "mas *natural*".

A final word should be said before I move to another theme. The attempt of any prosodist to scan classical or even "popular" Arabic poetry in favour of the syllabic approach implies before anything else the failure of such a prosodist to "master and internalize" the Arabic metrical system if we want to dismiss other possibilities, such as prejudice, lack of objectivity and so forth, as being unscientific and may not be easily verified⁵. These examples have been cited to prove that the latinized method of scanning Arabic poetry is misleading and inadequate.

In order to avoid such unfortunate inadequacies, I have proposed the following scansion. From now onwards a short syllable is roughly equated with the Arabic sabab while a long syllable is equated with the *watad*. This entails that a sabab and a *watad* are to be indicated by a breve (u) and a macron (-) respectively. In accordance with Imam Al-Khalil's circle theory, no Arabic foot can have more than two "short" syllables or more than one "long" syllable. If a foot has three sababs (u u u), it means that its only *watad* has been altered in favour of a sabab; likewise, if we have afoot with two *watads*, it means that two sababs have been altered in favour of the additional watad.

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New Prosodic Transcription: Retaining Natural Arabic Rhythms

We have seen how the Latinized system of scanning Arabic poetry can easily create misleading conclusion. To avoid this, we are embarking now on introducing a new prosodic transcription. Such a proposed transcription should take into account the natural combinations of vowelled and unvowelled (sukunated) consonants. Since Arabic script chiefly accounts for consonants, then these consonants should be equally accounted for any other non-Arabic system for writing, and as such accompanied by their proper vowels, without the existence of which the Arabic word would appear as if it were a multi-consonant cluster. Therefore, I propose that consonants be transliterated in capital letters whereas the harakat (i.e. vowels) shall be represented by small letters. As for the sukun, it shall be represented by a small circle above the sukunated consonant. This small circle for the sukun will have a crucial and sophisticated function: it "seals" the sequence and determines whether it is a sabab or a watad or a fasilah at the same time. Such unprecedented prosodle transcription, as far as I know, is hoped to simplify scanning Arabic poetry for foreigners with every possible accuracy. So, a word such as Muhammed shall be transcribed prosodically now as such (MuHaMMaD).

Now let us see how this *sabab* - and - *watad* - *and* -*fasilah* system has enabled Imam AI-Khalil to conclude the Arabic metrical system. Below metres are listed according to their occurrence in the circle alongside their corresponding feet. The list will show at the same time that Imam AI-Khalil's metrical system comprises homogeneous and heterogeneous metres. [For economy in space a *sabab* and a *watad* and a *fasilah* are abbreviated as s and w and f respectively (scansion according to the circle system is applied to one hemistich)]

Circle One (heterogeneous metres: four feet per hemistich)

1st Foot 2nd Foot 3rd Foot 4th Foot I. *Tawil*: ws (-u) wss (-uu) ws (-u) wss (-uu) II. *Madid*: sws (u - u) sw (u -) sws (u - u) sw (u -) III. *Basit*: ssw (u u -) sw (u -) ssw (u u -) Circle Two (homogeneous metres: three feet per hemistich)

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IV. *Wafir*: wf (--) wf (--) wf (- -) V. Kamil: fw (--) fw (--) fw (--) Circle Three (homogeneous metres: three feet per hemistich) VI Hazaj: wss (- u u) wss (- u u) wss (-u u) VII Rajaz: ssw (u u -) ssw (u u -) ssw (u u -) VIII Ramal: sws (u - u) sws (u - u) sws (u - u)Circle Four (heterogeneous metres: three feet per hemistich)⁶ (Disregarded for the time being) IX Sari^c (Disregarded for the time being) X. Munsarih: XI. Khafif: (Disregarded for the time being) XII. Mudari^c (Disregarded for the time being) XIII. Muatadab: (Disregarded for the time being) XIV. Muitath: (Disregarded for the time being) Circle Five (homogeneous metres: four feet per hemistich) XV. Mutaqarib: ws (-U) ws (-U) ws (-U) ws (-U) XVI. Mutadarak: sw (u-) sw (u-) sw (u-) sw (u-)

Notice how the "Arabic iambic" is the least important metre of all while the "Arabic trochaic" comes next to it in importance.

