



The Thin Line between Lying and Using Linguistic Possibilities: Tawriyah or Double-Entendre in al-Ḥarīrī's Maqāmāt¹

Asmaa Essakouti

Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Berlin, Germany

asmaaessakouti@gmail.com

Abstract

For two centuries, during the data collection period or *'aṣr al-tadwīn*, philologists wandered the desert seeking a reliable informant, mostly an illiterate Bedouin who lives far away, to provide them with rare *recherché* words. Later, this quest for words will make its way to *adab*, but this time the philologist will pursue a trickster, who travels from one city to another, armed by ambiguity only. Thus, the *maqāmah* genre was born, as a parody of a vain quest, where terms were prioritized over meaning. Consequently, I suggest in this paper a new reading of al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt*, as a collection that was produced within a unique linguistic context, marked by a lexical abundance and training for ambiguity. To illustrate this point, I will limit myself in this paper to a single literary figure and its multiple uses within the book; I mean *tawriyah* or double-entendre, as a literary figure that shares the same *enjeu* as the *maqāmah*, meaning the clash between appearance and essence, which can be read aesthetically or morally.

Keywords: data collection period, *maqāmāt*, *tawriyah*, essence and appearance, moral vs. aesthetic judgment, ambiguity.

الخط الرفيع بين الكذب واستخدام الممكنات اللغوية: التورية في مقامات الحريري

أسماء السكوتي

معهد برلين للثقافات والمجتمعات الإسلامية، ألمانيا

asmaaessakouti@gmail.com

¹ In the following, I refer to al-Ḥarīrī's *maqāmāt* as the *Ḥarīriyyah*. I am using two different translations of the work, plus my own, due to the complex history of its translation: for instance, although Preston's translation is loyal to the origin, for moral and linguistic reasons, the translator only translated half the episodes (see the translator's summary of the untranslated *maqāmāt* and the reasons for overlooking them in *Makamat or Rhetorical Anecdotes* 481–496). On the other hand, Cooperson's translation is playful and closer to the author's intentions, yet, its polyphony makes citing it a tricky and unpractical sometimes. Concerning the translation of the other citations, whenever the name of the translator is not mentioned, then the translation is mine.

ملخص

خلال عصر التدوين، جاب اللغويون أقصى الصحاري وأوحشها بحثاً عن مصدر موثوق يسمعون منه غريب الكلام ووحشيته، من ثم اختاروا البدوي الأمي والمعزول عن الحضارة والتعدد اللغوي. فيما بعد، ستجد رحلة البحث عن الكلمات هذه طريقها إلى الأدب، وبالضبط إلى المقامة التي أعادت تمثيل هذا البحث اللوح، مع تغيير طفيف؛ تعويض البدوي المعزول بمحتال فصيح ينطلق من مدينة إلى أخرى، أعزل من كل شيء؛ دون هوية أو مال أو مستقبل، ولكنه في الآن ذاته مجند بغير ابته وغريبه، حافظ لمدونة لغوية يتعطش إليها اللغويون والأدباء أينما حل. من ثم، أقترح في هذه الورقة قراءة جديدة للمقامات الحريرية، تنطلق من حاجة ملحّة لتبيان السياق اللغوي الاستثنائي الذي ولدت فيه؛ سياق انتصرت فيه الكتابة على الشفاهة، وكثرت فيه المادة اللغوية لدرجة البحث عن شكل أدبي جديد يحتوي تشعباتها، وتدرّب فيه اللغويون والأدباء على قبول الغموض، بل وتلمسه. لتبيان كل هذا، قررت أن أركز في هذه الورقة على أداة بلاغية واحدة هي التورية، باعتبارها محسناً بلاغياً يشابه حبكة المقامة في تنصيبه على اشتباك الكينونة بالظهور؛ اشتباك يحتمل القراءتين الجمالية والأخلاقية.

كلمات مفتاحية: عصر التدوين، المقامات، الكينونة والظهور، الحكم الاخلاقي والحكم الجمالي، الغموض.

Introduction

Here ends the *maqāmāt* that I in my vain glory wrote... Had I had the grace to bewailed my gilts, and to study to the salvation of my soul, I would have hidden my faults and kept my honour [*satartu 'awārī l-adhī lam yazal mastūrān*]; but it was afore ordained... (*Maqāmāt* 603)

With these words, al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122) concludes his fifty *maqāmāt*, bidding farewell to his *satr* [concealment], which he had forfeited by writing and publishing his *maqāmāt*. In other words, he is announcing that once the act of writing is completed, the author is exposed forever. In his commentary on the *Ḥarīriyyah*, al-Shurayshī (d. 619/1223) confirms this statement by declaring that “writing equals displaying one’s mind on a plate for everyone” [*man ṣannaḥa faqad ja ‘al ‘aqlahu ‘alā ṭabaq ya ‘riḍuhu ‘alā l-nās*] (al-Shurayshī 23), a striking allegory indeed, in which reading equals eating someone’s brain! Regardless of the hyperbole, these two statements articulate a deep fear of the word,² and the loss of concealment it generates in the author’s relation with the reader.³ However, it can also be a mere conventional gesture required by the premodern ethics of writing.⁴ In such context, it is no surprise that the author would use so many rhetorical and linguistic tools to conceal his mind and prevent his audience from deciphering his true intentions. Accordingly, I engage with the *Ḥarīriyyah* as a work that resists comprehensibility and shields its “true” meaning under piles of ambiguities and linguistic games.

² Al-Ḥarīrī is quite explicit about this point in his introduction where he narrates how he resisted the order to write his *maqāmāt*, to quote him: “I reminded him of the well-known adage. About the consequences of composing even two words, or stringing together only one or two verses” (*Makamat or Rhetorical Anecdotes* 26).

³ The idea of the reader as an enemy can already be found in al-Jāḥiẓ who announced: “Who ever decides to write a book, must write it as if all people are his enemies” [*yanbaghī li-man kataba kitāban ‘allā yaktubahu ‘illa ‘alā ‘anna nās kullahum lahu ‘a ‘dā’*] (al-Jāḥiẓ 60).

⁴ According to Hämeen-Anttila, “the mediaeval author did not write his preface in order to elucidate the process of writing or to pinpoint his relation to the genre. The preface was an answer to a fixed set of questions, and the answers were also fixed. Why write a non-religious book? Because under its non-religious surface, there is a religious, educational and noble moral. How does one dare to write a book? Because a close, or influential, friend asked one to. How does the author himself see his work? As mediocre, but the works are to be judged according to their intention (الأعمال بالنيات), and even a mediocre work may contain something for a perspicacious reader, etc.” (Hämeen-Anttila 149).

