

Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd and his Outstanding Arabic Mua'llagah

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Abstract— *This paper is an attempt not to claim to be comprehensive in dealing with a poetic piece as one type of expressive text in Arabic but a fair endeavor through analytical evaluation of a poem. The paper is limited to a few selected verses of Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd Mua'llagah. Al-Mua'llagah is a representative of the Arabic language and its magnificence. It is a long piece of poetry cannot be examined and scrutinized in a short paper like this. The study focuses with analysis on the first twenty-five verses Tarafah's Mua'llagah.*

The study applies an analytical and critical approach, attempting to illustrate the influence of Arabic poetry as a means of the language and its glory. It commences with an introduction presenting the importance of Arabic poetic language then it moves to give a suitable picture of Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd as a man and a poet. The researcher afterward shifts to the main part of the study, attempting to bring a paraphrase to some selected verses of the long poem. The work reaches its end by a recommendatory afterword.

Keywords— *Arabic poetry, Arabic tongue, Mua'llagah, pre-Islam, Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd.*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Arabic language

History of the language literature as defined by Al-Hashimi in his encyclopedic book *Jewelry of Literature in Literatures and Growth of the Language of Arabs* (1969), is that science which searches in the language and its circumstances – its prose and verse – in its various ages. It is the science that explores its high situation and position, as well as what happened for its pioneers who left touched influence in it (p. 3). Also, he defines Arabic language saying that it is one of the Semitic languages; it is the ancient common language of the Arabs nation who dwelled the peninsula that took its name from them which is located to the western edge of Asia. “The sciences were transmitted into the Arabic language from different parts of the world; by it they were embellished and penetrated the hearts of

men, while the beauties of that language flowed in their veins and arteries” (Lewis, 2002, p. 142). Furthermore, Mou'nis (1978), comments that the purest portrait of the original Semitic that developed in the Arabian Peninsula is the Arabic language which indeed initiated as a perfect culture; it is not a mere tool of culture but a tool and culture together (p.343). In addition to that, Faheem (1986), talks about the Arabic language saying that the Arabic language is the language of human science (p. 200).

The Arabs of the Desert is people of bravery, at all occasions. Their adventurous mode of life makes courage central. Perpetual wanderers, they wander to and fro looking for the required water-supply for their camping area. They are outstanding horseman; and, from the fourth century time, Arabs cavalry make its presence. When the sight of battle is reached, a rider would drop, and ascending the mount he hadled, barebacked, to the spot. The “Arabic-Muslim-speaking people were the major bearers of the torch of culture, knowledge, and civilization throughout the world” (Dahami, 2015). See also (Hitti, 1989, p.557).

It was from Arabia, then, that Arab poetry was to come; for the lands were too much engrossed with commercial materials, matters and kinds of stuff to give literature any possibility of growth. “Towards Arabia, from which they brought gold, agate, and onyx, incense and myrrh, and the perfumes of Arabia; pearls, spices, ivory, ebony, ostrich plumes and apes from India” (Seignobos, 1912, p. 81). Thaif (1960), in *History of Arabic Literature: Ignorance Age*, comments saying: we do not reach the pre-Islamic age that we talk about until we find the classical Arabic has been perfected and reached the summit of its development (p. 121). In addition to that, “Arabic poetry has always been regarded as the diwan al-Arab (the repository of Arabs), a resort in times of sorrow and happiness, of defeat and victory, an expression of the Arab people's cultural ideals and great aspirations” (Allen, 2000, pp. 65-66).

Furthermore, “In both religious and secular poetry, but especially the latter, medieval culture discovered and

celebrated the magical potent bitter-sweetness of the glorious image of the Feminine. Of many influences perhaps the most significant, paradoxically enough, was that of the great enemy to Europe, the superior civilization of Arabia" (Coyle, M. et al.p.228). Southwards, the Himyarite inhabitants, living on those commercial routes which, from the most antiquetimes, had linked Egypt with India by water road, had created towns that congregated themselves into States—amongst them that of Sheba, whose famous Queen Balqeas figures amongst the prodigious folk who traveled to salute the magnificence of the son of prophet *DAWOUD* (David), the sagacious King and Prophet *SULAIMAN* (Solomon), and the reality of which, in the first eras of the Christian era, is demonstrated by monuments now uninhabited, in ancient Yemen, and by inscriptions in Himyaric alphabetical fonts.

Northwards, Syrian progress, civilization, and refinement had early extended to the Arabian oases. On the frontiers of the Roman Realm, small States had flourished such as the princes of Ghassan, to the west of the Syrian barren land, and the princes of Hirah to which the land of our poet Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd belongs, not far from the river of Euphrates, ruled minor kingdoms, centers of civilization that shed their illumination farther than one would have believed. At Hirah, notably, where varied inhabitants are drawn from various countries had inhabited.

