

Poetic Rhythm in Abū Tammām's selected anthology

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Abstract---This article seeks to examine one of the most significant elements in poetry—**rhythm**—and to explore how Abū Tammām relied on it in the process of selecting and choosing the poetic fragments he included in his book *al-Wahshīyyāt*. After conducting a prosodic ('arūḏī) analysis of the corpus, we identified a distinctly "Tammāmian " inclination that brings together **meter and poetic purpose** on the one hand, and, on the other, the **prosodic configuration** of each meter and the movement it imposes upon rhythmic dynamics.

Keywords---rhythm, Abū Tammām, *al-Wahshīyyāt*, poetic purpose, prosody ('arūḏ).

Introduction

Rhythm appears in many phenomena of our daily life in ways that we find comforting, and through which we sense a kind of movement that makes us feel life itself. One scholar maintains that rhythm precedes the creation of animals, nature, and the universe as a whole, because it is the principle that the Creator—Glorified and Exalted—established as a foundation for the continuity and permanence of the cosmos. This becomes manifest in the rhythmic motion performed by celestial bodies in their orbits, such as the movement of the earth around itself and around the sun—motion which, were it to be disrupted, would disrupt the system that sustains life on the face of the earth. The Creator who grounded life in the principle of rhythm is thus the Creator of rhythm, having chosen it as a law guaranteeing the continued movement and endurance of the universe.¹

Accordingly, rhythm exists within us and in the nature around us. We are powerfully inclined to enjoy diverse rhythms, taking pleasure in them and savoring them both sensorially and intellectually; they draw us toward them compellingly. Since rhythm is present in this manner in our lives, it manifests in multiple forms, among them poetic texts, within which rhythm is a fundamental and essential element²

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It confers a distinctive beauty insofar as it reveals the relationship that binds the creator to his text on the one hand, and the relationship of the recipient to the text on the other. Rhythm is an affective surge that pours from the poet's self into the text, by which the reader's sensibility is nourished.

Poetry becomes even more singular through rhythm: it is a basic component of its constitution and a salient feature of its character.³ This is what made the aesthetic that shapes poetry for Abū Tammām one of the most important criteria of poetic selection. Poetic texts, in general, are first born in the ear; and since hearing is the core of the poetic act of reading, reliance on that steady hierarchical regularity enables poetry to be received at the highest levels of aesthetic appreciation. Hence, in this article we attempt to trace the rhythmic aesthetics of the various poetic fragments selected by Abū Tammām in his *Waḥshīyyāt*.

Rhythm in Poetry

Most sources nearly agree that the primary etymological root of *īqāʿ* (rhythm) is *maqʿ*, which denotes the "striking/marking" of melodies—making them appear and clarifying them. Rhythm is therefore linked to those sounds in which the ear delights, and which in turn prompt certain movements, most prominently dancing.

Kashājim says :⁴

**Ah, for a hoarseness—without interruption—
for a maiden whose rhythm is unbroken.**

**Her voice is wearied; yet from
the throat's fatigue, the ears may harvest rest.**

Ibn al-Muʿtazz says :⁵

**When I sense slackening in my script—
in my fortune, in eloquence, in expression—
do not be uneasy with my understanding: for my dance
is in proportion to the rhythm of time.**

These two witnesses make rhythm a mode among the modes of poetry and prose. Thus, whenever we confine ourselves to poetry, we must address **meter**, for it is the defining property of poetry ("poetry is metrical speech ..."); meter is a branch, while rhythm is the origin. Adūnīs says: "Rhythm is a spring, and meter is one of the channels of that spring"⁶

Thus, meter is the boundary between poetry and prose, and one of the most important and most evident constituents of poetry as style. It confers upon poetic discourse—once it enters it—a character that distinguishes it from what is other than it, and protects it from dissolution into what does not belong to it. It is among the limits separating prose and poetry, because it is an essential property of poetry, not a negligible component that can be dispensed with.⁷ Moreover, among the principal supports that increase the rhythmicity of meter is **rhyme**, which critics regarded as sharing with meter the privilege of belonging specifically to poetry.⁸ Rhyme has musical dimensions, and for that reason the ancients likened it to the hooves of a horse. This simile bears rhythmic significance: it depicts the striking of hooves upon the ground in regular succession—a sound dear to the self, which sometimes conveys speed and at other times slowness—so that rhyme becomes the cause of the rhythmic pulse of the poetic line, just as the hoof is the cause of the rhythmic pulse of motion.⁹