Since the *Ḥarīriyyah* uses plenty of shields: metaphors, riddles, rare jargon, highly wrought orations, grammatical enigmas, and others, which would exceed the scope of this paper, I limit myself to the use of *tawriyah* or double-entendre. As a dominant rhetoric figure that shares the same *enjeu* as al-Ḥarīrī's *maqāmāt*, since they both imply a constant clash between essence and appearance, in the following, I first highlight the historical context of techniques and genres where the *Ḥarīriyyah* was first produced (writing system, data collection, parody). I then define *tawriyah* and tackle the question about its morality and its impact on the *maqāmah* genre. In a third step, I dwell on the two forms of employing double-entendres in *Ḥarīriyyah*: first, framing *tawriyāt*, which is speaking to the real reader who exists outside of the text, and second, illustrative *tawriyāt* that were essential to the plot of six *maqāmāt* (M8, 9, 20, 34, 35, 44) and were addressed to the embedded audience within the book. Finally, I conclude by discussing the mode of reception that *tawriyah* expects from its ideal reader; in other words, I elaborate the difference between moral judgment (truth vs. lying) and aesthetic experience (based on the appreciation of make-belief or *takhyīl*).

1. *Ḥarīriyyah*'s First Seeds

1.1. *Orality vs. Writing*

Maqāmah can be defined as an “anti-heroic narrative” (Monroe 13), where the trickster hero (or anti-hero) Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī wins against the philologist, thanks to the former's literary erudition, manipulative tongue, and numerous masks. A typical *maqāmah* takes the following form:

Arrival of the narrator => appearance of the disguised hero => verbal performance => reward => anagnorisis (recognition or unveiling) => parting of the two characters.⁵

The systematic repetition of this scheme might be explained by the fact that the father of the genre used to improvise his frivolous episodes to entertain his companions toward the end of his literary sessions.⁶ In other words, the oral context, where *maqāmāt* were first produced as impromptu accounts, made al-Hamadhānī (d. 397/1007) repeat the same structure and use the same characters to facilitate the act of instant invention. This might also explain why we have no definite number of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* (Drory 15). Nevertheless, compared to his successors,⁷ al-Hamadhānī's episodes were more playful, flexible, and explorative, due to their newness and originality, not yet bound by genre constraints.⁸

A century later, by the time this once “fresh” genre reached Abū Muhammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī, the simplicity of the oral improvisation had vanished and was substituted with a highly

⁵ Monroe illustrates this scheme in detail by adding other components to argue for the “ring composition” that marks the patterns in *maqāmāt* (23).

⁶ “Al-Hamadhānī also fabricated [*zawwara*] highly ornamental *maqāmāt*, improvising [the stories] at the end of his literary sessions. He would ascribe them to a narrator who had told him the story and whom he called ‘Isa ibn Hishām” (al-Qayrawānī 13-14).

⁷ “The language used by al-Hamadhānī is ornamental but it lacks the baroque overelaboration of later periods; in comparison to al-Ḥarīrī and Ibn al-Ṣayqal, al-Hamadhānī's language starts to seem refreshingly simple and straightforward” (Hämeen-Anttila 52).

⁸ According to A. F. L. Beeston, al-Hamadhānī's major achievements—of course beside inventing the *maqāmah* genre—resides in two points: (1) extending the use of *saj'* into the previously untried field of popular accounts and (2) the frank admission that his stories are fictional (8-9).

condensed ambiguous text loaded with paronomasias, riddles, lipograms, and other wordplays strongly attached to the written word. In fact, it is enough to read the following passage in al-Ḥarīrī's exordium, to realize the amount of time and erudition that was invested in the making of the collection:

These *maqāmāt* contain serious language and lightsome, and combine refinement with dignity of style, and brilliancies with jewels of eloquence and beauties of literature with its rarities. Beside quotations from the Koran wherewith I adorned them, and choice metaphors, and Arab proverbs that I interspersed and literary elegancies, and grammatical riddles and decisions on ambiguous legal questions, and original improvisations, and highly wrought orations, and plaintive discourses, as well as jocose witticisms... (*Makamat or Rhetorical Anecdotes* 28)

Accordingly, the written word allowed al-Ḥarīrī to ornate his style and multiply his games; it permitted him to “emphasise on belles-lettres” (Stewart 150) and multiply the levels of ambiguity, interpretations, and misunderstandings. Compared to al-Hamadhānī's work, *Ḥarīriyyah* is a far more challenging text, requiring an erudite reader who can decipher its insinuations, riddles, and rhetoric games.

Moreover, al-Ḥarīrī's heavy reliance on *recherché* words and erudition can be explained by the data collection period. On the one hand, it provided an abundant amount of vocabulary and caused a need for a new form to display the accumulated lexical corpus. On the other hand, the process of recording resulted in misery for philologists who suffered troubles and journeys to record a few rare words.⁹ The *Ḥarīriyyah* was provided as a solution to a philologist problem, offering a way to order collected jargon in a more sophisticated manner. At the same time, it was also a parody of the excessive obsession with Bedouin terms.

1.2. The Aftermath of Data Collection: Abundance and Homonymies

Works on *gharīb* naturally no longer followed the model adopted a century earlier by Abū Zayd and Abū Miṣḥal. With the completion of data collection, authors sought various ways of arranging their *gharīb* material in a meaningful manner. (Baalbaki 89)

Baalbaki presents this argument while displaying a rarely studied type of Arabic dictionaries known as “intertwined dictionaries” [*mudākhal*], which rely on homonymies to display recorded rare jargon in a “meaningful way”.¹⁰ For instance, Ghulām Tha‘lab’s *al-Mudākhal fī al-Lughah* [*The Book of Interconnectedness in Arabic*] opens as follows:

⁹ For instance, Ibn Qutaybah portrays these philologists as follows: “How many enquirers gained only exhaustion? How many travellers ended up returning after wandering in foreign lands, lamenting their birthplace, severing the bounds of kinship, losing their children, enduring foreignness, loneliness, rough food, and worn clothes? Spending their nights in mosques with no light but the moon, eating rarely and sleeping hastily, obsessed with collecting but not comprehending, captivated by channels over contents, oddities over norms, and by multitude and varieties of names, until they return to where they left, with nothing but a huge number of books that only burden their backs.” (37)