One of the significant elements of pre-Islamic poetry is that it portrays the communal and moral condition of the culture of the Arabs before the appearance of Islam. Surely it is the Pre-Islamic Poetry that serves as a gate via which one can envisage the situation, whether, it is ethical or communal, it is political or social, of the society of pre-Islamic epoch. Furthermore, the poet is a significant figure in such an epoch. "For a poet was a defence to the honour of them all, a weapon toward off insult from their good name, and a means of perpetuating their glorious deeds and of establishing their fame forever" (Hoyland, p. 212). Through the poetry of pre-Islam, critics might identify that Arabs, genealogically, were sometimes open-minded and in some other times opinionated without any chief government or authority. The Arabs are disintegrated into tribes in which the young are taught and trained to be warriors and poets.

The period of the Middle Ages, indeed, was of great importance. It "saw considerable progress in many areas of scientific thought (thanks to the Arabs, much of Greek science had been rediscovered)" (Coyle, M. et al. p. 76). "The influence of literature among nations, from a country to another and from continent to another, is tangible and palpable all over the ages. No one can deny the contribution

and influence of Arabic and Islamic civilization on the West" (Dahami, 2017). Such influence commenced since the middle ages until the resurgence or revival period and likely after, with witnesses, proofs, verifications and corroborations of Holy Mecca and Al-Medina El Monawara, Andalusia, Constantinople, Al Quaraouiyine Masjid of Morocco, Great Masjid of Kirwan in Tunisia, Al Azhar of Cairo, Baghdad of Iraq, Umayyad Masjid in Damascus, and many other beacons of erudition and knowledge in the Arabic Islamic world.

2. Tarafah: The Man and The Poet

Tarafah ibn (This Arabic expression *ibn* means son of) Al-A'bd Al-Bakri belongs to that part of the tribe of Bakr. Probably, "he was born in 543 in Bahrain" (Az-Zawzani, 1983, p. 81). Forced and Pushed first by his family, because of the energy of his satires against his clan, he wandered into areas that did not belong to his community; he then took part in the wars which his tribe Bakr and Taghlib had been making for several years. He stayed for a period of time at the court of Hirah, in which he was put to death by order of the king A'mru ibn Hind.

It is in the various periods of this traveling about without any clear destination that he has composed his poetry so diverse in character. Sometimes, he praises his supporters, sometimes he overpowers his parents with reproofs; sometimes he eulogizes his glory, at times he groans over the misfortune that collides with him; but above all, Tarafah is the panegyrist of bounty, hospitality, and pleasures. From an edge to the other of his poetry one feels the vitality of a young, eloquent and tender poet. The sole objective of the poet is to show that his clan is more respectable than the rival one.

The best basis to write a career of the poet as careful as possible is his poetry. On his death, critics might have some details on the part of *Kitab Al-Aghani*, which deals with Al-Mutalammis, Tarafah's uncle, however, this book does not articulate enough about the period of Tarafah's life that preceded his coming to the court of Hirah. Some other historians do not extend either to this matter, perhaps this is for the reason that there were no fixed number of the poems of Tarafah: some historians have certainly placed him among those who are called *Al-Mogollon* 'those who left few poems'; some others have placed him among the 'authors of one piece', assigning only the piece called Al-Mua'llaqah. It is undeniable that by examining only a minor number of Tarafah's poems, one cannot get a thorough inkling of his lifespan.

It is difficult to tell with precision either his birth date or that of his death because different sources do not confirm

a definite information. We know that he lived under the reign of A'mru ibn Al-Munthir III, commonly known as A'mru ibn Hind. It is not surely confirmed in what year Tarafah was killed and how old he was when he died, but what is confirmed is that he died very young. However, Az-Zawzani, (2011), mentions in the book of Al-Mua'llaqat As-Saba' that Tarafah was born in 543 and died in 569 (p. 43). In addition to that, it is mentioned in *Kanz Ad-Durar wa Jame' Al-Gherar* by Ad-Dawadari (1994), that he used to versify before reaching twenty years (p. 483).

Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd is the name typically given to the poet A'mru ibn Al-A'bd ibn Sufyan ibn Sa'd ibn Malik ibn Thubai'a ibn Kais ibn Tha'laba ibn' Oukaba ibn Sa'b ibn Ali ibn Bakr ibn Wa'il, from Ma'add ibn' Adnan (see Majmou' Al-Motoun Al-Kabeer, 1958, p. 650) by several authors. His father Al-A'bd is the brother of the young poet Al-Margash; both were nephews of Al-Margash Al-Akbar (the Elder), *Kitab Al-Aghani*, Vol. (6) for Al-Asfahani, 2008, p. 99). His mother's name is Warda. She is the sister of the renowned poet Al-Mutalammis, of the family of Thubai'a ibn Rabiya. See *Kitab Al-Aghani*, Vol. (24) for Al-Asfahani, 2008, p. 146). Tarafah had a brother named Ma'bad and a sister called Khamag who is a poet too.