Let us scan the first hemistich from the Suspended Ode of 'Imri'ul Qays in accordance with our proposed scansion and see how easy it will be for a prosodist to identify the feet in terms of *sababs* and *watads*:

QiFaA NaBKi MiN DiKRaA HaBiIBiN WaMaNZiLiI

According to our new method, between a *sukun* (i.e. small circle) and another *sukun* is either a *sabab* or a *watad*. The hemistich shall be scanned as follows:

QiFaA = watad } 1^{st} Foot (-u)

NaB

= sabab

KiMiN = watad DiK = sabab 2^{nd} Foot (-u u) RaA = sabab

HaBiI = watad
$$3^{rd}$$
 Foot (-u)
BiN = sabab

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WaMaN = watad } 4th Foot (- -) ZiLiI = watad

I have retained the "short" vowels that accompany the consonants immediately preceding their (i.e. the vowels) corresponding "long" ones (Ar. Letters of prolongation).

Only the circle system of Imam Al-Khalil can tell us that the fourth foot has emerged as a result of applying a "transformation" to the original one as I have elaborated earlier. The interpretation easily shows that the circle system has nothing to do with accentualism or any other factor as well has assumed in his celebrated article in the Encyclopaedia of Islam. If we want to compare the Arabic variations with the "puzzling variation" in Greek and Latin metrics, one should expressly state that the Arabic variations could have by far exceeded them if Imam Al-Khalil had focused only on arranging homogeneous repeated feet at any cost in every metre, while dismissing at the same time any other combination of feet as being "playfulness" as his Greek and Latin counterparts had done. In the overwhelming majority of the Arabic metres, for instance, no foot can ever appear without some degree of modification; but the poet has only to adhere compulsorily, though unconsciously, to the final foot in each hemistich. The first of these final feet is called the *carud* while the second the *darb*. We have in Arabic poetry ninety-seven (compulsory) variations only in these two places, let alone the variations in the other feet in every hemistich to which the poet is not forced to adhere. These compulsory variations are thirty-four in number of the carud and sixty-three for the darb. But Imam Al-Khalil's system of mnemonic words has reduced these numerous variations to only twenty-two as follows⁷:

1. Tawil

1. $Fa^{c}uULuN - u$ 2. $MaFaA^{c}iLuN - u u$ 3. $MaFaA^{c}iLuN - -$ II. *Madid*: 4. $FaA^{c}iLaATuN u - u$ 5. $FaA^{c}iLuN U -$ 6. $FaA^{c}iLaA(N) u - (.)$ 7. $Fa^{c}iLuN -$

8. Fa^cLuN u u III. Basit: 9. MuSTaF^ciLuN u u – 10. $MuSTaF^{c}iLaA(N) u u - (.)$ 11. MuSTaF^ciL uuu IV. Wafir: 12. MuFaA^caLaTuN --V. Kamil: 13. MuTaFaA^ciLuN _ _ 14. MuTaFaA^ciL - 11 15. MuTaFaA^ciLaATuN - - u 16. MuTaFaA^ciLaA(N) - - (.) VI. Hazal: NONE VII. Rajaz: NONE VIII. Ramal: 17. $FaA^{c}iLaATaA(N) u - u(.)$ IX. Sari^c: 18. MaF^cuULaA(N) uuu(.) X. Munsarih: 19. MuFTa^ciLuN u – XI. Khafif: NONE XII. Mudari^c: NONE XIII. Muqtadab: NONE XIV. Mujtath: NONE **XV.** Mutagarib: 20. Fa^cuU(L) - (.) 21. Fa^cuU -22. Fa^c U

When a metre has "NONE" of the variations, it does not mean that it has none of them in reality; on the contrary, a metre like the *kamil*, for example, has twelve variations but only four of these are not repeated sequences.

Now let us organize these sixteen Arabic metres in circles according to our sabab – and – watad – and – fasilah system:

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Circle One: (Heterogeneous Metres) I. Tawil: a b c d e f g h I j - u - u u - u - u u II. Madid: b c d e f g h I j u - uu - u - u u -III. Basit: d e f g h I j u u – u – u u – u – **Circle Two: (Homogeneous Metres)** IV. Wafir: a b c d e f V. Kamil: b c d e f **Circle Three: (Homogeneous Metres)** VI. Hazaj:a b c d e f g h i - u u - u u - u u cdefghi VIII. Ramal: u - uu - u - u - u **Circle Four: (Heterogeneous Metres)** Circle Four (heterogeneous metres: three feet per hemistich)⁶ (Disregarded for the time being) IX Sari^c (Disregarded for the time being) X. Munsarih: XI. Khafif: (Disregarded for the time being) XII. Mudari^c (Disregarded for the time being) XIII. Muqtadab: (Disregarded for the time being) XIV. Mujtath: (Disregarded for the time being) **Circle Five: (Homogeneous Metres)** XV. Mutaqarib: a b c d e f g h - u - u - u - u XVI. Mutadarak: bcdefgh u - u - u - u -Returning now to Weil's assumption that the circle system is a sign of accentualism, we can easily see that the real understanding of this system invalidates such a claim. If Well's claim is correct, this means

that my attempt – that could be any prosodist's attempt – to organize classical metres in circles, should solve "once and for all" the controversy in favour of accentualism. As a matter of fact, the circle system, as it can be easily understood, is no more than a diagram in the form of a circle, aiming at separating the rule from exception.