¹⁰ Three dictionaries in this genre were composed between 10th and 12th centuries: *al-Mudākhal fī al-Lughah* (*The Book of Interconnectedness in Arabic*), *Shajar al-Durr fī Tadākḥul al-Kalām bi-l-Ma‘ānī* (*The Trees of Pearls, on*

al-ṭalīl: al-ḥaṣīr, wa-al-ḥaṣīr: al-ḥabs, wa-al-ḥabs: al-Jabal al-ʿaswad, wa-al-ʿaswad: sawād al-ʿayn, wa-al-ʿayn: maṭarun la-yuqli ʿu ʿayyāman, wa-l-maṭar: kathratu siwāk, wa-siwāk: mashyu al-jāʿi ʿ... (Thaʿlab 23)

Accordingly, already within the first sentence of *al-Mudākhal*, we move from a carpet (*ṭalīl, ḥaṣīr*), to a mountain (*ḥabs*), to pupils (*sawād al-ʿayn*), to uninterrupted rain (*maṭarun la-yuqli ʿu ʿayyāman*), to teeth polishing (*siwāk*), and to the starver’s walk... The thread that holds these unconnected variables is that each word has at least two meanings, one that relates to the first and a second that tosses us to a completely different semantic field.

While trying to introduce this peculiar genre, ʿAbd al-Jawwād points to the similarity between these “playful” dictionaries and the *maqāmāt* genre, since both share the goal of displaying vocabulary, he says:

The *maqāmāh* is one of the works that are mostly loaded with linguistic terms... I consider it as a sort of linguistic literature, or literary language... which proves certainly that the *maqāmāt* are only a method of collecting language and one of the tricks to teach vocabulary and style (...) The fascination with recoding terms in tricky ways to teach them without causing any boredom or weariness, led to the invention of a new art of composition, which some linguists used to compose astonishing threads that assemble pearls linked by pleasant meanings, driving the reader from one word to the next, guided by a thread of meaning that binds them all. This amusing art is what was called *madākhil* (entries), *al-mutadākhil* (the intertwined) or *al-musalsal* (series). (16-17)

ʿAbd al-Jawwād’s claim that the *maqāmāt* were a mere tool of displaying vocabulary is wrong insofar as it disregards the evident literary aspects of *maqāmāt*. That said, the *maqāmāt*, and especially the *Ḥarīriyyah*, admittedly do contain a lavish amount of rare terms that may qualify them as “linguistic literature.” Moreover, the *Ḥarīriyyah* and the intertwined dictionaries share another aspect, which ʿAbd al-Jawwād overlooks: the reliance on homonymies. Intertwined dictionaries rely on homonymies to extend the sequences of words, while the *maqāmāh* uses the double-meaning of the term to promote a misleading appearance (first meaning) over an intended hidden meaning (second meaning). While playful dictionaries use homonymies for primarily philological ends (lengthening the sequences of synonyms as long as possible), the *maqāmāh* pushes its aspirations further, by using *al-mushtarak al-lafẓī* (homonymy) as a manipulative trick. I address this point in detail below when defining *tawriyah*.

To summarize, one of the first repercussions of the collection of vocabulary was the need to find a new “meaningful way” to display (Baalbaki) or to teach (ʿAbd al-Jawwād) collected terms. In other words, *maqāmāt* and intertwined dictionaries were the product of a rich linguistic era characterized by an abundance of terms yet in need of a new form. In the playful dictionaries, terms were translated into long sequences of homonymies. In *maqāmāt*, the philological

the Interconnectedness of Words Having Different Meanings), and *al-Musalsal fī Gharīb Lughāt al-ʿArab (The Book of Concatenation, On Rare Words in the languages of Arabs)*. Despite the three different headings [*mudākhal* (intermixed, intertwined), *mushajjar* (branched), and *musalsal* (serialized)], the three dictionaries basically shared the same pattern: long stretched sequences that start with a strange rare term; for this term, the linguist provides a synonym with a double meaning; the second of which is then defined by another word with a double meaning, and so on.

endeavor materializes in a repetitive plot where the philologist chases the trickster in order to hear a new word, which to his great misfortune always contains a disguised meaning.

1.3. Parody

The *maqāmah* genre has evidently benefited significantly from the data collection period. How else would al-Hamadhānī or al-Ḥarīrī access that amount of rare rhymed words and metaphors, if there had been no philologists who conquered the deserts looking for trustworthy sources? However, while reading the *maqāmāt*, one cannot fail to notice their ingratitude toward a period that provided their basic material. The *maqāmah*'s elementary plot is based on a parody of the philologist's obsession with Bedouins and their terms. In this context, Abdelfattah Kilito argues that if the *maqāmāt* were made possible, it is thanks to their mimicking of the thirst for learning (and entertainment) that made Iraqi intellectuals run after Bedouin informers (43).

The narrator's obsession with the eloquent trickster is a reference to a period where the data market was at its climax, and where the uneducated Bedouin was the "purest" source for Arabic (Baalbaki 7–16). But how did the "trickster" replace the Bedouin as the source of linguistic knowledge? Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila offers the following explanation:

Al-Hamadhānī, preferred, in most of his stories, to set the stories in a contemporary environment, and as they were set outside the desert, he could not draw on the usual device of quoting "a Bedouin." In this too he was following the spirit of the century. (47)

Accordingly, due to the Arabic literary milieu's movement in space (from desert to urban settings) and spirit (from tribal society to empire), al-Hamadhānī had to devise a new literary figure who owns the Bedouin's pure language, yet it is more accessible to the elite and versed in life in cities, as opposed to the Bedouin who must mandatorily live in a remote region far from non-Arabs and their "corrupting" presence (Baalbaki 7). With this shift from data collection to genre crafting, the literary figure changes as well: from a trustworthy source (the Bedouin) to an ambiguous manipulator of meanings and linguistic forms (the trickster). Therefore, the father of *maqāmāt* creates a character who is constantly on the move, motivated by trickery and fear of discovery. Analog to Shahrazād's fear of death that lengthens her stories, so also does Abū al-Faṭḥ al-Iskandarī's (al-Hamadhānī's hero) and Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī's (*Ḥarīriyyah*'s hero) fear of unveiling by multiplying their journeys and trickeries. Henceforth, instead of the philologists going all the way to the desert to seek the Bedouins, Hamadhānī creates a "counter-journey" that brought the informant source (trickster/anti-hero) to the comfort of the urban *majlis*.¹¹

To summarize, the *Ḥarīriyyah* is the fruit of three developments: first, moving from orality to writing; second, an abundance of vocabulary and seeking a new form of display; and third, parodying of the data collection period whereby the Bedouin was replaced by the trickster as a central figure. The first two elements are accountable for its ornamentation, rhetoric, and style, while parody is responsible for its plot. Consequently, in a book where ambiguity and parody are blended intentionally, reading becomes "an experience of discovery, where meaning is less straightforward, more surprising and unexpected" (Harb 72).