In this part, it is significant to say a few statements about how Tarafah's talent has been judged by various authorities. "Tarafa displayed his poetic talent, especially for satire of friend and foe alike, at a very early age" (O'Orady, 1997, p. 13). *Kitab al-Aghani* gives a judgment or an evaluation of three distinguished poets, Jarir, Al-Akhtal and Labid. As said by the first, Tarafah is the greatest poet, as stated by the second, 'the first is Al-A'sha and after him, comes Tarafah; on the word of the last, 'the first is Imruou Al-Kais, then Tarafah is in the second place. The nickname of Tarafah, which has been attached to the poet, perhaps comes from a type of tamarisk, perhaps also it is given for the reason that he had collected the following verse:

ولا أميركما بالدار إذ وقفا
لا تعجلا بالبكاء اليوم مطرفا
(Ali, 2001, p. 102)

Neither push both of you to weep for the one buys a new thing, nor your two princes in the house they stop.

Tarafah's genius, talent and forte were early. From his childhood, he was distinguished by his swift wit and intelligence and biting words.

An anecdote as in *Khizanat Al-Adab*, for Al-Baghdadi, (1997), p. 424; tells the story about our poet. One day when Tarafah was itinerant with people from his clan, he went hunting chasing larks. He held out his snare and waited for

a bit, but no lark having been ensnared, he had to relinquish his plan. When we moved off, he saw a lark comes to the place and pick up the fragments spread on the ground. He directly composed these verse line:

يا لك من قنبرة بمعمر خلا لك الجو قبيضي واصفري
وتقري ما شئت أن تنقري قد رحل الصياد عنك فابشري
ورفع الفح فمادًا تحذري لا بد من صيدك يوماً فاصفري
(Nisabori, p. 239)

O you, lark hovering over this enormous plain, space is free, lay eggs and sings.

Burrow and dig the way you like; the hunter has left be happy.

The net is lifted, what you to fear of; a day will come you will be taken. Be patient

It looks that the poet was young when he versified such lines. Tarafah was also young when his father died. His uncles (related on the father's side) wanted to dispossess Tarafah and his family of the property to which they were entitled. Tarafah, as a boy, could help his mother, brother and sister only with his tongue, improvising an amazing expressive satirical poetry, and threatening his uncles by saying that, although the children of Warda were tiny and she was remote from her own clan, they ought not to mistreat her. Tarafah commented on a speech about him that he is 'A little thing'; he retorted that this little thing sometimes might give rise to serious calamities.

Over the years, Tarafah's genius, talent and forte developed and simultaneously his caustic vigor sharpened. He devoted himself to alcoholic drink and love; he spent the majority of his youth with women and spent his money so much that he wrecked his future. His friends deserted him; he said, moved away from him equally one regresses from a mangy camel. Tarafah was then to wander in lands which did not belong to his clan, alone, discarded and a vagabond, spending nights in hollows like a dying man. Remembering his past he once said, a man who has wasted his youth out of his kinfolk is regarded as a dead man. He undertook, to oust his grief, dangerous expeditions, probing into hard paths over his honorable camel, which he admired in warm terms as we will realize in his *Mua'llagah*. Tarafah joined forces with invading parties and thus gained adequate sustenance to live on.

After losing his beloved Khawlah who traveled away with her clan avoiding a war, Tarafah identified his fault and returned to his family, undertaking to be a wiser man in the future and hands over his debauchery. He went back to favor with them and, as opposed to using his forces to raid, raids far from his people, he employed them in the

known war of Al-Basos. For this war, see Al-Ikd Al-Farid, Vol 6: pp. 69 and following that for some time had burst out between his tribe Bakr and that of Taghlib, both of which return to Wail. He took a very energetic part; he was young, nimble, and courageous like a lion. He possessed two weapons, his blade and his tongue, and both were strident. The people of his tribe gained the triumph under the leadership of Al-Harith ibn O'bbad who took away a significant loot and distributed it among them all. Tarafah got his portion, became affluent, and from then on he was totally reconciled with his clan. He attended gatherings where public affairs were argued and where he was given a grade of honor. Tarafah deserved it since his people were the most honorable of the tribe of Bakr.

Harder (1911), comments that the love of freedom and independence is a natural trait for all the people of fur particularly the Arab tribes. They do not care about sacrificing their blood or extinguishing their properties for the cause of keeping and preserving freedom. It is a characteristic continued within them all over the ages (p. 260). And Tarafah is one among them. He could not stay rich for long. Very generous, as it is a natural habit of Arabs, he gave many assistances, gifts and donations as well as helping anyone who asked him in a similar way to the famous Arabic poet in the period before Islam Orwa ibn Al-Ward who used to support and aid the poor and weak people. Orwa used to raid the rich miser ignoble, dastardly and shameful people in order to feed those who are lacking. Orwa ibn Al-Ward once versified that if he cannot provide food for his guests or for those who are in need, he will present them his body as a gift and a sacrifice.

Ibn Al-Ward,) أقسم جسمي في جسم كثير وأحسو قراح الماء والماء بارد (1998). p. 61.

'I would divide my body to feed my guests, and then I will drink untainted cold water at a time it is very cold winter'. Generosity, bounty and hospitality are innate morals of Arab people all over the ages.