English Poetry and English Prosodists

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English prosodists almost unanimously agree that one should speak of English prosodies rather than one English prosody. According to those critics "the phenomenon of English versification is too manifold and complex to be explained according to a single metrical system"¹⁰. However, they do acknowledge that some scholars and critics have endeavoured to prove in "unhappy attempts" that "all English verse of whatever period manifests one prosodic principle".

Before we examine the views of English prosodists, it should be known that in English poetry two types of metre have been experimented or rather traditionally established as peculiar to English: accentual metres and accentual-syllabic metres. In accentual metres only accents are measured. Old English as well as all Germanic poetries are said to be scanned in accordance with this type of metre. The line is normally divided into two hemistiches; each hemistich contains two strongly stressed syllables bringing the total number of strong stresses per line to four. This relatively fixed number is accompanied by a free number of unstressed syllables. The two hemistiches are separated, as prosodists say, by an invariable medial caesure. This very system came under attack during the Renaissance though it has been revived in the twentieth century by such poets as T.S.Eliot. In the second type, i.e., accentual-syllabic, both syllables and accents are measured. It is said that in this type of metre, the metrical patterns acquire a rigid form. When we examine English poetry, we immediately find ourselves struck by that strange diversity od views over central concepts traditionally used in the science of metrics. It is also widely accepted that metre in English poetry is an abstraction. According to David Crystal, no one has ever defined this abstraction. The only scholar who, to my knowledge, has maintained a different view is Roman Jackbson. Jackobson believes that metre is "not an abstract, theoretical scheme". This view, I believe, should never be taken lightly as David Crystal does. I will return to make a brief mention of this definition later. Let us try first to find the reasons that might have convinced almost all English prosodists that metre is an abstraction. The first reason, in my view, may be the fact that English metre has often been analyzed in terms of stressed and unstressed syllables. As a result of this, those prosodists have come to acknowledge that is impossible to transfer the phonological stress, which is sometimes called linguistic stress, into metrics. In their attempt to overcome this discrepancy they (i.e. prosodists) have introduced such "abstraction", "metrical vague as accent", "tension", terms "counterpointing", "metrical position" instead of "syllable".

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According to Chatman, for instance, a distinction should be made between "linguistic stress" and "metrical accent". However, he acknowledges that he was for a long time confused by this problem.

J.B. Leishman, on the other hand, explains this discrepancy in a similar way but in different wording. He believes that there are some facts that have not yet been discovered or insufficiently discovered or understood by English prosodists. The first of these facts is that there should be a great difference between English words "in action" and these words "in a dictionary". The second is that word have different pronunciation in different contexts. In other words, Leishman presupposes that the metre of English Poetry violates linguistic stress. But Leishman's views are in sharp contrast with those of Professor Keyser, the generative metrist, who is quite convinced that English poetry does not require that linguistic stress be violated. I will return later to examine Keyser's views in more detail.

The view that metre is an abstraction implies a distinction between metre and rhythm. As far as this distinction is concerned, there is an almost unanimous agreement that an abstract metrical pattern (i.e. metre) should be differentiated from that actualized by sequences of words or syllables (i.e. rhythm). But this distinction has also been considered from different angles. I shall mention the views of only two scholars who are widely known to have theorized over this topic. They are Seymour Chatman and Roger Fowler. Chatman advocates the theory of :metrical tension" while Fowler advocates that of proserhythm. Chanton speaks of a conflict between the abstract ideal pattern and the way in which words are emphasized according to their phonological expectations and according to what he calls the "established context". Accordingly, a separation is required between the abstract metrical pattern and the actualized one. This separation is achieved through a "metrical tension" which becomes according to Chatman a "loving metrical tension". Arnold Stein may not greatly differ from Chatman when speaks of how word "resist metre negatively". I do not agree with Stein though I do not see it necessary now to elaborate any further. On the other hand, Fowler's views are not different in essence from those of Chanton. According to him, the metrical skeleton should be filled by units with natural stress patterns corresponding with those of the metre. Fowler clarifies this point further by showing that there are a number of English constructions, whose natural stress pattern can be analysed phonologically as of two syllables, the first of which is unstressed while the second is stressed.

