formed the customs of Kung, Bandar 'Abbās and Bandar Rīf, for an annual sum of 20,000 rāmān.

Būshīr in the mid-18th/18th century offers an example of an Armenian ğabhmandar as opposed to a ghadīr who had been made to convert to Islam. This person, named Khādja Melekel, was a subordinate of the ğabhmandar of Bandar 'Abbās. In 1748 the town's governor, Shaykh Nāṣir, usurped the position. This may have set a precedent, for in the 19th century the head of customs in Būshīr appears to have been the port's ğadhīr or bulārān, mayor, rather than a ğabhmandar. Beginning in ca. 1850, when the port's trade began to flourish, customs were collected by a private functionary called the hamanābādī. In Bandar 'Abbās the term ğabhmandar long remained in use, but here too, it was the hamanābādī who in the 19th century collected customs fees. In the smaller ports, tribal chiefs or government officials called dābīs were usually the ones to manage the port's customs. Having become obsolete for the port towns of Persia, the term ğabhmandar was now used for the official who represented the interests of the Turkish merchants operating within Persia.


(a) Production. In the period between 750 and 1850, poetry was composed by a very different range of people from all walks of society in the growing world. Among the producers of poetry we find caliphs and craftsmen, secretaries and slaves, religious scholars and rogues, members of noble Arab tribes or people of non-Arab descent, rich and poor, famous and infamous. Of the three main panegyrists of the 13th/19th century, Abū Tamām d. ca. 231/845 [g.p.] was of Christian descent (and embarrassed by this fact), and had to earn his living as a weaver's assistant and a water-carrier in his early years; Ibn al-Rūmī d. 283/896 [g.p.] was of Christian (Byzantine) descent as well (and proud of it), whereas al-Baladhuri d. 284/897 [g.p.] was of pure Arab stock and grew up in a tribal milieu.

There was no uniform group of poets, nor was there a poet considered a specific profession with an established and definitive course of study or a canon of specific knowledge to be learned. Instead, everybody who had learned to compose poetry that met with common approval was called dā'ī. Professional poets during the 'Abbāsid period were primarily court poets who were financially dependent on the favour of the caliph or a patron. In the 12th/18th century, the role of the 'alim came from the ranks of the 'ulama'. During the whole of the period in question, however, it was taken for granted that every educated person had the ability to take part in poetic communication, at least in the role of a receptive listener/reader. Therefore, poetry composed by professional poets forms only one segment of the poetry composed, esteemed and transmitted. Even those poets who can be considered professional poets often played more than the role of producer of poetry and engaged in publishing literature as anthropologists, critics, or philosophers. Given this multi-layered situation, the role of poets and poetry in the Arabic-Islamic society can be appreciated properly only if the whole of the system of poetic communication is taken into account. This is even more important given that poetic communication played an incomparably much higher role in pre-modern Arabic societies than in modern societies.

(b) Medium. The oral recitation of a poem by its producer has always been considered the basic means by which poetry was accessible to others. Professional singers were not only important but often even famous transmitters of poetry from the latter.
Umayyad period onwards, not only in courtly arenas but also in other well-to-do households. Written transmission in the form of letters or books also played an increasingly important role. The output of individual poets was often collected in the form of a *dīwān*, frequently by those other than the original poets themselves. For example, it was Abu Bakr al-Saffī (d. ca. 355/967 [q.e.]) who collected the *dīwān* of Abu Nuwas, Abu Tamīmān, Ibn al-Rūmī and others. Of critical importance for the transmission of poetry were anthologies [see MEHMET], and other works called *adab*. Both linguistic and historiographical works as well as collections of biographies contain a great deal of poetry. Religious texts of an edifying nature and Saffī works are hardly to be found without poetry. After the rise of the madrasa [q.e.], the formal parameters of poetry (mērē, rhyme) and peculiarities of literary language [see AL-MĀʿĀFI WA L-BAYĀN] would become part of the propositional discipline of *adab* (in this case meaning the whole of linguistic disciplines). Poetry itself, however, was not a regular subject in the curriculum. Only the most famous works, such as the *Dīwān* of al-Mutanabbi and the *Maktābāt* of al-Harīrī, were taught within an academic framework. Story-tellers and preachers [see ḫāṣ] included poems in their speeches and thus contributed to their own popularity among the masses. As a whole, the process by which poetry was imparted has not yet been studied adequately.