Likewise, Tarafah had friends who survived at his expense where he bounteously wasted his property. He spent his time in feasts, slew fat camels, and called all the young men of his community to share his plates containing camel hump meat. Tarafah never thought of the expense when it concerns buying a drink for himself as well as for his friends, even when it is winter where commonly any item of consumption was of a great charge. He substituted the best camels of his herds for a heady drink. Consequently, he was reproached, and the women of his clan blamed him harshly due to his excessive disposition for the drink. He

said that the camels do not belong to himself alone but belong to both himself and his friends that they led them to graze one after the other. Nonetheless, Tarafah, speaking of the camels, always says that they are his brother's camels. His access generosity to anyone and everyone puts him in a state of fraud, deception and counterfeit. It is possible when he is betrayed by his friends and becomes meager that he goes to join his brother Ma'bad but he is blamed for being too lavish and open-handed in which he keeps nothing for himself. He then speaks to his cousin Malik, asks for his backing, however, instead of helping, drives him away, reproaching him and criticizing him with his life of dissipation. On the other hand, he is menaced by his brother and is consequently in a precarious situation. It is at this point in time that he composed his Al Mua'llaqah, the most appealing piece of poetry, the one where he portrays his past life and his personality. If the verses spoken to A'mru ibn Hind had not brought him back into ownership of his camels in previous poems, he thrived better with this new one. Having stated his two blood relation Kais ibn Khalid and A'mru ibn Marthad, rich and of significant rank, the last called Tarafah and said to him: Only God can give you children; but treasures and wealth, I myself is able to give you. He sent for his seven sons and his three grandsons directly and directed them all to bestow Tarafah ten camels each. Tarafah was able to go back to his clan bringing with him a hundred camels.

Tarafah had compensated his brother for the damage of the camels then he left his service. Now he is his own master, and as he was profligate, Tarafah soon lost the remaining of his camels, and soon subsequently he was bankrupt once more. The wars between the two famous tribes, Banou Bakr and the Banou Taghlib, were over from the time when King A'mru ibn Hind had sent to settle peace. The occasion to fight for the tribe was no longer afford to him. A'mru ibn Hind had just crowned king to the throne of Hirah; it was on this part that Tarafah made his way. The King, A'mru ibn Hind was a very austere man, ferocious and dreaded by his followers; he was known by the nickname as 'The one who lets stone winds blow'.

One day, a very beautiful woman sitting at the table in front of Tarafah; she is the sister of the king. Tarafah seized with esteem, admiration and improvised:

(Ali, 2001, p. 104) الذي يبرق شفافه
قد أثنى فاه

لا يا أبني الظبي
ولولا الملك القاعد

The gazelle with bright-eyed met with me.

If not the king is sitting, prevent me of her lips

The king is offended by such freedom. The anger caused by these daring expressions, together with the grudge he

felt against him, made him decide to end the days of Tarafah. Fearing also the satire on the side of Al-Mutalammis, the king determined to put him to death likewise. To dispose of Tarafah, ibn Hind planned, as Clement (1903), said, "of sending him with his uncle Mutalammis on a mission to the Governor of Bahrain. The uncle opened his own letter of credentials and discovered that the king therein commanded the governor to put him to death" (p. 14). So the king called them both and gave them two letters, to carry to the governor of Bahrain, Abu Karib. They carried the letters and left. The minute they were out of Bahrain, Al-Mutalammis informed Tarafah: 'I know the dishonesty of the king because we both attacked him; hence, I am afraid he has written something that is deadly to both of us. Let us read what is written in the letters and check. If there is anything satisfactory to us, we carry them to their recipients; if, on the contrary, there is something hazardous against us, we drop them to the river. However, Tarafah refused to open the royal stamp. Passing by the river of Hirah, Al-Mutalammis gave the letter he carries to a child there who opened the stamp and read the letter (Jad Al-Moula, 1962, pp. 343-344). Although the matter seems probable, it may be supposed that Al-Mutalammis, having not wanted to break the royal stamp, he caused it to be broken by somebody else.

In the letter, the governor of Bahrain is instructed to execute him. Al-Mutalammis dropped the letter into the river and advised Tarafah to follow him, however, he firmly refused. Al-Mutalammis escaped to Syria but Tarafah brought his letter to the addressee, the governor of Bahrain. The governor, after opening it, said to Tarafah 'Do you know what is written in the letter? Tarafah answered that he knows to say: 'it is written that you do me good'. The governor said 'you are wrong! I have instructions to take your life; but because I am your patient, I will not execute you, I appeal your flight. Go on the spot, so as not to, meeting you here, you should be aware of the content of the letter. Again Tarafah rejected to follow such decent advice, saying that if I do so, people would think I am guilty of a wrongdoing, but in fact, I am not. The governor is obliged to imprison him.

Being in jail, Tarafah knew the disloyalty of his brother-in-law A'bd A'mru ibn Bishr and understood that it was he who was the reason of all the wickedness; he composed a poem where he exposed the treachery of A'bd A'mru ibn Bishr, his cruelty and his inexperience. Tarafah was sad to have such a low and wicked parent as A'bd A'mru ibn Bishr, who unfolded the infection like a disgusting dirty

camel. He then made new efforts to secure the backing of his old friends, but, as he protests in a short poem, they deserted him. He continued alone under the weight of his illness and delivered to his meditations.