¹¹ Moving into the urban space in *maqāmāt* can also be in reference to all the Bedouin informants who moved to city to make themselves available to the philologists (Baalbaki 18).

2. Tawriyah

2.1. Definition and Morality

The term *tawriyah* comes from the root *warā*, meaning to conceal or to hide something behind (*warā*) another (Bonebakker 395-396); in other words, it is an intentional act that veils a meaning behind another, inviting the audience to search for the latter. The earliest definition of *tawriyah* goes back to Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (d. 296/908), who explains it as follows: “*Tawriyah* occurs when mentioning a single term with two senses: a near, explicit and unintended sense, and a remote, implicit intended sense” (106).

In this definition, the nature of the concealing becomes clearer: it relates to the nature of vocabulary that allows multiple synonyms (near/remote) and different degrees of clarity (explicit/implicit) and, in a further step, to the intention of the speaker (unintended/intended) who can choose between using the possibilities of language to express himself clearly or to make use of ambiguity to serve his ends. Interestingly, Ibn al-Mu‘tazz focalizes remoteness, explicitness, and intentions, yet, he does not mention the truthfulness of the first sense, nor the falseness of the second. In other words, the oldest definition of *tawriyah* in Arabic had no interest in judging the figure of style morally; it simply described the linguistic and pragmatic aspects of double-entendre.

Following the example of Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, al-Muṭarrazī (d. 610/1213) in his commentary *al-‘Īdāh fī Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī* defines double-entendre under the title “*‘ihām*” and “*takhyīl*”; to quote his definition:

Al-‘ihām [giving the illusion of something], also called *takhyīl* [make-believe], occurs when one uses terms with two meanings: the first is near [*qarīb*] and the second is remote [*gharīb*]. Once pronounced, the focus goes to the near first sense, while the intent of the speaker is actually the distant one. For instance, in the 8th *maqāmah* concerning the needle. (66)

Accordingly, al-Muṭarrazī takes over two of the defining points mentioned by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz (near/remote character and the intentions of the speaker), yet he removes the explicitness of the meaning and substitutes it with the “focus” of the addressee who falls into the first meaning and ignores the second. Thus, *tawriyah* becomes an act of make-belief that directs the addressee’s attention to the first “near” meaning, while intending the second “remote” sense. Remarkably, while providing this definition for *tawriyah*, al-Muṭarrazī—just as Ibn al-Mu‘tazz—does not reflect on its degree of morality or immorality and treats like any other rhetoric tool.

In contrast, centuries later, the 20th century scholar Monroe borrows Sufi terms to define double-entendre as a rhetorical figure that plays on *dhāhir* (exoteric)/*bāṭin* (esoteric) dichotomy, meaning on the gap between appearance (illusion) and hidden reality (disillusion). Hence, he concludes:

What is a *tawriyah*, if not a figure of speech that blurs the distinction between the (false) surface meaning of a word, and its (true) hidden meaning? (97)

The difference between the latter definition and the first two proves Antoon to be right when he argues that premoderns were “lighthearted” and “encouraging of humour” unlike modern scholars who are far more serious due to neo-Victorian morals (Antoon 19–24). A similar

argument is made by Bauer in *A Culture of Ambiguity*, where he highlights the premoderns' "training in ambiguity" and "playful interest" in linguistic matters (151–182). Thus, while *tawriyah* initially was considered by scholars as a rhetorical tool based on the duplicity of meaning and hidden intent, it became morally problematic later, when modernity started promoting clarity, rationality, and control.¹²

2.2. *Tawriyah* and *Maqāmāh* Genre: *Duplicity and Discovery*

Setting the question of morality aside, it is evident that the duplicity and ambiguity of this rhetorical figure made it one of the most permanent tools in the *maqāmāt*, a logical choice that stems from "the ever-present tension between appearance and reality in the *maqāmāt*" (Monroe 97). In the same context, Kilito argues that the relation between double-entendre and *maqāmāt* is a "kinship" relation:

[I would like to] indicate the kinship between *maqāmāt* and a figure of speech: the *tawriyah* (which I would like to translate as *sens déguisé*). The *tawriyah* supposes a "close meaning" (which is only a decoy) and has a "distant meaning" (the real meaning of the message); in the same way, many *maqāmāt* are built on a game of appearance and being: the hero appears first to the narrator as a blind man, an old woman, etc. We cannot avoid quoting Aristotle's definition of recognition (Recognition, as the name indicates, is a passage from ignorance to knowledge) (33)

Kilito omits the linguistic nature of *tawriyah* and turns it into a performative act; thus, instead of focusing on double-meanings as a lexical-rhetorical phenomenon, he interprets the hero himself as a *tawriyah*; in every *maqāmāh*, he hides his identity (essence) with a mask (appearance), changing his name, age, and even gender in order to trick his victims. Luckily, the narrator is always there to 'unveil the hero's true identity, hence, achieving anagnorisis.¹³

In a different context, while studying the science of eloquence (*balāghah*), Harb argues that *badī'* figures, mainly, paronomasia [*tajnīs*], padding [*hashw*], and double-entendre [*tawriyah*], "often inherently entail mechanisms of hiding and obscuring meaning, and misleading and tricking the listener, allowing for the discovery of an unexpected meaning" (45). In other words, *tawriyah* is an aesthetic experience where the addressee is challenged to unveil and discover the "hidden" face/meaning that was intentionally obscured. Therefore, the act of discovery or anagnorisis led by the audience is as important as the author's decoy, meaning that *tawriyah* is cognitively and aesthetically fulfilled, only when the trick is discovered by the addressee, which explains why the confrontation between the trickster (producer of *tawriyah*) and the narrator (discoverer) concludes almost all episodes of *Harīriyyah* (except for those *maqāmāt* where narrator and swindler appear as companions from the very beginning).