These two foundations of rhythm share a feature of codification: they appear in the poem according to a fixed structure, which critics classified as "external rhythm," in contrast to "internal rhythm," which does not submit to codification (the law of al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī). Hence rhythm becomes an aesthetic source upon which the taste of "Abū Tammām" relied in his poetic selections in *al-Waḥshīyyāt*.

Rhythm in *al-Waḥshīyyāt*

Arab literary historians have explained the abundance of transmitted early Arabic poetry—compared to transmitted prose—by noting that the memorization and recall of poetry is easier and more manageable. Perhaps the secret lies in poetry's harmony of segments and their successive arrangement, such that they follow a special order in that succession; and once ears are trained on that special order, they grow accustomed to it and come to anticipate it while listening.¹⁰ This compels the poet to proceed according to that harmony which ancient poetry knew instinctively, until al-Khalīl later formulated special laws for it, most notably the sixteen meters and their patterns—meters that appear in the *diwān* of *al-Waḥshīyyāt* in varying proportions. The anthology is limited to ten meters only, as the following table shows:

Chapters	Ḥamāsa	Elegies (Marāthī)	Adab	Nasīb	Hijā' (Satire)	Ridicule & Descriptions (Samāja wa-Awṣāf)	Attributes (Ṣifāt)	Gray Hair (Mashīb)	Witty Pieces (Milah)	Blame of Women (Madhammat al-Nisā')
Number of fragments (maqṭū'āt)	199	56	37	56	60	58	10	13	14	04
Poetic meters (buḥūr)										
al-Ṭawīl	98	20	18	40	32	25	03	06	03	04
al-Wāfir	37	08	05	03	07	12	00	02	03	00
al-Kāmil	21	10	05	07	07	07	02	04	00	00
al-Basīṭ	22	05	07	03	08	09	01	00	02	00
al-Sarī'	07	02	00	01	00	00	00	00	01	00
al-Rajaz	05	02	00	00	00	02	01	00	03	00
al-Khafīf	04	03	01	01	00	00	01	00	01	00
al-Mutaqārib	05	04	01	00	02	03	02	01	00	00
al-Ramal	00	02	00	01	02	00	00	00	01	00
al-Madīd	00	00	00	00	02	00				

This table shows that the rhythmic framework of ḥamāsī poetry in *al-Waḥshīyyāt* consists of ten meters, among which the four meters—**al-ṭawīl**, **al-wāfir**, **al-kāmil**, and **al-basīṭ**—account for the greatest share. This is a miniature image of rhythm in Arabic poetry as a whole, for these meters occupy a leading position therein. Al-Qarṭājannī says: "Whoever traces the discourse of poets across all the 'arūḍ will find that the discourse occurring therein differs in its patterns according to the differing courses of the meters, and will find delight in some more widely than in others. The highest in degree are al-ṭawīl and al-basīṭ, followed by al-wāfir and al-kāmil. As for al-ṭawīl, one finds in its 'arūḍ splendor and strength; in al-basīṭ, ease and sweetness; in al-kāmil, solidity and fine regularity; and in al-wāfir, balance "¹¹

"Abū Tammām " recognized this fact reached by "al-Qarṭājannī, " and thus most of what he had available—apparently—in the collection of "Abū al-Wafā' " seems to have been composed upon these meters. The rhythmic possibilities these meters provide made him "delight " in them, to use al-Qarṭājannī's expression.

Delight, in this sense, may approach aesthetic appreciation: both arise from the recipient who finds in the text what provokes and stimulates him, such that his reaction is built upon those stimuli.