The governor of Bahrain did not accept to kill his relative Tarafah and wrote to King A'mru ibn Hirah, giving his resignation. The king then sent another governor from Taghlib, an energetic man, who did not delay to order the death of Tarafah. The poetic energy of Tarafah was not affected and even composed some poems during the arrangements of his execution, while he was taken to be attached to the scaffolds. He is hanged, irrespective of his youth, for his princely character as well as his poetic gift and talent.

3. Al-Mua'llaqah (the Hanging Poem on Ka'abah)

It is confident that the poems of Al-Mua'llaqah are from Tarafah; there can be no disagreement on this point. However, the disorder of the verses and the diversity of the topics treated in the same piece indicate that the whole piece was not versified at one time. Indeed, Tarafah, on several incidents, celebrated his mistress, Khawlah, in terms that are approximately identical. The first ten verses, which are a eulogy (Madaih) of Khawlah are later inserted by a publisher. Furthermore, he has reiterated the same lines, simply with diverse rhymes. These first ten verses are placed at the beginning of Al-Mua'llaqah to form a comprehensive poetry.

Several poets, critics and commentators – ancient or current – indicated that Tarafah is one of the distinguished and eminent poets. He is classified to be among the leading poets. One as Jarir preferred Tarafah to all other poets however, there are others who ranked him in the middle or even the last. For Jarir I consider, he is true for the reason that Tarafah died a very young person. The matter is similar to Christopher Marlowe – the contemporary of Shakespeare – who was killed very young in a fight inside a tavern. Many critics said that if Marlowe lived the same age as Shakespeare, he might be better than Shakespeare. Likewise, if Tarafah lived similar years of other poets, he might be ranked first.

whatever may come, all agree that Tarafah was one of the greatest Arab poets ever. In his *Mua'llaqah*, Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd said:

1. لَحْوَلَةُ أَطْلَالٍ بِيَرْقَاتِهِمْ
تَلُوْحُ كَيْفِي الوَشْمِ فَيُظَاهِرُ الْبَيْدَا

¹ Az-Zawzani, Abo Abdullah Al Husien ibn Ahmad. (2004). *Sharh Al-Mua'llaqat As-Saba'*, (Interpretation of the Seven Hanging Poems of Arabs) Beirut: Dar El-Ma'refah. p. 71.

1. The remains of Khawlah's dwelling in the stony tract of Thahmad that shines like a tattoo on the surface of the hand.

Tarafah speaks about his beloved's ruins symbolized by the vestiges of tattoo marks on the surface of a girl's hands. Readers look to share the poet's bafflement, anxiety, and astonishment over the traces of the dwellings. Such dwellings are in tune with what occupies the mind and heart of the poet. *Al-Atlal* refers to ruins, relics, traces or remains of the beloved's abandoned place. *Bairqat* is a gravelly tract molded by small rocks. *Thahmad* is the name of a domicile familiar to our poet *Taluh* might mean shiny and lively, and *Washm* is the mark of the tattoo.

2. وَقُوفاً بِهَا صَخِيعَةً مَطِيئَةً يَقُولُونَ لَا تَهْلِكْ أَسَى وَتَجَدِّدْ

2. There, my companions, halted their mounts with me, saying: Do not perish of grief and take courage.

Mataiyais a riding mount; *asan* means grief. This second line symbolizes the poet stopping at *Al-Atlal* of the beloved's former dwellings. It conveys to the readers the anxiety and grief of the poet while showing his mates around on their riding mounts requesting him to stay tranquil and not to be nervous. It can be assumed that the suffering caused by love is alarmed.

3. كَأَنَّ خُدُوجَ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ غُدُوءَ خَلَايَا سَفِينِ النَّوْاصِفِ مِنْ نَدَى

3. On the dawn of departure, Al-Malikhia sailed like desert ships, in the valley of Dadid.

The poet uses a metaphorical vision, well known in Arabic communities old or current when he pronounces the camel as a desert ship. Tarafah compares the howdahs on the camel of the tribeswomen to the traveling fleet of ships in terms of their enormous litters and luggage transport. *Hudj* means the camel howdah which is used for the carriage of women. Its plural is *Haduj*. *Khalaya* signifies large ships, and *nawasif* is a large broad place close to the sides of the valley. *Dadid* is the name of a valley known by the poet.

4. غَدُو لَيْتَةً أَوْ مُسْتَفِينِ ابْنِ يَامِنٍ يَجُوزُ بِهَا الْمَلَاخُطُورَ وَيَهْتَدِي

4. Adawliyyan or Ibn Yâmin's fleet, that the mariner sometimes diverts, sometimes straight forward;

This line gives a brief description of Tarafah himself comparing trip taking by camel to the tacking of a ship. The poet gracefully presents a high standard usage of Arabic language in which he portrays how camels occasionally werve from a straight path. The poet uses deep Arabic expressions such as *A'dulii*, *Ibn Yamin*,

Safin, and *Yajor*. *A'dulii* is a tribe in Bahrain and *Ibn Yamin* is a tribal fellow. *Safin* means ships; it is taken from the singular word *safina*. *Yajor* is a verb from the noun *jawr* which means a deviation from the right way, that is, to trip via the wrong track.