(c) Rejection. Poetry was an everyday commodity. A poet could "réciter une quittance à son entourage, à ses amis, à des confrères. Qu’il aille dans les souks de la ville, parcourt ses rues, fréquente les cabarets de ses faubourgs et leurs jardins, descend son fleuve, ses canaux ou se poste sur l’un des ponts... ou sous les arcades de mosquées, dans le demeure d’un bourgeois ou d’un prince, partout... il peut déclarer sans étonner, parler d’amour sans surprendre, pleurer de douleur sans choquer" [Benchekih, 38]. Poetry was an effective system of communication in which a substantial part of the population took part and by which the emotional and affective requirements of the people were met. People listened to poetry for its social, emotional, and intellectual effect [see TĀRAH; TAʿLIMIH], and it was considered the poet’s task to convey information and to stir emotions, curiosity and interest rather than to express his own feelings. Modern modes of reception, influenced by the cult of the poet as a genius who is expected to be more in touch with deeper feelings and thoughts than other people, and the individualistic notion of poetry as a means to express one’s very own and specific emotions, have often led to misconceptions about pre-modern Arabic poetry. Whereas modern and individualistic conceptions of poetry have fostered an acceleration of literary change, they have also led to an increasing social marginalisation of poetic communication. By contrast, although the pre-modern understanding of poetry as a social activity resulted in a greater stability of literary forms and content, it nonetheless allowed poetry to remain effective and meaningful for a wide range of people over the whole period considered here and thus allowed a greater sector of the population to participate in elaborate artistic activities.

(6) Processing. The Arabic pre-Islamic literary and cultural heritage forms, next to Islam itself, one of the two foundations of Arabic-Islamic culture. The collection of and commentary on pre- and early Islamic poetry therefore was one of the primary activities in the first centuries of Islamic scholarship. The discipline of grammar and lexicography owed their development more to the need to comment upon ancient Arabic poetry than upon the normative texts of Islam. This creation of a consciousness of poetry was one of the prerequisites for the rise of the scientific study of contemporary poetry and of literary criticism by the 3rd/9th century. These disciplines cannot be dealt with here (see the overview by Ouyang), but it should be remarked that, during the 'Abbasid period, literary history and criticism was a discourse clearly separated from the production of poetry itself, notwithstanding the exertion of mutual influence. Among the major poets, only Ibn al-Mu'tazz and Ibn Rashīk were famed theorists as well. The Mamlik period, in which the merger of a secular and religious discourse had already been perfected, witnessed the complete synthesis of poetic production, on the one hand, and literary theory and rhetorics on the other in the form of the *badisgīya* commentaries by Šaft al-Dīn al-Hillī (d. probably 749/1348 [q.e.]) and Ibn Ḥīdīja al-Ḥamawī (d. 837/1434 [q.e.]), among others. Other important forms by which literature was processed are various forms of intertextuality such as the *miftabād* or the *tablām* [q.e.], in which a poet transforms a given poem into a new work of literature following special rules. These techniques should be understood within the framework of similar forms of appropriation-cum-transformation of the scholarly, cultural and literary heritage of Islamic culture, such as the commentary (gharaḥ [q.e.]) or the abbreviation (maddāsiyar [q.e.]).

Four important social environments provided a framework for educated poetic communication between the Umayyad and the modern period.

(i) The Court.

Throughout the entirety of the 'Abbasid period, the courts of the caliph(s), provincial rulers, governors and the court-like households of viziers, generals, and other high officials served as centres of literary activity of preeminent importance. Two kinds of literary activities should be distinguished here: first, the recitation of panegyric poems as part of the official representation of the ruler; and second, poetry as part of court entertainment. Panegyric poems [see MAFTŪ] formed the most important political discourse throughout a great deal of Islamic history. In panegyric poems, the subject personage was described as an embodiment of royal virtue, above all in terms of military prowess and generosity. The recollection of these virtues simultaneously confirmed and reinforced them, for society as well as for the ruler himself, and by confirming the ruler's ideal fulfillment of these normative values, the poems contributed to its legitimation. Further, they served to spread the news of important events (such as battles won), and helped to memorialise them and to locate them and their protagonists within a broader historical context.