Accordingly, we may say that Abū Tammām chose poetic models whose aesthetic value returns to a harmony between meter and poetic purpose on the one hand, and the prosodic configuration of each meter and the rhythmic movement it imposes on the other.

First: Meter and Poetic Purpose

The cluster of meters that dominate the minor *Ḥamāsa/al-Waḥshīyyāt* are al-ṭawīl, al-wāfir, al-kāmil, and al-basīṭ in varying proportions, as shown in the following table:

Meter	al-Ṭawīl	al-Wāfir	al-Kāmil	al-Basīṭ
Number of fragments (maqṭū‘āt)	249	77	63	57
Percentage	%49.11	%15.18	%12.42	%11.24
Rank	1	2	3	4

These proportions reflect Abū Tammām’s considerable ability in selecting poetic models in which he strove to ensure that his anthology would be refined and distilled, embodying his knowledge of rhythm as the most important constituent of poetry.

The hypothesis that certain meters are more suitable than others for specific poetic purposes—a question that witnessed substantial debate among critics, who split into two groups, one supporting the idea and another rejecting it on the grounds that the poet can compose in a single purpose across many meters—may nevertheless approach validity in the context of selection and anthologizing.

Abū Tammām, it seems, selected fragments in which rhythm suited poetic purpose, and this becomes evident through what the four major meters achieved in *al-Waḥshīyyāt*:

1.1 Meter al-Ṭawīl

Al-ṭawīl is the longest of Arabic meters, and the most laden with majesty, composure, and depth. It is the most spacious, the most unrestrained, and the gentlest in tone: its resonance reaches you when you scarcely notice it, and its hum within the crafted speech resembles a beautiful frame around an image—adorning it without distracting the viewer from its beauty and ornament.

It takes from al-wāfir without abrupt truncation; from the delicacy of al-ramal without excessive softness; from the pure ease of al-mutaqārib without its lightness and narrowness. It is spared the clamor of al-kāmil and the harshness of al-rajaz; and its length grants it dignity and grandeur.¹² Since al-ṭawīl possesses these qualities, we find 249 fragments in the *Ḥamāsa* woven upon it, constituting 49.11% of the selections.

Abū Tammām’s selection of these fragments in this meter is due to the fact that poets prefer it when narrating connected stories bound to their past, their reports, their legends, and the epics of their tribes¹³ with a pressing desire to highlight the virtues and features of chivalry that constitute the core of *ḥamāsa*. The poet finds in those virtues—generosity, chastity, daring and courage, rescue, and pride—attributes of boastful self-assertion, and these features appear across all chapters.

Moreover, among the reasons for the dominance of this meter is its spacious sonic field, which enables the poet to express any meaning among the meanings of *ḥamāsa*. It corresponds to the majesty of situations of boasting, mutual invective, and contestation, to which the Jāhilīs devoted great attention, and which poets continued to cultivate in the first Islamic centuries—the periods from which Abū Tammām selected most of the *ḥamāsī* material of this anthology.¹⁴ Thus, when you read the verse of Ḥumayd b. Thawr al-Hilālī:¹⁵

You sought, perhaps, to prolong our bloodshed—
yet if you are heedless, God is not heedless.

The charge of horses did not cease until it drove you—
your necks thrust deep into chains.

We marched, and leveled graves, until they stood—
a barrier against a progeny competing in number.

Had any tribe ever preceded you before us—
with a blood-feud, that you might claim it among the tribes?

You find the poet depicting a ḥamāsī scene in which he boasts of his people, recounting successive, consecutive events. He gathers for us the beginning and end of the battle and the intoxication of victory, delivering them as a single powerful surge. What further strengthens it is the musical resonance accompanying those events: the poet excelled in narration and description to the point that the recipient listens and is stirred with delight simultaneously¹⁶ This quality is granted by al-ṭawīl due to its length and spaciousness.

In another example, in the chapter of nasīb, the poet "Shurayḥ al-Qāḍī" says:¹⁷

Take pardon from me, and you will keep my affection—
and do not speak against me when I flare in anger.

For I have seen love in the heart, and grief—
when they meet, love does not linger, but departs.