5. يَتَشَقُّ حَبَابَ الْمَاعِزِ وَمُهَا بِهَا كَمَا قَسَمَ النَّزْرِيَّاتُ بِالْيَدِ

5. Split the waves via prows, as a player divides the hoarded sand with his hand.

This insequence indicates the sense of a gambler. This verse reveals a unique symbolic image of poetry in the pre-Islamic period. In the three verse lines (3-5) we find that Tarafah is one of those thinkers who believe in life as a useless and vain thing and thinks that one should live unassumingly. The principle of Tarafah was to live in delights and enjoy life as much as probable.

6. وَفِي الْحَيِّ أَخُو بَيْتِئِضْ الْمَرْدِ شَادِنٌ لَوْلَوْ وَرَبَّ جِدِّ مَظَاهِرِ سَمَطِي

6. In the tribe there is a beautiful young gazelle, old enough to reach the fruit, with a neck flaunting double necklaces of pearls and chrysolite;

Our poet, Tarafah, in this particular line evaluates his beloved's lips, murky eyelids and eyeballs as those of a young dark deer. He transmits a comparable representation of the beloved's beauty in distinguished Arabic culture, paying special attention to the connotative meaning. The poet exhibits careful poetic images. He sticks to the description of his adored lady who is compared with a young gazelle, murky-lipped with a gorgeous long neck. Generally, the vivid image presented by the poet allows readers and critics to retain formal poetic features as closely as possible by his talented way of applying the language.

7. خَدُولٌ ثَرَاعِي زَيْزَبِ بِحَمِيلَةٍ تَنَازَلُ أَطْرَافَ الْبَرِيرِ وَتَرْتَدِي

7. Viewing aloof, with the herd glancing in the lush thicket,

nibbling the tips of the arak, covers them in her cloak. This distinct verse exhibits other moments of reminiscence, craving and concern. This is represented by the female antelope that has been absconded behind by the rest of the flock. Likewise, this line attempts to make a straight comparison of the beloved's neck to that of an antelope's long neck in terms of its attractiveness and straightness. This sequentially reveals the poet stopping at the traces of the former dwellings and experiencing an ephemeral moment of longing about his beloved after her leaving.

8. وَتَبْسِمُ عَنِ الْمَسْكَانِ مَمُورًا تَخَلَّلَ حُرَّ الرَّمْلِ دَغِصَ لَهُ نَدَى

8. She shows pleased white teeth like a vivid chamomile that propagates in the middle of a moistened mound of the purest soil.

[All Arabic verses about Mua'llaqat Tarafah ibn Al-A'bdin this study are from this edition of the book, pages 71-82].

In this line, Tarafah compares the lips of his beloved with the flower that sparkles and shines on a clear sandy hummock. The poet emphasizes the accurate meaning of the verse line, for instance, the expression 'teeth like a brilliant chamomile' underline the quality of beautiful metrical poetry with an explicit point of reference that goes in the company of a sense of profound expression.

9. سَقْنَهُ إِيَّاهُ الشَّمْسُ إِذَا لَيْتَهُ أَسِفَتْ وَلَمْ تَكْدِمِ عَلَيْهِ بِأَمْدٍ

9. To its teeth the sun has divulged its brilliant water but not to the amount where they grow, that is interspersed with lead-ore, while the ivory persists unspotted.

The poet elucidates an amazing picture about the prettiness of the dark mouth which is ornamented by the shining bright teeth. This prettiness is completed by the ray of the sun which is flashing to the face where its beauty increases by a pure smooth color. Tarafah ingeniously creates an attractive image by mixing the brownish mouth with the white teeth beside the reflection of the sun adding further beautification.

10. وَوَجْهَ كَأَنَّ الشَّمْسَ أَفْنَتْ رِءَاءَهَا عَلَيْهِ نَقِيُّ اللَّوْنِ لَمْ يَتَّخَذِ

10. And a face is like enfolded in the sun's coat, Pure of hue, the skin is light and smooth.

The symbolic images are seen in this verse convey the truthful features of the beloved's appearance in terms of its lucidity and brightness. The use of the conjunction and at the beginning of the line emphasizes the image depicted by the poet the illumination of the beloved's face. Such idea compels the readers to fix their attention on one purpose. It is the purity and gracefulness of the face of the beloved as it is the habit of Arabic poets and thinkers mostly mention in Arabic culture and literature, that the sunlight is commonly used to designate a bright face. Tarafah compares the beauty of the face of his lady as the brightness of the sun.