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This exactly corresponds to the basic iambic foot. He gives such examples as for me, ye fight, does give and alarm. If such is the situation, then the English metrical system should have been the easiest of all because, as Whitehall puts it, "any foot can measure the number of stresses in a line".

I am afraid that speaking of prose-rhythm as the authors of the Theory of Literature do or as Fowler does in the constructions quoted above may be unconvincing or even superfluous, since every literary art uses the phonetic material of that very language in which this art is written or expressed. If we have to establish a meaningful relation between the abstract metrical pattern and its actualization, then we should say that metre is the severe restriction of the prosaic use of the linguistic entities. This restriction may demand in some cases the modification of some linguistic entities, phonologically, morphologically or syntactically, if the original form violates the metrical pattern. This means that it is possible to violate the grammar or even the phonological expectations of words but this violation should be severely restricted and controlled by explicit rules so that the metrical pattern is guarded against any attempt to violate it. English metre is constantly under violation. This is why English prosodists are confused and divided among themselves as regards this inexplicable phenomenon. They are faced with two conspicuous realities: those who have composed this verse are great figures in the history of English literature, such as Chaucer, Donne, Shakespeare etc. and at the same time their verse does not follow a consistent metrical pattern. If they say their verse is unmetrical, it means that they have to strip those figures of their glory. This is why those prosodists have recourse from time to time to various vague terms such as "tension", "counterpoint", "semantic dimension of metre", "orthography and metre", "style and metre", the "recorded poem" and the "original record of poem" and so on and so forth, in order to create such a "loving tension" between these two conflicting realities. This is the only explanation I can present to account for such a diversity of views concerning a topic that has been settled once and for all by Arab and Muslim prosodists twelve centuries ago.

We shall now have a brief look at the three schools of metrics: traditional, structural and generative. In traditional metrics the main focus is on the four basic feet: iambic, trochaic, anapaestic and dactylic. The remaining feet such as spondees, pyrrhic and tribrach, etc. are treated as substitutions¹¹. The traditional metrical system is based on what I may call the homogenous repetition of these feet up to a certain

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number. The difference between "stressed" and "unstressed" syllables plays a crucial role. Traditional metrists, when faced with a conflict between stress as assigned in accordance with the rules of English phonology and stress as found in the hypothesized metrical patterns, traditionally called "metrical stress" have recourse to substitutions where his conflict is explained in terms of "demotion" and "promotion". The second school is "structural metrics". The main hypothesis of this school is that traditional metrics "failed to identify foot quality by linguistic stress" as Donald Freeman puts it. Structural metrical analysis is guided by the Trager-Smith system in which the four levels of stress are distinguished: primary, secondary, tertiary and weak. As I have stated, structural metrics assumes a "tension" between the abstract metrical pattern which has two levels: stressed/ unstressed and the four levels of stress as hypothesized by Trager and Smith. Structural metrics has produced such terms as "prose-rhythm", "metre-fixing feet" "metre-fixed feet" to account for the difference between the two patterns. As traditional metrists are accused of not having an adequate definition for stress, structural metrics has also been criticized for not clearly establishing the basic metrical unit. Opponents of this school believe that it is not known whether this basic metrical unit is the foot, the line or the whole poem.

The third school is generative metrics. This school resembles structural metrics in differentiating between the abstract metrical pattern and the phonetic material actualizing it. According to its advocates it has gone beyond this mere distinction by formalizing the rules relating these two types of arrangement in verse. This school, as known from its name, derives its analysis from the findings of modern linguistic theory in general and generative phonology in particular. Its main hypothesis is that since the grammar of any natural language has to generate all and only the grammatical sentences in that language and to account at the same time for the grammaticality or ungrammaticality of these sentences on the basis of native speakers intuition, then an adequate metrical theory should have the same function concerning the metricality or unmetricality of lines within a given metrical form. The main exponents of this school are Professor Morris Halle and Professor Jay Keyser.

In their analysis, Halle and Keyser dismiss the foot as the basic metrical unit and replace it instead with the line. However Keyser suggest that such a level, i.e. foot level, may be introduced in case a further study requires a modification of the "Revised Iambic Pentametre Theory".