Here al-ṭawīl maintains its strength and spaciousness, in keeping with the intensity of these emotions and impulses. Shurayḥ expresses with sincerity a recurring situation in the life of man and woman: verbal quarrels prompted by anger, which often makes the poet see his wife's silence during his rage as a reason for pardon and the endurance of love, affection, and intimacy—feelings and states that, more often than not, are best conveyed through al-ṭawīl due to the abundance and breadth of its units.

1.2 Meter al-Wāfir

In al-wāfir there is a flow drawn from its origin (al-mutaqārib), except that its melody is cut off at the end of each line, and this truncation is sharply abrupt. It has a profound effect on the tone of al-wāfir, granting it a strong resonance not found in al-mutaqārib. This powerful resonance naturally deprives it of the pure musical rapture of al-mutaqārib, yet it compensates greatly by making it suitable for emotional performance—whether in raging anger and ḥamāsa or in amorous tenderness and longing¹⁸. In other words, once we deny it pure rapture, it exits the realm of short meters and becomes fit for the expression of ḥamāsī feeling—just as we found in al-ṭawīl—and likewise fit for the expression of tender feelings in ghazal: affection, yearning, and nostalgia.

This is what made it rank second after al-ṭawīl in *al-Waḥshīyyat*, with 77 fragments, i.e., 15.18% of the total meters of the book. Its style is often characterized by rhetoric in which repetition, pairing, and antithesis appear¹⁹ keeping the recipient attentive and following its narrative flow without boredom or monotony.

‘Īsā b. Fātik al-Khārījī says :²⁰

My daughters have only increased my love of life—
for they are among the weak.

I fear that after me they will taste misery,
and drink murk after purity.

And that they will go unclothed while other girls are clothed—
so that the eye turns away from a generosity grown lean.

And that time will force them, after me,
to a harsh boor among uncles—cold and rough.

Were it not for them, I would have branded my steed—
yet in the Merciful is sufficiency for the weak.

My little daughter says: "Entrust the clients, "
but how can one entrust what he fears for you?

In this address the clarity of feeling becomes apparent: we sense the warmth of paternal emotion emerging from the powerful, weighty diction and its fine composition. What further intensifies it is the

repetition of the feminine plural *nūn*, which supplies it with a beautiful musical rhythm—one for which al-wāfir is an original locus.

Moreover, al-wāfir is suitable for elegiac compositions in which meanings of sorrow drive the poet to proclaim the virtues of the deceased and recall his qualities. Thus "Abū al-ʿAtāhiya" says :²¹

Who will grant me your companionship, my brother—
and who will let me confide to you what I bear?

The turns of time have folded you after you had been spread—
so are its calamities: spreading and folding.

If death could unfold your resting place for me,
I would complain to you of what it has done to me.

I wept for you, my brother, with my tears—
yet weeping did not avail you in anything.

Enough sorrow is it, to bury you; then I—
shook the dust of your grave from my hands.

In your life there were lessons for me—
but today you are more admonishing than you were alive.

Abū al-ʿAtāhiya releases his meanings in thrusts, as though pumping them out—not in a steady outpouring as the poet of al-mutaqārib does, nor in a light dancing agility as the poet of al-kāmil does²²

1.3 Meter al-Kāmil

It rarely comes in its fully complete form. It is among the meters richest in rumbling resonance and movement, and it has a particular musical quality that—if intended for seriousness—renders it grand and majestic with a clear chant-like element; and if intended for ghazal and related themes of softness and tenderness, renders it sweet, with a ringing like the ringing of bells, and a sort of dignity that prevents it from becoming frivolous or light²³ It is the most complete of the heptasyllabic meters and suits most subjects; it is better in informative discourse than in performative discourse, and it tends toward delicacy if ḥadhadh enters it. When its composition is excellent, it becomes rapturous and dance-inducing, and it carries a tone that stirs emotion—especially if ḥadhadh and iḍmār occur together²⁴

The meter al-kāmil occurs in sixty-three poetic fragments distributed across the chapters of *al-Waḥshīyyāt*, with the chapters of ḥamāsa and marāthī taking the largest share (21 fragments in ḥamāsa and 10 in marāthī). Twenty-one fragments are distributed equally across nasīb, hijāʾ, and generosity/hosting.