11. وَإِنِّي لَأَمْضِي الِهَمَّعَدَةَ اخْتِصَارَهُ بَعُوجَاءَ مَرْقَالِ التَّرْوِخِ وَتَعْنَدِي

12. أَمُونٌ كَالْوَرَّاحِ الْإِرَانِيْنَ صَانَتْهَا عَلَى لَاجِبِ كَأَنَّهُ ظَهْرُ بُرْجِدٍ

13. جَمَالِيَّةٍ وَجِنَاءَ تَرْدِي كَأَنَّهَا سَقْنَجَةٌ تَنْبُرِي لِأَرْعَارِ زَيْدٍ

14. تَبَارِي عِتَاقًا نَاجِيَاتٍ وَتَأْتِبَعْتُ وَظِيْفًا وَظِيْفًا فَوْقَ مَوْجِ مُعْبِدٍ

15. تَرَبَّعَتْ الْفَقِيْنِ فِي السُّؤْلِ تَرْتَعِي خَدَائِقَ مَوْلِيَا لِسِرَّةِ أَغْبِدٍ

16. تَرَبَّعَ إِلَى صَوْتِ الْمَهِيْبِ وَتَقِي بَدِي خُصَلِي زَوْعَاتِ أَكْفَمِ لَيْدٍ

11. I dispel sorrow when it displays itself, appreciation to a light and fast camel that goes unfatigued from evening to morning.

Tarafah in this verse and the next five lines, he enjoys giving elegant *wasf* (description) of his she-camel. He connotes that if disaster falls upon me and on my area, I expel it away via mounting my camel *A'wja* because it is

used to long travels with enduring patience from dawn to dusk.

12. Its steps are as harmless as the planks that back the stretcher; I drive it on a path covered with footprints, like a piece of cloth decorated with strips.

Linking the previous line with this one, Tarafah makes a comparison between the camel with its wide sides to the wooden coffin of the dead.

13. Pretty she-camel struggles speed as, an ostrich presented with little hair and grey.

14. My camel imitates the generous man, hurries, quickly its legs follow its hand on a prepared track.

Continuing from the previous lines, the poet still in his portrayal of his she-camel saying that this camel is a rival to others in its quick walking not like other slow ones. This camel when walk, it walks with a systematic move in which the legs land on the preceding hand which is already prepared.

15. My camel stayed all spring on both green hills, among other milk fewer ones, in rained gardens of the valley.

It spends the spring in Al-Kouffan, in the middle of full camels, grazing in orchards in a fertile valley, the bottom of which is watered by successive rains.

16. It turns to the voice of the one who calls and defends herself with her bushy tail against the dreaded attacks of the brown male whose tail is stuck to the rump.

In the verses 11 – 16, Tarafah insists on producing the picture of the camel as a gorgeous one using the best expression. He increases a developed invented artistic paint when he associates the short hair of the camel's tail as wings of a white eagle. Also comparing the camel's fleshed two thighs to two elongated smooth gates of a huge palace; its armpits to two beasts' hole in a tree. Similarly, the poet compares the hugeness of the body as a roman bridge characterized by firmness and strength.

17. كَانَتْ جَنَاحِي مَضْرَحِيْنَ حَيْثُ كُنْتُ جَافَا فِيهِ شُكَا فِي الْعَسِيْبِيْمِ سُرْدٍ

18. فَطَوْرًا بِهِ خَلْفًا لَزْمِيلٍ وَتَارَةً عَلَى حَتَفِ كَالشَّنِّ ذَاوِ مَجْدٍ

19. لَهَا فَخْدَانِ أَكْمِلًا لِنَحْضِ فِيهِمَا كَاتِهْمَا بَابَا مِنْبِيْمِ مَرْدٍ

20. وَطَيِّ مَحَالٍ كَالْحَنِيْخِلُوفَةِ وَأَجْرِنَةَ لَزَّتْ بِدَائِيْمِنَضِدٍ

21. كَانَتْ كِنَاسِي ضَالًّا لِيَكْتَفِيَهَا وَأَطْرَ قِسِي تَحْتَصُلِبُ مَوْجِدٍ

22. لَهَا مَرْفَقَانِ أَقْتَلَانِ كَاتِهَا تَمْرٌ بِسَلْمِي دَالِجِ مَسْتَدٍ

23. كَقَطْرَةِ الرُّومِيَّاسِمِ رَبِّهَا لِنُكْتَفَنَ حَتَّى تُشَادِقَ مَرْدٍ

24. صِهَابِيَّةُ الْعُنْتُونِ مُوَجِدَةٌ الْفَرَا بَعِيدَةٌ وَخَدِ الرَّجْلِمَوَارَةِ الْبِيدِ

25. أَمْرَتْ يَدَاهَا فَتَلْتَضَّرُ وَأَجْنَحَتْ لَهَا عَضْدَاهَا فِي سَقْفِيْمِسْتَدٍ

17. It appears like the wings of a great vulture, sewn with an awl to the bones of the tail, cover it on both sides.

18. Sometimes it strikes her posterior part, sometimes her dried breasts, like an old flabby and milkless.

19. The camel's two thighs are of dense flesh as if they were the two gates of a large and high fort.

The flesh of her two thighs is perfectly firm. They are as a gate of a lofty smooth-walled fortress.