¹² "The historic task of modernity, starting in the seventeenth century and continuing to this day, has been to develop a theory of rationality adequate to a universe of randomness—and not only a theory but a program of strategic operations capable of entering into the heterogeneity of things and bringing it under control. One could say that with modernity the task of reason was no longer to interpret the world but rather to overcome it—to reduce it conceptually, to grasp and contain it within an order of general laws and technological systems" (G. L. Bruns ix).

¹³ For further detail see Kennedy (2016).

Therefore, I argue that *tawriyah* is a cooperative procedure; the act of misleading (near meaning) is an invitation to discover (hidden meaning). As such, *tawriyah* has inspired if not given birth to the *maqāmah* genre, and especially to the *Ḥarīriyyah*, where the author and the hero use language as a “shell game, which seeks to conceal and frustrate” (Beaumont 144). In the following section, I study two types of double-entendres: framing *tawriyāt* that mark the beginning and end of the book and embedded or illustrative *tawriyāt*, which were used in six *maqāmāt* against judges and literati to expose their vanity and shallowness.

3. Framing *Tawriyāt*

3.1. Al-Ḥarīrī’s *Homage*

Before the *maqāmāt* begin, and even before the trickster appears on stage, we encounter the first use of *tawriyah* in al-Ḥarīrī’s own words, more specifically in his homage to his predecessor al-Hamadhānī, whom he mentions as follows: “*Hadhā ma ‘a i ‘tirāfi ‘anna al-Badī ‘sabbāq ghayāt*” (7). Cooperson translates the latter to “outstripped every courser in the race” (*Impostures* 5), which is an accurate translation if one falls into the trap of al-Ḥarīrī’s decoy and understands “*sabbāq*” as a winner of a race. All *tawriyāt* demand a moment of discovery/recognition/anagnorisis, and al-Shurayshī in his commentary unveils the second meaning by indicating the double-sense embedded in “*sabbāq*”; he clarifies that while the first meaning declares al-Hamadhānī as an inimitable example and al-Ḥarīrī’s respect and acknowledgment of his ancestor, the second “true” meaning is a simple reference to al-Hamadhānī’s antecedence in time, to cite al-Shurayshī’s explanation fully:

While declaring Badī’ as pre-eminently excellent, and as author of prodigious power, [al-Ḥarīrī] was insinuating—to those who are clever enough to understand him—that Badī’’s only deed is due to his precedence in time [*‘innamā faḍluhu bi-taqaddum al-zamān*]... had al-Ḥarīrī followed the conduct of impolite scholars, declared the pre-eminence of his *maqāmāt* over al-Badī’’s, insulted the latter and undermined his worth, his attack would have turned on him. This is our opinion, and it applies to all those who praise themselves and diminish others, they are almost always loathed. Thus, since al-Ḥarīrī praised al-Badī’ and paid him his due merit and superiority in full, while only glancing at himself quickly and secretly—an act that only few can decipher—God shielded him [*satara Allāh ‘alayh*] and gratified him with fame. (27-28)

Remarkably, instead of judging al-Ḥarīrī’s decoy, the commentator’s tone betrays admiration and approval; this does not mean that al-Shurayshī was against al-Hamadhānī or proingratitude but rather that he was beguiled by al-Ḥarīrī’s skill to seemingly follow the tradition and praise his ancestor, yet in the same time highlight his own eminence to the few perceptive readers that can understand his double-entendre. However, al-Ḥarīrī’s double-meaning was not always deemed positively. In the age of modernity, his homage to his predecessor was depreciated; for instance, Nadir Kāzīm describes it as follows: “the first verse in the funeral commemoration of al-Hamadhānī’s *maqāmāt*” (Kāzīm 85).

In my view, the difference between the two attitudes, admiring al-Ḥarīrī’s *tawriyah* or condemning it, is mainly related to one’s perception of ambiguity; in premodernity scholars had a “training in ambiguity” (Bauer 172) which allowed them to go beyond a true-false dichotomy

and appreciate the make-believe game in itself,¹⁴ while in modernity clarity and straightforwardness became the new guiding terms. However, if we follow the example of premodern readers and set morals and clarity aside, we can recognize that al-Ḥarīrī's homage is the first act of trickery in a book full of trickeries and tricksters.

3.2. *The Trickster's Last Words*

The perhaps most powerful *tawriyah* is by the swindler hero in *Ḥarīriyyah* figures in the last words that he articulates in the book, more specifically, in the last *maqāmah* where he repents and returns to his homeland to pray and implore God's forgiveness. Although the narrator witnesses the moment of penitence, he does not believe his ears when he encounters anonymous travelers and hears about Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī's (*Ḥarīriyyah*'s hero) life in a solitary sanctuary. Accordingly, the narrator embarks on his last journey to verify the truth of his companion, anticipating that it is just another ruse. To his shock and amusement, he meets the new Sarūjī, who renounces all types of speech besides one: exhortation (*wa'z*) (Kilito 192). During farewell, the repentant hero addresses the narrator al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām: “*ij'al al-mawta bayna 'aynayk, wa-hādha firāqu baynī wa-baynk*” or “Never forget death. This is parting between me and you.”

Primarily, the sentence “*hādha firāqu baynī wa-baynk*” seems as an eloquent form to announce farewell (first meaning), yet once we realize that it is actually a Qur'anic verse, specifically, from the conclusion of a parable where appearance and essence intersect a second meaning starts to emerge. “*Hādha firāqu baynī wa-baynk*” is the first half of verse 78, in *Sūrat al-Kahf*. It is part of the story of Moses (*Mūsā*) and the “Servant of God”¹⁵ (Q18: 60–82), wherein Moses meets “the Servant of God” and asks to follow and observe his actions. The latter agrees on the condition that Moses will not question his actions, although he will not understand the reasons for them. A series of circumstances follow, in which the Servant of God acts in ways contrary to what would seem to be just; first, he damages a vessel; next, he kills a young man; finally, in a town where they were denied hospitality, he restores a decrepit wall in the village. After all these perplexing incidents, he reveals the meaning of his actions to Moses (the boat was damaged to prevent its owners from falling into the hands of a king who seized every boat by force/the boy will disobey his good parents and God will replace the child with one better in purity and affection/underneath the wall was a treasure belonging to two helpless orphans whose father was a righteous man). The Qur'anic story is plotted around a series of *tawriyāt* or ambiguous acts that seem outrageous to Moses at first sight, yet once the saint explains their hidden meaning, they make palpable sense. Accordingly, by referring to this clash between meanings which are only accessible to the master (essence) and visible surface that deludes the disciple (appearance), Abū Zayd is insinuating his similarity to the Servant of God, whose actions seem immoral until he provides their meaning; as for al-Ḥārith, just like Moses, he is constantly perplexed and hesitant to help his master until provided with clarity. In light of this analogy, one can read Abū Zayd's announcement of *firāq* as a double-entendre, which declares a

¹⁴ Besides Bauer's *A Culture of Ambiguity*, read also Lara Harb's *Arabic poetics*, where she differentiates between the old and new school of criticism; according to her, the first judged speech (especially poetry) by its truthfulness and naturalness, while the latter, was only interested in the aesthetic ploy of the make-believe (2020).