Al-Muʿallā b. Ṭāriq al-Ṭāʾī says :²⁵

Our spears walked softly through the foe—
until they came to know the pathways of souls.

Their skulls grew angry with their bodies,
and so the spearheads gathered choking in the chests.

Never did a war-eagle face you even once
but you shattered its wing with your wing.

The full moons suffer at his laughter; but if he goes
angry, he makes the withered spears laugh.

This fragment bears martial tones, in which the poet paints the scene of meeting the enemy and how spears strike them. This fusion of artistic imaging, rhythmic motion, and boasting was for poets the locus of their glory and the axis of their pride.

A tone of gravity and resolve also appears in the fragment, for the stance of war demands an emotional coloration and an inflamed sensibility—precisely what al-kāmil imposes

The Basīṭ Meter

Al-Basīṭ is the sibling of al-Ṭawīl in majesty and grandeur. What diminishes al-Basīṭ, however, is that it retains a residue of *rajaḥ* inflections whose humming resonance prevents its rhythm from fully disappearing behind the poet's diction and from wholly "descending" into it as a musical atmosphere that frames the poem like a border. In general, the formula of al-Basīṭ tends to be **performative/constructive** (*inshāʾi*) if we assume that al-Ṭawīl, by contrast, has an **informative** (*khbari*) formula.²⁶ Accordingly, it accompanies the meanings the poet aims at, strengthening them and fastening them so that they settle in the recipient's mind; for poetry seeks to carry meanings more capaciously than prose can convey, and it is the music of poetry that enables it to reach meanings and transmit them.²⁷

Second: Prosodic Configurations and the Dynamics of Rhythm

Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Shaykh notes in his *al-Shiʿrīyya al-ʿArabīyya* that the sixteen meters never appear in actual practice in the exact form presented in the five circles; rather, they almost always appear in manifestations derived from that ideal model, sometimes departing from it to a considerable degree. Hence, we cannot classify the prosodic forms in use solely according to the eight *tafʿilāt* of the theory. He adds: the truth is that the circles are merely a kind of rhythmic "origins" from which the real metrical patterns employed by poets are derived, in one way or another, as "branches."²⁸ This means that a breach of the Khalīlīan rule becomes visible in the prosodic form of the poetic line through *zihāfat* and *ʿilal*, which poets found to be a means of overcoming the monotony and complexity imposed by the original pattern.

The recipient relies on the same path: in the new metrical formations for each meter, the reader finds a distinctive rhythm that takes him beyond what is pre-fixed, and an aesthetic that enriches his readings. This may well be what occurred with Abū Tammām. For when we return to the meters most dominant in the selected fragments of *al-Waḥshīyyat* and their patterns, we find deviant forms—something we will examine by returning to different models across the four principal meters, on the premise that *zihāf*, in taste, is more pleasing than the original.²⁹

2.1 The Ṭawīl Meter

Al-Akhfash reports: I asked al-Khalīl, "Why did you name al-Ṭawīl 'long'?" He replied: "Because it is long by the completeness of its parts."³⁰ The Ṭawīl consists of forty-eight letters distributed across four *tafʿilāt*. Its original form is:

فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ

From its models in *al-Waḥshīyyat*:

Al-Muntafiq al-Dabbī³¹ says in the chapter of Ḥamāsa:

And fortune saved you—cleaving rock—after

the horses of al-Hārīth b. Sharīk had overshadowed you.

فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ

Ṭufayl³² says in the chapter of Elegies:

Sinān of Huraym was a successor—

and Ḥiṣn—and of Asmāʾ—when they disappeared.

فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ

Hudayya³³ says in the chapter of Adab:

I am not one who seeks evil—though evil keeps close to me;

yet when I am made to bear evil, I ride it.

فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيلُنْ

Another poet³⁴ says in the chapter of Nasīb:

Upon you be God's peace: as for our hearts, they are ill—

yet as for our affection, it remains sound.