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The metricality of a line according to generative metrics, is accounted for in terms of "strong' and "weak" metrical positions instead of "stressed" and "unstressed" syllables respectively but with some reservations of course. In the "Strict Iambic Theory", a foot, then recognized as an intermediate level, is taken to consist of two metrical positions: the first strong, the second weak. When this theory was found insufficient to account for a considerable number of lines by great poets, the level of "allowable deviations" was introduced. I can say that this level has made sweeping concessions for poets to secure the metricality of this huge stock of English poetry. Once again and despite all these concessions, there are lines that are too "arrogant" to compromise their unknown metricality. For example, in Keats line:

How many bards gild the lapses of time

The one-syllable word *gild* and the syllable *lap*- are stressed, i.e. carrying a stress maximum each. These two syllables are occupying weak positions according to the "Revised Iambic Pentametre Theory" of scansion. Then the line is unmetrical. But this is the line of Keats and Keats is Keats. Then his line, according to professor Keyser, is metrical and should be considered a "metrical pun" whose unmetricality is required by the context. As far as I am concerned with the search for a universal metrical system, such "metrical puns" should have no existence. If the context forces the poet to violate the metre, this means that the poet is not skillful enough to convey what he has in verse. But I am quite convinced that Keats was aware that he was writing a metrical line according to his own pattern. The syllables are exactly ten. If stressing is ruled out, the line fits the jambic pentametre pattern.

The main point I would like to raise, among others, against generative metrics is that as far as English poetry is concerned it is impossible to equate grammar with metrics. If the speaker is able to internalize his "linguistic competence" according to what is known in language acquisition, such a competence can never be converted into a "metrical competence" in a stroke of fortune. There is no evidence from English poetry and Western poetry in general that poets have ever been able to "master and internalize" the metres of their indigenous poetry. My second criticism of generative metrics is that the gulf between prose and verse seems to have been greatly bridged. Further studies may prove that the theory of generative metrics has converted much of English prose into verse, if such prose is organized in lines. Conclusion

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We can easily understand that there is no fixed rule for scanning English poetry with reference to all schools of prosody. English metrists are sticking to scan their poetry in line with the concept of stress which means overlooking or even neglecting the natural ear since the structure of the English syllable consists of "unbalanced" sounds as far as vowels are concerned.

The fatal error may be the absence of the difference between sounds and letters. This may be traced further to the fact that no matter how many sounds the syllable contains, it gives no more than one syllable.

This proves that English is not a phonetic language and ,therefore, it has nothing to do with human natural ear as in Arabic poetry.

NOTES

¹"The Metre of Ibn Quzmah: a Classical Approach", Vol. 6 (1975), PP. 1 -29

² Paul Fussel, "metre", *Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1974), P.497.

³ (Berkley : University of California Press), P. 249.

⁴ "Metrica de la Moaxaja y Metrica Espanola", PP. 1 -255.

⁵ The author intends to examine the views of Professor Gomez in more details in a forthcoming publication. See: G. Niema al-Hilfy, *The "Romance" Kharja: Why Not Evidence in Favour of the Arabic Origin of the Muwashshah?* Forthcoming.

⁶ This circle may prove very crucial as regards the relation between metre and rhythm. See: G. Niema al-Hilfy, *The Relation between Metre* and Rhythm: Evidence from the Theory of Arabic Metrics with Particular Reference to AI-Khali!'s Fourth Prosodic Circle. Forthcoming.

⁷ Ibn Jinni, *Kitab Al - ^carud*, ed. Hasan Shadili Farhud (Beirut: Dar AI-Qalam Press, 1972)

⁸G. S. Fraser, *Metre, Rhyme and Free Verse* (Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1970), P. 3. ⁹ Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.), *Style in Language(M.* I. T. Press, 1960), P. 197 - 209.

¹⁰ Paul Fussel, "English Prosody," in *Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry* and Poetics, P. 238.

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¹¹ Donald Freeman, "Current Trends in Metrics," in Braj B. Kachru and Herbert F. W. Stahlke (eds) *Current Trends In Stylistics* (Canada: Linguistic Research Inc., 1972), PP. 67 - 68.

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ABSTRACT

This research examines how orientalists are scanning Arabic poetry and tries to reveal that this scansion is influenced by scanning English and European poetry in general which is based on long and short syllables as defined in English phonology.

The researcher tries to prove that the English writing system is misleading or even defective because there is no clear definition for the syllable on the one hand and because of the existence of consonant clusters in that system on the other as an accomplished fact which contradicts what is found in the Arabic writing system.

A new prosodic transcription has been devised to retain natural Arabic rhythms when written in Latin letters.

The researcher finds it necessary to examine the schools of English metrics and a vast area has been allocated for Generative Metrics as championed by Professors Morris Halle and Jay Keser.

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