¹⁵ See the different names of the Servant of God, also known as Khidr, and the different biblical origins of the story in Wheeler's book (2002).

farewell (first meaning) and invokes a parable where hidden essence prevails over appearance (second sense).

However, if we accept this second interpretation, numerous questions follow. To what degree is it acceptable to compare a saint to a trickster? What was the trickster trying to say to the narrator? Was he insinuating that every trick he led in Ḥarīriyyah had a deeper meaning that is yet to be revealed? These questions remain unanswered, simply because unlike the Servant of God, Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī stops speaking after announcing the departure. In the Qur’anic passage, the Servant of God continues: “He said: This is parting between me and you. I will inform you of the interpretation of that about which you could not have patience” (*Saheeh International*). In other words, the saint announces to Moses that they will part once for all and then proceeds with the interpretation [*ta’wīl*] of his ambiguous acts. In contrast, Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī bids his final farewell and provides no explanation for all his unjust actions along the book. Since every decoy is only truly fulfilled when its tactics are discovered and “recognized,” we are left with two options. Either the Ḥarīriyyah is still waiting for an ideal reader, who is capable of providing the interpretations that Sarūjī denied the narrator or Abū Zayd’s intentions were to parody Moses and the saint’s story and, hence, teach the narrator to seek for his true meanings himself instead of waiting for his master to provide both mystery and discovery, ambiguity, and interpretation.

Bidding farewell is an act of weaning [*fiṭām*] whereby the disciple (Moses or narrator) ceases to be dependent on the master (the Servant of God or trickster). This could possibly apply to the relationship between the author displaying his mind and the reader learning to digest it. In the original story, the Servant of God announces separation once he uncovers the hidden purpose of his acts; yet in Ḥarīriyyah, Abū Zayd bids farewell when he abandons his masks and becomes a “good” man. In both stories, the protagonists separate when ambiguity is overcome, when actions and words become monosemantic, or in Kilito’s words, when “essence prevails over appearance” (191).

To summarize, both framing *tawriyāt*, the first on al-Ḥarīrī’s tongue and the second on that of Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī, invite a figure from the past (al-Hamadhānī in the first and the Servant of God in the other) and ambiguously engage with them, in which respect is mixed with parody, and ego is intertwined with homage. At the end of the day, it is the reader’s responsibility to decide between the two interpretations and to discover the “true face” or intentions of the speaker. However, not all *tawriyāt* in the *Ḥarīriyyah* are this opaque; in fact, most of them are argumentative tools that occur in the collection to declare a clear point against the privileged elite, as we see in the next section.

4. Embedded *Tawriyāt*: Against Literati and Judges

Besides the above-mentioned framing *tawriyāt* and *al-Maqāmah al-Fiqhiyyah* (nr. 32) where the hero is tested by a series of legal Islamic riddles (based on *tawriyāt*) to assert his knowledge of Islamic-juris-prudence, all the remaining *tawriyāt* in Ḥarīriyyah are used by the hero against elite groups, be it literati or judges, to argue against their superficial minds that fail to perceive hidden meanings. To illustrate, let us examine the following table.

Maqāmah	Hero and accomplices	Victims	Plot	<i>Tawriyah</i>
8	Abū Zayd	Judge of	Hero and his son ask a	Two double-entendres:

	and his son	<i>Ma'arat-Nu'mān</i>	judge to settle a dispute that turns out to be a pretext for showing off their verbal abilities.	1. <i>mamlūkatan rashīqata l-qad...</i> : enslaved woman (near)/needle (hidden) 2. <i>mamlūkan lī mutanāsiba l-tarafayn...</i> : enslaved man (near)/a kohl jar (hidden)
9	Abū Zayd and his wife	Judge of Alexandria	Hero's wife accuses him of lying about his profession before marriage	<i>nazama durra 'ilā durra</i> : jeweler (near)/literary composition (hidden)
20	Abū Zayd alone (the lost friend as a substitute for the accomplice)	A group of literati	Abū Zayd begs for money to bury his dead comrade, who turns out to be his penis.	<i>man yarghab fī takfīn mayt gharīb</i> : a dead man (near), impotence (hidden)
34	Abū Zayd and his son	Judge	Abū Zayd sells the narrator a slave, who turns up to be his own son and a free man	"Remember Josef? I dropped the hint: No slave was he when he was sold" Josef as a common name (near), in reference to Josef's hagiography (hidden)
35	Abū Zayd alone (narrator plays the role of the accomplice)	A group of literati	Hero tricks literati, who pride themselves on their erudition, by begging on behalf of a young woman who needs money for a dowry	<i>bikr ṭāla ta'nīshā</i> /an old virgin bride: an unmarried woman (near), wine (hidden)
44	Abū Zayd (narrator plays the role of the accomplice)	A group of literati	Hero proves his erudition to the educated elite by proposing a series of riddles based on double-meanings. He promises to solve the puzzles after the reward and then promises to answer the next morning; however, he leaves in the middle of the night	56 <i>tawriyah</i> ; al-Ḥarīrī solves them within the text to his real readers unlike Abū Zayd who sneaks out leaving his riddles unanswered

Regardless of the different plots and characters, these six *maqāmāt* share the following patterns.