نُ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيْ اِفْعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُولُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ

Shabīb b. al-Barṣā' ³⁵ says in the chapter of Hijā':
 By my life: Suhayya surely hastened on—
 at Arṭāh—among the caravan of treachery and perfidy.
 فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ *** فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ
 Ziyād al-A'jam ³⁶ says in the chapter of Generosity and Guests:
 A noble man—when you come seeking good—
 bestows on you what his fingers contain.

فَاعِلُنْ m نْ اِفْعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ *** فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ
 Al-Ḥuzanbal al-Zuhayrī ³⁷ says in the chapter of Attributes:
 It set out—what set out in a night—then came to Najd:
 a southern wind of Dhāt Shafān, counterbalancing it.
 فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ *** فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ
 And another says in the chapter "Blaming Women":
 I kept ties with you when I had desire for you,
 and turned away when I became divided spoil.
 فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ *** فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ

All of these verses are in the Ṭawīl meter. They are affected by the *qabḍ* *ziḥāf* in both 'arīḍ and ḍarb, whereby the fifth silent letter is حذف, so *mafā'ilun* becomes *mafā'ilun*. As for the *ḥasbm*, we find *fa'ilun* sometimes "qabḍed" (becoming *fa'ili*), and sometimes not. This entails dropping some silent elements, which accelerates the rhythm—an acceleration that we observe to align with the poet's psychological state. Thus, in the first example al-Muntafiq al-Ḍabbī speaks of the rescue of his companion, an action that calls for speed, matching the acceleration of rhythm. The same applies in the sixth example: Ziyād al-A'jam resorts to rhythmic acceleration, which corresponds in meaning to generosity and liberality—where the agent is expected to display swiftness and energy.

2.2 The Wāfir Meter

It was named *al-Wāfir* because of the abundance of its parts, "a wataḍ upon a wataḍ" ³⁸ Its original form is:

مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ *** مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ
 This meter tends toward rapid flow, and is marked by its ability to stir the recipient and listener—or to immerse him in grief to the point of calamity. Hence it is frequently used in boasting, elegy, and supplication ³⁹ It intensifies when you intensify it, and softens when you soften it ⁴⁰ From its models in *al-Wahshiyat*:

'Ufayra bt. Ṭurāma al-Kalbiyya ⁴¹ says in the chapter of Ḥamāsa:
 We left the "ṭuls" among the maidens of Qays—
 widowed—after the easing of dyeing.
 نْ فَعُوْلُنْ اِنْ مَفَاعِيْلُنْ اِمْفَاعِيْلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ *** مَفَاعِيْلُنْ اِمْفَاعِيْلُنْ
 Ṭufayl ⁴² says in the chapter of Elegies:
 I have never seen a dead man among the people of Najd
 like Zar'a, the day the mourners rose for him.
 مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ *** مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ
 Another poet ⁴³ says in the chapter of Nasīb:
 I had already healed—then longing was roused:
 the cooing of two doves answering one another.
 مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ *** مَفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ
 Yazīd b. 'Amr al-Nakha'ī ⁴⁴ says in the chapter of Hijā':
 They are two stones from Mount Ṭamī—
 when told, "Sweat!" they do not sweat.

نْ فَعُوْلُنْ اِمْفَاعِلُنْ مَفَاعِلُنْ فَعُوْلُنْ *** مَفَاعِلُنْ اِمْفَاعِلُنْ
 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr ⁴⁵ says in the chapter of Generosity and Descriptions:

If Ibn Khārijā b. Ḥiṣn should die,
then let the sky not rain upon the earth.

نُ فَعُولٌ اِنْ مَفَاعِيْ اِمْفَاعٍ *** فَعُولٌ مَفَاعِيْ اِنْ مَفَاعِيْ

Another ⁴⁶ says in the chapter of Gray Hair:

Alas, my grief! I grieved for a youth
announced dead by grayness and a head once dyed.