To understand the mechanism of the panegyric poem, it is important to bear in mind that the patron, to whom the poem is addressed (the mandīth), is not identical with the intended public of the poem. Of course, panegyric poems could fulfill their political and social role only if a general interest in them was granted. Therefore, the dichotomy of the poet and the mandīth, which appears in the texts themselves, should be expanded to a triangle with the "public" as third participant. Each of the three participants in this form of communication acted in a mutually-informative give and take. This triadic interplay can be generally schematized as follows:
Given the first-rank importance of the panegyric-political discourse as a means of representation and legitimisation, even rulers who had no feeling for poetry could hardly afford to be patronised by poets. On the other hand, many rulers and princes pursued an intense interest in poetry, had expert knowledge at their disposal, and often composed poetry themselves. Just to mention a few, the caliph Harun al-Rashid (d. 193/809); his sister the princess 'Ubayya b. al-Maddhi (d. 210/825); the prince Ibn al-Mutarr (d. 296/908), one of the greatest men of letters of the ‘Abbasid period; the caliph al-Radi b. 'Abdah (d. 392/970); the Hamdanid Sayf al-Dawla (d. 356/967); and the Ayyubid Abu l-Fida (d. 732/1331) [q.v.] and other members of this dynasty. In such cases, where the mandith assumed both the role of the patron as well as the role of the public, poets had to accommodate their poems not only to general panegyric standards but also to the personal taste of the patron. To mention two examples: al-Buḥṭari replaced the traditional nasīb [q.v.] with all its intertextual strands with the more modern genre of ghaṣal [q.v.] in order to meet the taste of al-Mutawakkil, who had less literary training than his predecessors. Ibn Nubata al-Mīṣrī (d. 730/1349 [q.v.]) faced the opposite problem after the death of Abu l-Fida and tried to win the favour of his pious and ascetic successor by replacing the nasīb of his panegyric odes with ascetic poetry.

Panegyric poets hoped for an immediate reward for any given poem, which often reached rather exorbitant sums of money. Considering the fact that generosity was one of the main values praised in the panegyric odes and that the poet offered himself as a first object for the demonstration of this generosity, the exchange of poems for reward assumed the character of a ritual exchange. If successful, poets could even hope for a permanent patronage of the ruler, thus being spared having to wander from patron to patron. Al-Mutanabbi, the pre-eminent panegyric poet of the times, spent several years in search of a permanent patron, eulogising Bedouin chieftains and second-rank provincial dignitaries until he found the favour of Sayf al-Dawla, at whose court he spent nine untroubled years, only to start the search anew after an intrigue by his fellow-poets forced him to flee Sayf al-Dawla’s court. In addition to material gains, success at a court could also provide for a broader fame of a poet due to the public nature of his task as a panegyrist. In any case, gaining the favour of patrons through panegyric poetry was nearly the only way to make a living as a professional poet during the ‘Abbasid period. Poets who did not have an administrative or scholarly position as a starting-point therefore had to earn their living as a copyist or craftsman, or with similar jobs until they gained enough fame to be able to live as a full-time poet. Competition for a position as court poet must have been rather rigorous. Therefore, it is small wonder that the relations between the poets enjoying the favour of a certain patron is often characterised by envy, polemics and intrigues. The relations between al-Mutanabbi, Abū Firās and the Khashīd brothers offer a good example. Dependent as poets were on the favour of their patron, they were not completely powerless in turn. If they felt that they were treated unjustly, they had the possibility of taking revenge by composing satires [haḍīq] [q.v.], and the satires of a famous poet could prove to be a sharp weapon indeed. Again, al-Mutanabbi—an extraordinary self-confident poet—provided us with examples in his invective against the Khashīd ruler Kāfūr [q.v.]. Many poets, however, experienced feelings of humiliation when forced to “beg” for monetary reward for their poems, as is repeatedly told in their biographies.