In this line, the poet describes the physical appearance of his she-camel: her thighs are robust, strong, resilient and durable and. Tarafah thus makes use of allegories to create a personal point of comparison. Putting this in mind, he attempts to give a description by focusing on the physical objects in portraying the fleshy thighs of the she-camel.

20. As if two dens in a thicket of lotus surrounded the camel, his ribs are curved and bows under its strong reins.

21. The two elbows are arched as if they support the two buckets of a sturdy water carrier.

22. Broadly spaced are its elbows, as if it walks carrying loads of a sturdy water bucket carrier.

In this verse, our poet tries to compare the elbows of his she-camel with a water carrier. The portrayal here focuses on a comparison based on the attributes of the she-camel. Tarafah depicts the strong elbows as the most dominant feature to portray the strength of Tarafah's camel, hence giving a close figurative image.

23. A shape like a Byzantine's bridge, whose builder insisted to raise up brick and mortar side to be true. The line can be read another way. 'Like a bridge constructed by a Greek, whose designer would have sworn to surround it with well-cemented blocks.

Tarafah in this particular line, endeavors to portray a direct comparison of the concrete body of his camel to a Byzantine bridge in terms of its distinctive power, arrangement and the robustedifice of its components. He attempts to provide leading features of the strong parts of his camel using distinctive connotation. Tarafah proves more than a few times in his poems that he devoted great significance to oaths.

24. The cluster of hair under her chin is fair-haired, its spine vigorous, the stride of its long hind foot, the swaying of its firm front foot.

Another paraphrase of the line can be read as 'With a red-bristle under the chin, very firm her back, long stride, and lashing forearms'

In the above verse line, the poet illustrates further specific qualities related to the look of his camel. After illustrating its reddish tufts, he goes on to elucidate its strong back.

25. She is swaying, her race is impetuous, her head is strong, her two shoulders are attached to a very high height. To sum up the previous nine verses, it can be said that the camel has attracted the mind and heart of Tarafah in which he estimates it his shelter in all his circumstances – good or

bad / sorrow or gladness – for that we find him better select his word and images. He concludes forming his long inventive portrait by describing the camel's long neck as the tail of a ship swimming in Dejlh River of Iraq, gathering two images in one, the symbol of the desert and that of sea and civilization, shifting to its lips as the manipulated smooth leather of cows. Similarly, Tarafah compares the eyes of his camel to two polished untainted pure mirrors which glitter like the pure unpolluted water.

After finishing the *Wasf* 'description' of the parts of his sturdy she-camel, Tarafah moves to give us a picture of the function and importance of this mount in life in which, for him, it is his eyes that he sees with; it is his ears that he hear through. *Wasf*, *Fakhr*, *Madaih*, *Hija*, *Marthiyah* and several other poetic elements are the main types of poetry. Consequently, Tarafah has framed an ideal portrait for the mount that he roams the lands with it because he is a brave knight refuses a less quality mount than this one. Tarafah "is almost the only one of the ancient poets in whose work we find some signs of meditation, maxims, or apophthegms" (Clement, 1903, p.15). our poet, Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd, as a poet-knight indeed, roamed with his audiences into a beautiful paint incarnating performance, imagination and design. Thairf (1960), states on the situation saying: the poet brings images through his mind from the wide concrete world around him. With such sensitivity, if the poet wanted to describe something, he scrutinizes profoundly in its parts. The poet amply labels it as if he wants to move the described thing accurately to his poems (p. 221). Thairf adds that the poet is a sculptor who does not compose a poem but makes a statue. A better example of that is Tarafah when describing his camel.

II. AFTERWORD

The paper anticipated at scrutinizing inspecting the figurative, metaphorical and aesthetic pictures in Al-Mua'llagah of Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd Al-Bakri. As the analysis shows, it pursued the logical method centered on the most substantial sources. This piece of Arabic poetry depicts original Arab values and standards in pre-Islamic age. The researcher might say that the task arrived at certain concerns the most significant of which is the impact of Arabic graceful language.

The Arabic language is presented as the perfection and excellence of phraseology and full with flashes of humor and pageantry. Generally, the poem of Tarafah can be estimated as one of the gallant pieces of literature of Arabic convention, for it comprises Arabic heritage. Al-Mua'llagah had been revealed as a work of genius. Tarafah ibn Al-A'bd

by composing this Al-Mua'llagah succeeded to convey an ancient Arabic harmonic flavor in his piece of work through his terminology. He could create an intelligence of striking moods and provoke the tensions of motivating elements. Al-Mua'llagah, therefore, is a significant example of Arabic poetic language. In addition, it is one of the poetic masterpieces to have made a touchable impact among Arabs.

As a recommendation, the researcher recommends in further examinations to deal with poetic concerns and artistic qualities, values and figurative visualizations. What has been stated in this short paper, might be not enough to entirely fulfill the objective of searching the complexity of a work like this Mua'llagah. It is commendable of additional studies.

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