مَفَاعِيْ مَفَاعِيْ اِنْ مَفَاعِيْ اِمْفَاعِيْ *** فَعُولٌ مَفَاعِيْ اِمْفَاعِيْ

All these models are in the Wāfir meter. They are affected by the *‘aṣb zihāf*, whereby the fifth element of *mufa‘alatun* is made quiescent, transforming it—at the level of the *hashm*—into *mafa‘ilun*. In this way, the rhythm of the line shifts from (fluidity/acceleration) to (curling/slowing), to use al-Qarṭājannī’s terminology, who holds that "fluidity" (*sabāṭa*) is that in which four consonantal rests succeed one another within two parts or within three parts of a single part ⁴⁷ This is precisely what occurred to *mufa‘alatun*, which became *mafa‘ilun*—from once to as many as four times.

Accordingly, this transformation in rhythmic movement from acceleration to deceleration may be regarded as reflecting the psychological state experienced by the poets in the previous models. In the last two examples, for instance, we note how "‘Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr" laments the death of "Ibn Khārijā," while the other poet mourns his youth—two affects that instill a measure of calm and brokenness in the soul, which is mirrored in rhythm, yielding a slower cadence.

2.3 The Kāmil Meter

It is called "complete" because it contains thirty movements not gathered in any other meter ⁴⁸ It is among the most song-like, gentle, flowing, and clearly intoned of Arabic meters, consisting of a pure, single unit that is repeatedly reiterated ⁴⁹ Its original form is:

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ *** مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

From its models in *al-Wahshiyāt*:

"‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Ajlān al-Nahdī" ⁵⁰ says in the chapter of Elegies:

**He left orphans—he used to mend their distress,
and provide for them each year in hardship.**

عَوْلٌ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ *** مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ

"‘Amr b. La‘ūy al-Taymī" ⁵¹ says in the chapter of Adab:

بَكَرَتْ عَقَّةُ أَبِ السُّؤءِ كَأَسِيرَةٍ تُخَوِّفُنِي بِعِيْرِي

**The vulture of evil rose early, wing-broken—
threatening me with my own beast of burden.**

مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

"‘Abd Allāh b. Jaḥsh" ⁵² says in the chapter of Nasīb:

**If her enemy could, he would drive her mad—
within the breast—drinking her fragrance and her rapture.**

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ *** مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ مُتَفَاعِلُنْ

¹ al-‘Ayyāshī, Muḥammad. *Naẓariyya li-Īqā‘ al-Shi‘r al-‘Arabī* [A Theory of Arabic Poetic Rhythm]. Tunis: al-Maṭba‘a al-‘Aṣriyya, 1986, p. 41.

² al-Nahmī, Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ. Mukhtārāt Shi‘r al-Ḥamāsa bayna Abī Tammām wa-al-Buḥturī [Selections of Ḥamāsa Poetry between Abū Tammām and al-Buḥturī]. Previously cited work, p. 44

³ al-Wād, Ḥusayn. al-Lughā al-Shi‘riyya fī Dīwān Abī Tammām [Poetic Language in the Dīwān of Abū Tammām]. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2005, p. 167.

⁴ Kashājim. al-Dīwān. Ed. al-Nabawī ‘Abd al-Wāḥid Sha‘lān. Cairo: Maktabat al-Madanī, 1997, p. 264.