The circumstances under which truly panegyric poetry was performed had been only little studied so far. Obviously, panegyric poems were often performed as part of public ceremonies, during a majlis or a banquet. The poems that were recited may have been pre-selected by court officials (al-Kifīr, Inshā', iv. 149). How these poems became known by a broader public has not yet been explored in detail. The poets themselves, philologists, compilers of anthologies and literary critics may have participated as mediators in this process. In the end, however, this process must have been rather effective, since in most books on literary criticism, panegyric poetry is given privileged interest, and anthologies and chronicles overflow with quotations of eulogies. Since without the participation of the recipients, the process of panegyric communication must have been ineffective as a whole, the study of this part must be considered a major desideratum.

In addition to the ritual and public performance of panegyric poetry, courtly life offered a great many other opportunities for poetry making. Hunting excursions provided an opportunity for the recitation of hunting poetry [jāḥyā] [q.v.]; banquets and musical gatherings gave rise to the presentation of wine poetry [see ṣawā‘ir]; love poetry and other genres. On these occasions, the ruler was accompanied by his nadāmūn, “wine-companions” [ṣūr, nadīm [q.v.]], a group of talented people from various fields. Even the office of the nadīm was institutionalised at the ‘Abbasid court. Poetry played a prominent role in the gatherings of the ruler and his nadāmūn, and was practiced not only by professional poets but also by nadāmūn with other professions. And poetry itself, both ancient and contemporary, was often the subject of conversation in the majlis. It must be stressed that the kind of poetry recited and sung in these courtly environments was not fundamentally different from that practised outside the court in urban milieu. Therefore, a common term like “courtly love” characterising the relations between lover and beloved in a current type of love poetry (ghaṣal, nasīb) is misleading, since love poetry sung at courtal banquets in no way differed from the poetry that was popular in other social environments. Instead, it was rather the ideals, ethical models, and literary tastes of the udābā’ and kutūb which dominated at the court [see Ẓahr]. Nadāmūn circles also existed in the households of viziers and high-ranking kutūb, and the same people practised their poetic skill in circles of philologists and udābā’ as well as in their role as nadāmūn at the court.

In the period after the fall of the ‘Abbasids and
Ayyubids, the importance of the court for Arab literary culture decreased considerably. Though panegyric poems in the Arabic language were still composed about Mamluk and Ottoman sultans (and poets duly rewarded for them), the Mamluk and Ottoman courts no longer offered the resources for a vivid literary culture in Arabic language. One of the main reasons for this development is, of course, the fact that rulers of these dynasties often had only limited (if any) command of the Arabic language. But it should also be borne in mind that, whereas in the 'Abbasid period political authorities were part of the culture of the civilian non-religious elite of the kutāb and were eager to see their legitimisation expressed in the medium of poetry common to both, the post-'Abbasid period witnessed the merger of a religious and non-religious élite, which now formed a counterpart to the military élite which no longer shared this culture. Rather than poetry, Mamluks instead patronised architecture to an hitherto unprecedented extent.

ii. The kutāb

At least in the 3rd and 4th/9th and 10th centuries, the class of the secretaries (kutāb, sing. kāth [q.v.]), which formed a rather homogenous group with a distinct group consciousness, had no less influence on the development of Islamic culture than the groups of religious scholars. This is especially true in the field of literature. The kāth were the bearers and main exponents of the culture of adab [q.v.], which meant not only producing a certain type of literature but also adhering to an ideal of education, knowledge, manners and conduct, which became manifest in the literature called adab. Of course, not every kāth was a kāthāb, but the kāthāb serve as its most typical embodiment.

For the kāthāb, poetry had a multitude of functions. Some of them, to mention a few, are as following:

(a) Perfection in artistry and poetry was a prerequisite for other responsibilities. These included drafting and writing official letters and administrative correspondence in which they showed their mastery of linguistic correctness and stylistic sophistication.

(b) Kutāb were expected to be able to compose poetry. In this context, it seems plausible that the first dictionary that was arranged according to rhyme consorts and rhyme schemes, the Kāthāb al-Tafṣīlī fī al-Baṣaṭīnī (d. 897/1492), was in all probability addressed to the kāthāb who needed to compose poetry for the notables of the court.

(c) Poetry formed part of the encyclopaedic knowledge kāthāb were supposed to have.

(d) Genres like love and wine poetry, besides being entertaining and emotionally affecting at an individual level, were especially suitable for not only expressing the refined Weltanschauung of this group [see zārātī] but also for displaying their literary taste.