1. *Victims/Addressees*: double-entendre is never aimed at common people¹⁶; they are either used while confronting judges or literati. The latter group are always ridiculed; they are portrayed as pompous snobs who determine people's value based on their appearance or garments, only seek entertainment. Never discuss anything but language, and easily fall for the trickster's ambiguous words. They also accept the narrator for his suitable looks, although he always ends up betraying them by conspiring with Abū Zayd. In other words, according to the swindler's logic, educated elite deserve to be tricked due to their favouritism of appearance over essence. As for the judges, they are treated with a fair amount of respect; sometimes, they are duped (*Maqāmah* 9); sometimes, they sense the trap of ambiguity (M8: (إما أن تبينا وإلا فبيننا)), and in others, they decipher the true hidden lesson (M34: "You yourself have testified that this boy gave you a hint, which you failed to heed. Rather than prosecute him, look to your wits, and try to suppress this report of their dullness"). It means that instead of challenging the authority of judges, the trickster was interested in the confrontation in itself.

2. *Duplicity and Accomplices*: *tawriyah* is always about doubles; two words that look alike yet signify differently. To articulate this duplicity, Abū Zayd never performs his trick alone; he is either accompanied by a supporting relative (wife or son: see M8, 9, 34), referring to an absent character (M20: hero's dead friend/penis), or recruiting the narrator as an instant accomplice (M35, 44). Regardless of the accomplices' identity, they are usually selected for their similarity with the hero; they either share his eloquence (wife in M8), manipulative skills (son in M34), or simply, his secret (narrator in M35 and 44).

3. *Narrator and Hero*: additionally, although the narrator and hero are throughout the book tied together by an ambivalent relation, alternating between companionship and animosity, their bond is at its weakest in the "*tawriyah* based *maqāmāt*." This is mainly because the narrator is seldom needed for the anagnorisis scene (Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī usually reveals his true identity by himself). Accordingly, the narrator is mostly "extradiegetic" (merely narrating the scene and not participating in the events). Even when he conspires with Sarūjī and becomes his accomplice, the latter refuses companionship, claiming: أنا عربييد وانت رعييد وبيننا بون بعيد or in Cooperson's translation: "The imbalance," he added, "is that I'm zesty and bold while you're flabby and flat. Between us are too many soul fights!" (328) After all, the narrator is one of the literati, and regardless of how many times he keeps the swindler's secret, his thirst for terms and erudition would always hinder him from becoming the hero's alter ego.

¹⁶ Curiously, Abū Zayd only addresses the masses using sermons, that is to say, the plain truth. Also, exhortatory *maqāmāt* are usually in a simple language that usually builds around simple orders "do" or "do not do." Of course, we are always told at the end of these *maqāmāt* that the hero acts differently from his speech, yet, in themselves, sermons articulate the words and orders of God. Thus, regardless of the hero's conduct, they represent the truth.

4. *Ambiguity*: double-entendres are distributed disproportionately in the *maqāmāt*; sometimes, one *tawriyah* is sufficient (M35); in others, two are requested to enhance the resemblance between hero and accomplice (M9). One *maqāmah* is brimmed with *tawriyāt* to the point of total opaqueness (M44). One may argue that the more double-entendres a *maqāmah* contains the more ambiguous it becomes. Most of the “*tawriyah* based *maqāmāt*” are written in an ornamental style and complicated language, partly because of the addressed audience who demand to be impressed and beguiled by pompous styles and vocabulary, and partly due to the nature of *tawriyah* itself, as a figure that leads its audience away from the hidden meaning.

5. *Test and Punishment*: the basic *enjeu* of double-entendre is to challenge the addressee to see beyond appearance. Accordingly, whenever addressing the literati, the hero dresses miserably to accentuate appearance over knowledge. In these circumstances, he is usually regarded with revulsion and disgust (M35) [In *Maqāmah* 22, he is almost thrown from a moving vessel due to his repulsive rags]. After these reactions, the hero uses *tawriyah* (along with paronomasia, puzzles, and lipograms) to examine how deep his audience can go behind appearances and how many hints they can detect beyond the explicit words. However, the victims hardly unveil any meanings; and when they do, Abū Zayd is long gone!

6. *Lesson and Reward*: the ultimate lesson of *tawriyah* is “never take anything at face value”; to attain this message, some victims pay a dinar (M8), others pay 200 dirhams, while others offer a she-camel and never receive their answers (M44). Moreover, while confronting literati, Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī is certain that he provides a product they are starvedly seeking; hence, he demands his reimbursement before he unveils solutions, a promise that he does not always honor (M44).

To conclude, double-entendres in *Harīriyyah* address a fictitious elite audience, mainly to test their perceptive skills and prove their shallowness. Accordingly, the plot always stages a confrontation, between the pompous elite and the manipulative swindler. The latter always appears with an accomplice to hint at the duplicity of his speech. In several circumstances, the hero subverts the dichotomy between truth and lying, insisting that his double-entendre should not be misinterpreted as deceitful, because he always provides a hint that shields him from the accusation; for instance, in *Maqāmah* 34, Abū Zayd’s son introduces himself as “*Anā Yūsuf, anā Yūsuf, laqad kashaftu laka l-ghīṭā’, fa-’in takun faṭīnan ‘arāfta, wa-mā ’ikhāluka ta’rif*” (“I am Joseph,” your brother: aye, Joseph! A warning to you, did you but know it); later when the narrator discovers the trick, the boy does not apologize; instead, he declares: “Remember Joseph? I dropped the hint: No slave was he when he was sold.” Thus, we come to the long-postponed question that was announced in the title; since the trickster provides hints while delivering his decoy and barely uses a rhetoric figure allowed and provided by the language, is he really a liar and a “bad man”?

5. Conclusion

To summarize, the *maqāmāt*, in general, and the *Harīriyyah*, in particular, were conceived owing to a linguistic shift, marked by an abundance of vocabulary, a dominance of writing over orality, and the need for new forms that invited the parody of the data collecting period. Accordingly, grounded in *tawriyah* as a rhetoric game where appearance is in constant clash with essence, the

Ḥarīriyyah uses double-entendre as a tool that articulates multiple possibilities of meaning (framing *tawriyāt*) and tests the readers’ perceptive abilities (embedded *tawriyāt*). While framing *tawriyāt* address the real reader that exists outside of the text (al-Shurayshī for instance), embedded *tawriyāt* engage with an embedded audience that live and die within the *Ḥarīriyyah*. The relationship between the two forms of double-meaning can be described as illustrative; embedded *tawriyāt* ridicule a class of audience who in their attachment to appearance and superficial ornaments repetitively fall for the trickster’s ruse. Meaning that literati and to a lesser extent judges are used as an “anti-model,” to warn the real reader against choosing *dhāhir* (exoteric) over *bāḥin* (esoteric). Embedded *tawriyāt* are employed to direct the real reader (who may well have been a judge or a man of letters) to an opposed approach: to embrace ambiguity and playfulness and to avoid the moral judgment that may stigmatize the hero as a trickster or a “bad man.” After all, the hero is the fruit of an era of abundance and obsession with words and rarities; he had to adhere to decoy and disguise to quench the thirst of his audience. Therefore, I argue that *Ḥarīriyyah* itself can be interpreted as one long *tawriyah*, where narrator and hero constantly encounter each other to indicate the duplicity of meaning, and where ornamentation, rhyme, metaphors, and rhetoric figures hide a simple lesson: “never take anything at face value.” And since the episodes conclude with an open ending, where Abū Zayd al-Sarūjī keeps the interpretations of his acts to himself (unlike the Servant of God), the hermeneutic circle remains open, delegating the responsibility of finding the thin line between lying and using linguistic possibilities to the reader.