- ⁵ Ibn al-Mu‘azz. *al-Dīwān*. Ed. Karr al-Bustānī. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d., p. 444 .
- ⁶ Adūnīs (‘Alī Aḥmad Sa‘īd). *Zaman al-Shi‘r* [The Age of Poetry]. Beirut: Dār al-‘Awdā, 2nd ed., p. 64.
- ⁷ al-Nahmī, Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ. Previously cited work, p. 47.
- ⁸ Ibn Rashīq. *al-‘Umda fī Maḥāsin al-Shi‘r wa-Ādābih*. Ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd. Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1981, vol. 1, p. 17.
- ⁹ al-Jūzū, Muṣṭafā. *al-Shi‘r ‘inda al-‘Arab: al-Jāhiliyya wa-al-‘Uṣūr al-Islāmiyya* [Poetry among the Arabs: The Jāhiliyya and Islamic Periods]. Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī‘a, 1988, vol. 1, p. 38.
- ¹⁰ Anīs, Ibrāhīm. *Mūsīqā al-Shi‘r* [The Music of Poetry]. Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 3rd ed., 1955, pp. 12–13.
- ¹¹ al-Qarṭājannī. *Mīnhāj al-Bulaghā’ wa-Sirāj al-Udabā’*. Ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb Ibn al-Khūja. Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1986, p. 268.
- ¹² al-Majdhūb, ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṭayyib. *al-Murshid ilā Fahm Ash‘ār al-‘Arab wa-Ṣinā‘atihā* [A Guide to Understanding Arabic Poetry and Its Craft]. Kuwait: Dār al-Āthār al-Islāmiyya, Ministry of Information, 3rd ed., 1989, pp. 443–444.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 450.
- ¹⁴ al-Nahmī, Previously cited work, p. 55.
- ¹⁵ Abū Tammām, Ḥabīb b. Aws al-Ṭā‘ī. *Kitāb al-Waḥshiyyāt (al-Ḥamāsa al-Ṣughrā)*. Ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Maymanī al-Rājkūtī. Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 3rd ed., p. 78.
- ¹⁶ al-Majdhūb, Previously cited work, p. 450.
- ¹⁷ Abū Tammām. Previously cited work, p. 185.
- ¹⁸ al-Majdhūb. Previously cited work, p. 406.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 407.
- ²⁰ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 90.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 131–132.
- ²² al-Majdhūb. *al-Murshid*, p. 407.
- ²³ al-Majdhūb. *al-Murshid*, p. 302.
- ²⁴ al-Shāyib, Aḥmad. *Uṣūl al-Naqd al-Adabī* [Principles of Literary Criticism]. Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-Miṣriyya, 10th ed., 1994, p. 323.
- ²⁵ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 117.
- ²⁶ al-Majdhūb. *al-Murshid*, pp. 507–508.
- ²⁷ al-Bāwī, Iyād Ibrāhīm Fāliḥ. *al-Binya al-Īqā‘iyya fī Shi‘r Shu‘arā’ al-Jāhiliyya* [The Rhythmic Structure in the Poetry of Pre-Islamic Poets]. PhD diss., College of Arts, University of Baghdad, Iraq, 2008, p. 65.
- ²⁸ Ibn al-Shaykh, Jamāl al-Dīn. *al-Shi‘riyya al-‘Arabiyya* [Arabic Poetics]. Casablanca: Dār Tūbqāl, 1st ed., 1996, p. 278.
- ²⁹ al-Tabrīrī al-Khaṭīb. *al-Kāfi fī al-‘Arūḍ wa-al-Qawāfi*. Ed. al-Ḥasan Ḥasan ‘Abd Allāh. Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 3rd ed., 1994, p. 19.
- ³⁰ Ibn Rashīq. Previously cited work, p. 136.
- ³¹ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 7.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 161.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 183.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 214.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 247.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- ³⁸ Ibn Rashīq. Previously cited work, p. 136.
- ³⁹ ‘Abd al-Riḍā, ‘Alī. *Mūsīqā al-Shi‘r al-‘Arabī Qadīmuḥu wa-Ḥadīthuḥu* [The Music of Arabic Poetry, Ancient and Modern]. Amman: Dār al-Shurūq, 1st ed., 1997, p. 112.
- ⁴⁰ al-Rāḍī, ‘Abd al-Majīd. *Sharḥ Tuḥfat al-Khalīl fī al-‘Arūḍ wa-al-Qāfiya*. Baghdad: Maṭba‘at al-‘Ānī, 1968, p. 353.

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- ⁴¹ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 7.
⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 125.
⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 183.
⁴⁴ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 213.
⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 247.
⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 287.
⁴⁷ *al-Qarṭājannī*. Previously cited work, p. 260.
⁴⁸ Ibn Rashīq. Previously cited work, p. 136.
⁴⁹ ‘Abd al-Riḍā, ‘Alī. Previously cited work, p. 44.
⁵⁰ Abū Tammām. *al-Waḥshiyyāt*, p. 127.
⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 184.