(e) Literature of the adab type in prose and poetry was part of the kāthāb’s life-style and its practice served to strengthen their group identity.

Some of the kāthāb’s poems typical of the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries were: al-Uḏbī (d. 828/1425), al-Jazairī (d. 233/847), the ghazal poet Khālid b. Ya‘zīd al-Kāthī (d. ca. 262/876), al-Naḥšī al-Akbar (d. 293/ 996), Ibn Bassām (d. 303/914-15), Ibn Ishāq al-Ṣāḥīb (d. 384/994), Ibn ‘Abdād (d. 385/995) [q.v.], and Ibrāhīm al-Sūfī (d. 414/1025). The influence of the kāthāb, however, went far beyond their activity as poets: more importantly, they shaped the culture of adab, which proved equally dominant in courtly milieu as well as in the urban middle class in general. A sharp distinction between the court and the kāthāb cannot be drawn in any event, since kāthāb were themselves part of the courts. Many of them participated in the composition of panegyric poetry and fulfilled the duty of naʿtim. Many officials had risen to positions in which they acted as patrons for poets themselves.

iii. The ‘ulamā’

Islamic normative texts [the Qur’an, esp. XXVI. 224-7; Hudūth, see Bonehaldner] display an ambiguous stance towards poetry which resulted in different interpretations, ranging from outright prohibition of many of its forms to a mild disapproval of the more entertaining and morally dubious genres like wine poetry and sa‘ida. Thus, in the first centuries, ‘ulamā’ rarely felt encouraged to take part in a form of communication that was dominated by the secular élite. Yet religious scholars required knowledge of pre- and early Islamic poetry in order to be able to comment upon Qur’an and Hudūth, and some of them composed at least poetry of the zāhīya genre, as the collection of poetry ascribed to al-Shāfī’i (d. 204/820) [q.v.] demonstrates. Due to its emotional effectiveness, poetry of the zāhīya genre, as well as love poetry, was used in sermons. However, scholars were rarely proficient poets, and in his collection of the biographies of linguistic scholars, al-Kifī repeatedly speaks with derision of grammarians and other scholars who composed poetry. The kind of the poetry of grammarians (mukālib/schools) [q.v.] al-Kifī, Ḥanbalī, iii, 219, 263, 267, 273, 345, iv, 165). Nevertheless, from the latter ‘Abbasid period onwards, there is an increase in the number of ‘ulamā’ who were composing poetry in different genres. A few kāthīn and mukaddimīn are already mentioned in al-Jaḥālī’s [q.v.] anthology titled Taṣawwif al-dalāl, which contains poetry from the second half of the 4th/10th century. By the time of Imām al-Dīn al-Isfahānī’s [q.v.] anthology, the Kāthāb al-dīn, the poems from the 6th/12th century, the number of ‘ulamā’ composing poetry and the quality of their poems had obviously increased considerably. Here, in this period of transition, we can witness the gradual merger between the adab-oriented culture of the kāthāb and the suṣūn-oriented culture of the ‘ulamā’ (Bauer, Raffman, Homcrin, Preaching poetry).

From the Sa’dījī period onwards, the kāthāb gradually ceased to be a distinct social group with their own cultural values. Instead, the duties of the kāthāb came to be fulfilled by people who had received the training of a religious scholar. The result, as it becomes very obvious during the Mamluk period, was a rather homogenous group of ‘ulamā’ who had become the bearers of Islamic religious as well as secular culture. Remarkably, this development did not prove detrimental to literary culture. Instead, the process of ‘ulamā’isation of adab’ was counterbalanced by a process of ‘adabisation of the ‘ulamā’’, which in the meantime had made the adab discourse of the kāthāb their own. Though the political relevance of poetry decreased, its relevance for the civil élite increased, so that one can speak of a process of privatisation of poetry. Poetry became a pre-eminent medium of communication between ‘ulamā’, and this medium included panegyric poetry, which now became addressed from one ‘ulim to the other rather than to rulers and military leaders. For the ‘ulamā’, it would become more and more important to be able to take part in this form of poetic communication. Consequently, the poetry of the Mamluk period grew more personal and more interested in private matters. The merger of the secular and religious élite into a new group which shared to a considerable extent the values and ideas of the old religious élite, but which also had appro-
printed the literary culture of the old secular élite, led to an unprecedented rise of religious poetry. Since also the boundaries between high and popular culture became blurred, the percentage of the population taking part in a rather homogeneous literary culture became larger than ever. The Mamluk period, therefore, may have been the period which displayed the broadest literary culture in Arab history.