Works Cited

- ‘Abd al-Jawwād, Muḥammad. “Introduction.” *Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Lughawī, Shajar al-Durr fī Tadākhul al-Kalām bi-l-Ma‘ānī*. 3rd edition, Dār al-Ma‘ārif, N.D., pp. 9–50.
- Antoon, Sinan. *The Poetics of the Obscene in Premodern Arabic Poetry: Ibn al-Ḥajjāj and Sukhf*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Baalbaki, Ramzi. *The Arabic Lexicographical Tradition: From 2nd/8th to the 12th/18th century*. Brill, 2014.
- Bauer, Thomas. *A Culture of Ambiguity: An Alternative History of Islam*. Trans. by Hinrich Biesterfeldt and Tricia Tunstall, Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Beaumont, Daniel. “A Mighty and Never-Ending Affair: Comic Anecdote and Story in Medieval Arabic Literature.” *Journal of Arabic Literature*. No. 24, 1993, pp. 139–159.
- Beeston, A. F. L. “The Genesis of the Maqāmāt Genre.” *Journal of Arabic Literature*. Vol. 2, 1971, pp. 1–12.
- Bonebakker, S. A. “Tawriyah.” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Vol. X, 2nd edition, ed. by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs, Brill, 2000, pp. 395-396.
- Bruns, Gerald L. “Toward a Random Theory of Prose.” *Theory of Prose*. Dalkey Archive Press, 1991, pp. ix–xiv.
- Devin, Stewart. “The Maqāmah.” *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*. Ed. by Roger Allen and D. S. Richards, New York: Cambridge, 2006, pp. 145–158.
- Drory, Rina. *Models and Contact: Arabic Literature and its Impact on Medieval Jewish Culture*. Brill, 2000.
- Hämeen-Anttila, Jaakko. *Maqāmah: A History of a Genre*. Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002.

- Harb, Lara. *Arabic Poetics: Aesthetic Experience in Classical Arabic Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Al-Ḥarīrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim. *Impostures*. Trans. by Michael Cooperson. New York University Press, 2020.
- Al-Ḥarīrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim. *Maqāmāt*. Al-Maṭba‘ah al-Ḥusayniyyah, 1929.
- Al-Ḥarīrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim. *Makamat or Rhetorical Anecdotes of al-Hariri of Basra*. Trans. by Theodore Preston, Cambridge University Press, 1850.
- Ibn al-Mu‘tazz. *Kitāb al-Badī‘* (The Book of Ornate Style). Annotated by ‘Arfān Maṭarjī, Mu‘assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 2012.
- Ibn Qutaybah. *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*. Annotated by ‘Abd Allāh al-Jabbūrī, Maktabat al-‘Ānī, 1977.
- Al-Jāḥiẓ, Abū ‘Uthman. *Al-Ḥayawān*. Vol. I, 2nd edition, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2003.
- Kāzim, Nādir. *Al-Maqāmāt wa-l-Talaqqī. Baḥth fī ‘Anmāṭ al-Talaqqī li-Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī fī al-Naqd al-‘Arabī al-Ḥadīth*. Al-Mu‘assasah al-‘Arabiyyah, 2003.
- Kennedy, Philip F. *Recognition in the Arabic Narrative Tradition*. Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Kilito, Abdelfattah. “Le Genre Séance: Une Introduction.” *Studia Islamica*. No. 43, 1976, pp. 25–51.
- Kilito, Abdelfattah. *Al-Maqāmāt: al-Sard wa al-Ansāq al-Thaqāfiyyah* (The Maqāmāt: Storytelling and Cultural Codes). Trans. by ‘Abd al-Kabīr al-Sharqāwī, 2nd edition, Toubkal, 2002.
- Al-Lughawī, Abū al-Ṭayyib ‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn ‘Alī. *Shajar al-Durr fī Tadākhul al-Kalām bi-l-Ma‘ānī* (The Trees of Pearls; Intersected Words and Meanings). Annotated by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Jawwād, 3rd edition, Dār al-Ma‘ārif, N.D.
- Miskawayh, Abū ‘Alī & al-Tawḥīdī. *Al-Hawāmil wa-l-Shawāmil*. Annotated by Aḥmad Amīn & Sayid Aḥmad Ṣaqr, al-Hai‘ah al-‘Āmmah li-Quṣūr al-Thaqāfah, N.D.
- Monroe, James T. *The Art of Badi‘ az-Zamān al-Hamadhānī: As Picaresque Narrative*. Center for Arab and Middle East Studies, 1983.
- Al-Muṭarrazī, Abū al-Faṭḥ. *Al-‘Īḍāḥ fī Sharḥ Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*. Annotated by Khurshīd Ḥasan, Doctorate dissertation, University of the Punjab, 2005.
- Al-Qayrawānī, Ibn Sharaf. *‘Alām al-Kalām*. Annotated by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Amīn al-Khānijī, al-Khānijī, 1922.
- “Surat al-Kahf”. *Qur‘ān*. Trans. by Saheeh International, <https://legacy.quran.com/18>. Accessed 28.02.2022.
- Al-Shurayshī, Abū al-‘Abbās. *Sharḥ Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī*. Annotated by Ibrāhīm Shams al-Dīn, vol. I, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1998.
- Tha‘lab, Ghulām. *Al-Mudākhal fī al-Lughah* (The Book of Interconnectedness in Arabic). Annotated by Muhammad ‘Abd al-Jawwād, Maktabat al-Anklū al-Miṣriyyah, N.D.
- Wheeler, Brannon M. *Moses in the Quran and Islamic Exegesis*. Routledge Curzon, 2002.