The Ottoman period has not been studied well enough to allow a more detailed assessment. At least, it is beyond doubt that the 'ulama' still played the most important role in poetry. Arabic poetry at this time may have witnessed a decrease in its local importance, but at the same time the geographical range due to the increasing global and cosmopolitan character of the 'ulama'. Texts displaying a very similar literary style were composed in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as in the Indian subcontinent. Locally, 'ulama circles seem to have developed into one of the main centres of the production of poetry.

iv. Urban milieux

A study of the involvement of different social environments of the urban middle classes in the poetic discourse has not yet been carried out. However, it is clear from countless hints in the sources that poetry in the language and the established genres was esteemed and even produced among craftsmen, merchants, and in similar milieux. The site of Abu Nuwar's (d. ca. 1062/1283 [g.v.]) wine poems is not only the courtly banquet but also the tavern. Another and rather different urban milieu was that of the zanzák, in which the poems of al-Abbas b. al-Aljawf [g.v.] are set. Several little-known poets mentioned in Ibn al-Mu'tazz's Taqdābi al-ğawrā' bear names pointing to crafts, and even professional poets like Abu Tamām had to earn their living by manual work before they were famous enough to live from their poetry. In any case, social boundaries were not as strict as in Europe, and people of low descent and non-privileged social positions were not in principle excluded from taking part in high culture.

In the 4th/10th century we find a baker (al-Khabbars b. al-Balad, see Sezgin, GSS, ii, 625-6; a fruit-seller (al-Watīlī [g.v.]), and a barber (al-Sarīf al-Rabbī [g.v.]) among the well-known poets of the age. Another poet, al-Khubzī aruzī [g.v.], was a baker of rice bread in Baṣra and became famous as a ghaZZī poet. Young men from all over the town used to visit his shop in the hope of becoming the object of one of his love poems. By quoting poems by al-Aljawf al-Ukhdari, al-Tabarī [Ṭaḥīna, ii, 122-4] allows a glimpse of the poetry of the vagabonds [see Āsān, 110]. These poets owe their lasting fame to the fact that representatives of high culture took an interest in their productions, but they may also be taken as evidence of the kind of interest in poetry that cut across different levels of society.

Sources are much more copious for the Mamluk period, during which a convergence between high and popular culture is attested. The most representative figures of poetry in standard Arabic, as well as in dialect, appealing to 'ulama' and people of the street alike, were Ibrāhīm al-Miṣrī for the 7th/13th and Ibn Sūluṭ for the 8th/14th century. These and quite a few other similar, often illiterate figures represent a "missing link" between modern forms of popular literature and time-honoured forms, themes, and motives, and thus point to the fact that Arabic literary culture was not the exclusive prerequisite of a small élitarian group, but was, at least in its fundamental parameters, ideas and way of achieving emotional effects, shared by a broad sector of the population.

During the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, religious poetry was extremely popular in all urban environments. 'Ulama poetry, prayers [see wusul] and poems in praise of the prophet [see Mawlānīyya] were composed and recited among adherents of the Sūfī orders [see TAṬBĪQA and TAṢAWVŪR], which were deeply rooted in the middle classes.

During all periods, different forms of folk poetry co-existed alongside poetry which was eventually written down. In many environments, both written and oral forms of poetry influenced each other, and sometimes it is not easy to draw a clear boundary between them. Other forms of poetry transmitted orally existed without being noticed by the educated. So, for example, Bedouin poets continued to compose poetry in a style reminiscent of pre-Islamic poetry throughout the centuries. This can be deduced by the existence of the so-called nabā-nil poetry [g.v.] which has been recorded from the 19th century onwards and is still practised in the Arabian peninsula even today. For further information about the complex of folk poetry, see MUSLIM, i. E. The folk poet in Arab society, at Vol. IX, 2336.

SHĀİR — SHAMIR b. DHI T-DJAWSHAN


SHAKHAB, [BATTLE OF] [see marij al-Saffar].

SHALISH, also written Dhaltum, a term referring to either the vanguard of an army or a flag raised to signal the announcement to an army of the advance of the vanguard. The word is of Turkish origin, derived from Ciltah, meaning “battle” or “conflict” [see G. Doerfer, Türkische und mongolische Elemente in Neupersischen, Wiesbaden 1965-75, ii, 32]. It appears in Persian during the late Sāljuq era (Rāwandi, Rāhāt al-sultān, ed. M. Iqbal, GMS, NS, 2, London 1921, 347), with the meaning of “battle” in Arabic, it is found in works of the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk times (see below). It is unclear whether it entered Arabic via the Persian or was adopted in the former language directly from Turkish military men.

1. In the sense of advance troops of a general nature, the term is found in the description of the battle of Hitmūn [q.v.] in 584/1187, where we find daltah (Bahā’ al-Din Ibn Shahlidh, Navodī al-sulṭānīyya, Cairo n.d., 61 = tr. D.S. Richards, The rare and excellent history of Sulayman, Aldershot 2001, 73; Ibn al-Aṣḥār, Ruml, Beirut 1987, xi, 146). In the early Mamlūk period, it is used on the one hand as a synonym for tafā’, advanced scouts or vanguard, as at the battle of Ayn Daltah [q.v.] in 658/1260 (cf. Ibn al-Dawwār, Kimg al-lnān, ed. U. Haarmann, Freiburg-Cairo 1971, 49, with al-Makrīzī, Sūlūk, Cairo 1943-74, i, 430). On the other hand, in the battle of Hitmūn [q.v.] in 680/1281, daltah is used in the sense of mukaddama, i.e. the large forward division of the Mamlūk army (Baybars al-Mansūr, Zuhd, ed. Richards, Beirut 1998, 197). The term was not only applied to the Mamlūk army; in 699/1299, the daltah of the al-Khilat Gahāzin [q.v.] passed by Halab on the way south (al-Makrīzī, Sūlūk, i, 685); the exact intention, i.e. whether it was a small reconnaissance unit or a large advance division, is unclear from the context.

2. In the sense of a flag raised above the tabbākhāna [q.v.], see D. Ayalon, art. tābūkh, iii, above, Vol. III, at 184. Ibn Khaldūn (Muḥadditha, ed. Mustafā Muhammad, Cairo n.d. = tr. Rosenthal, ii, 52), writes that in the Mamlūk state (dawlat al-turk), a large flag (rubūs) surrounded by a big tuft of hair (probably of a horse) was called a daltah, and that it was a sign of the sultan. It would seem that the use of the word for the flag used to declare preparations for a campaign was already in use in the meaning above, so the advance force or vanguard. The sense of flag was derived perhaps from the advance force which may have carried it.

Bibliography: Besides the sources and studies given above, see E. Quatremère, Histoire des sultans musulmans à l’Orient, Paris 1837-43, i/v, 225-7 (with numerous examples from the Ayyūbid and Mamlūk sources giving both contemporary meanings); Dozy, Supplement, i, 182.

SHAMIR (also al-Shamīr, commonly Shāmir) b. DHI T-DJAWSHAN Abu T-Sābīgha, often portrayed as one of the killers of al-Husayn b. ‘Abbās [q.v.]. Shāmir’s father, Shumābil (or Aws) b. Kūr (various forms of the name are given), was a Companion of the Prophet who settled in al-Kufa.

Shāmir fought at Siffin [q.v.] on ‘Abbās’s side, receiving a sword wound to his face (al-Mīnkal, Waq’at Shīfī, ed. ‘A. Hūrūn, Cairo 1401/1981, 268; al-Tabarī, i, 3035). Subsequently he changed sides and became a supporter of the Umayyads. In 517/671 he testified against Ḥadīr b. ‘Abbās [q.v.] ibid, ii, 133; nine years later, ‘Ubayy b. al-‘Abbās b. Ziyād [q.v.] recruited him and other tribal notables to quell the revolt of Muslim b. ‘Abbīl [q.v.]. When al-Husayn was intercepted at Karbalah, he appealed in vain to Shāmir and others to let him go to the caliph Yazīd [ibid., ii, 285]. Shāmir prevailed upon Ibn Ziyād to adopt an unwarranting attitude towards al-Husayn; Ibn Ziyād thereupon gave him a letter ordering ‘Umar b. Sa’d to kill al-Husayn should he refuse to submit to Ibn Ziyād’s authority, and warning ‘Umar that if he failed to obey this order he would be replaced as commander by Shāmir (ibid., ibid, 315-6). ‘Umar reluctantly obeyed and put Shāmir in charge of the foot-soldiers (al-Balād al-fawār, i, 391; al-Tabarī, ii, 317). On 9 Muharram 61/9 October 680, as ‘Umar was making final preparations to do battle with al-Husayn, Shāmir offered a safe-conduct to three or four sons of ‘Abbās b. ‘Umar b. al-Banūn b. Hizâma, who belonged to Shāmir’s tribe, the Banū Killāb; the sons rejected the offer, insisting that al-Husayn, too, should be granted safe-conduct (al-Balād al-fawār, iii, 391; Ibn ‘Aṣākir, iii, 105; cf. al-Tabarī, ii, 316-7).

The next morning—the Day of ‘Ashūrā—‘Umar put Shāmir in command of the army’s left wing (ibid., ii, 326). Shāmir intended to burn down al-Husayn’s tent with the women and children inside, but was shamed into withdrawing (ibid., ii, 346-7) and acceded to al-Husayn’s request to be allowed to surrender to him (al-Balād al-fawār, i, 407; al-Tabarī, ii, 362). Shāmir’s role in the death of al-Husayn is disputed in the sources. While some accounts merely refer to his participation in the battle (e.g. Ibn ‘Aṣākir, xxiii, 186), he is more usually said to have instigated the final assault, while yet other reports explicitly mention him as having killed al-Husayn (al-Wâkidī, in al-Balād al-fawār, iii, 418; al-Iskhāqī, 119; Ibn Hazm, Baharīr asbab al-arab, ed. ‘A. Hūrūn, Cairo 1351/1612, 287), as having decapitated his corpse (al-SA’idī, xii, 425, xv, 180); or both al-Makrīzī, xvii, 56; cf. al-Tabarī, 250). This last report is supported by both Shāmir’s report that it was Shāmir himself who killed al-Husayn and decapitated his body (Abū Mīqān, in al-Tabarī, ii, 366), or that Shāmir killed him and Khalīl b. Yazīd al-Asbāhī cut off his head (al-Balād al-fawār, iii, 418; cf. Ibn ‘Abbās b. Bāqir, i, 393). In the ‘azīya [q.v.] passion plays, Shāmir is habitually presented as al-Husayn’s killer (Chelkowski, 15, 106, 110, 116-7, 159, 165; Ayoub, 127) and as more evil than Shīrāzī (Viroletaud, 94-5; Chelkowski, 160).

After the battle, Shāmir was about to kill al-Husayn’s son ‘Abbās [see ZAYN al-‘ABBĀD], but was prevented from doing so (Ibn Sa’d, i, 480; Shāmir led the Hāwīzawī, who formed one of the contingents that brought the heads of the fallen warriors to Ibn Ziyād (al-Tabarī, ii, 386; Ibn Tawīs, 85); later he accompanied the survivors to Damascus (al-Tabarī, i, 375). An address is preserved in which he recounts to Yazīd the events of Karbalah (al-Dinawarī, 260-1, cited in D.M. Donaldson, The Shi‘a religion, London 1933, 102-3; this same address, however, is also ascribed to Zayr b. al-Djīfī: see al-Tabarī, ii, 374-5). Back in al-Kufa, Shāmir is said to have repented of his actions, explaining that he had been duty-bound to obey Ibn Ziyād (al-Dhababī, Mīzān al-ta’dil, ed. A. Mu’attawī and A’. Abd al-Mawdjid, Beirut 1416/1995, iii, 385; cf. Ibn Sa’d, i, 499; Ibn ‘Aṣākir, xxiii, 189).

In 668/686 Shāmir was among the Kufan asbāh who rose against al-Mu’tahar [q.v.]. After they had