Introduction

The poetry of ʿAntarah ibn Shaddād is extremely well served when it comes to the availability of high-quality editions, so much so that any further intervention such as this edition may seem supererogatory, if not hubristic. Why produce a new edition of the diwan of ʿAntarah ibn Shaddād?

After collating as many of the manuscripts of the diwan as I could gain access to, I arrived at the following conclusions. There are two main traditions of the poetry of ʿAntarah: a twenty-seven-poem tradition; and a forty-poem tradition. The twenty-seven-poem tradition is associated with al-Aṣmaʿī and may have been produced by his pupil al-Sijistānī. It was used by al-Shantamarī as the basis for his commentary, whereas the forty-poem tradition was used by al-Baṭalyawṣī as the basis for his commentary. The provenance of the forty-poem tradition is unknown.

In view of these findings, I decided that a new version of the diwan was merited, one that paid express attention to elucidating the contours of this literary history. In order to understand why I adopted an approach that required editing the separate recensions and redactions as works in their own right, it is worth surveying the principal editions currently available, as they all share an approach to editing texts, an approach that I will refer to as “hybridization.”

Hybridization

Ahlwardt’s The Divans of the Six Ancient Arabic Poets

In 1870, Wilhelm Ahlwardt (1828–1909), Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Greifswald, published, in London, an edition of the poetry of ʿAntarah, along with the diwans of al-Nābighah al-Dhubyānī, Ṭarafah ibn al-ʿAbd, Zuhayr ibn Abī Sulmā, ʿAlqamah al-Faḥl, and Imruʿ al-Qays. From the moment I started my study of pre-Islamic poetry in October 1984 for my DPhil at the University of Oxford, Ahlwardt’s The Divans of the Six Ancient Arabic Poets has been central to my research. Indeed, it has in many ways shaped my reading of this corpus.
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The book’s full title makes clear the range of Ahlwardt’s erudition and his achievement: *The Divans of the Six Ancient Arabic Poets Ennābiga, ‘Antara, Tharafa, Zuhair, ‘Alqama and Imruulqais; chiefly according to the MSS of Paris, Gotha, and Leyden, and the Collection of their Fragments with a List of the various Readings of the Text* (London: Trübner & Co.). The study is in two parts: an Arabic section and an English section. There are 222 pages of Arabic text and 114 pages of English.

The principal manuscripts that Ahlwardt relied on for his edition of the Six Poets contained the redaction of al-Aṣmaʿī in the commentary of al-Shantamarī, with the exception of the manuscript he used for his edition of Imruʿ al-Qays, which he based on a Leiden manuscript (see *The Divans*, xx), in the recension of al-Sukkarī (from Abū ʿUbaydah). The Irish-born French Orientalist William MacGuckin de Slane (1801–78), student of Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), had published, in 1837, at L’Imprimerie royale in Paris, *Le Diwan d’Amrol’kaïs, précédé de la vie de ce poète*, an edition and translation of the diwan of Imruʿ al-Qays, based on the Parisian manuscripts that were also at Ahlwardt’s disposal. Ahlwardt decided therefore to make a separate recension of this key poet available.

Ahlwardt imposed a completely new arrangement on the material he encountered in his manuscripts, from the sequence of poets to the order of poems. He explains that he positioned the diwan of Imruʿ al-Qays last because its edition was not based on the Paris and Gotha manuscripts, and presented the diwan of ‘Alqamah prior to that of Imruʿ al-Qays because of the many “resemblances and allusions” (*The Divans*, xi) in the former to the latter. Because he thought that in the manuscripts the poems which are “genuinely acknowledged to be genuine . . . are placed first” (*The Divans*, xii), he decided not to observe the internal arrangement of the recension but instead chose to arrange the individual poems alphabetically. In addition to identifying the meter of each poem, he provided every line with full vocalization and almost complete orthography (there is some variation in the indication of *hamzah*). He also, importantly, did not include in his work an edition of the commentary of al-Shantamarī available to him in one of the Paris manuscripts and in the Gotha manuscript. Ahlwardt’s guiding principle was that “the poem itself should lead . . . to . . . an opinion of its purport.” After the edition of the diwans (*The Divans*, 2–162) the book contains an appendix of fragments and verses attributed to the Six Poets that Ahlwardt had collected from various texts (*The Divans*, 164–207).
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section of the book is rounded off with a fihrist, here an inventory of the prefatory remarks, comments, and narratives that accompany each poem in the Paris, Gotha, and Leiden manuscripts (The Divans, 208–24). There is further Arabic material on pages 112–14 of the English, a supplementary appendix of seventeen fragments collected by Ahlwardt but too late to be included in the typeset text (“Supplement to the Appendix of the Fragments”).

The English section of the study is in two parts, a Preface and Table of Contents (in Roman numerals, The Divans, i–xxix and xxx, respectively) and the philological “boiler room” of the study (in Western Arabic numerals, The Divans, 1–110). This “boiler room” is what establishes the philological credentials of the edition. It comprises: a “List of different Readings and Corrections” (The Divans, 1–86), a list which is selective and excludes “discrepant readings . . . due to the copyist’s neglect (The Divans, xiv); an “Appendix” (The Divans, 86–102), containing a list of different readings and corrections for the appendix of fragments and verses on pages 164–207 of the Arabic section; a “Table of Abbreviations” (The Divans, 103–4), in which fifty-eight sources are enumerated, the majority of them in manuscript form and not available in scholarly editions at the time; a table presenting a “View of the order of the poems in the MSS. of Paris, Gotha, and Leyden, with a statement of the number of their verses” (The Divans, 105–6); a “Statement of the discrepancies between the MSS. of Paris (and Gotha) and this edition, as to the order of the verses in the poems of Imruulqais” (The Divans, 107); a “Table of the order of the verses in the Mo’allaqat of ‘Antara, Tharafa, Zuhair and Imruulqais, in the fifth poem of Ennābiga, and in the second and thirteenth poem of ‘Alqama, according to some MSS. and editions” (The Divans, 108–10); and finally, a “view of the poems of the six poets, which are stated by Ela’lam to be spurious or doubtful, according to the judgment of Elaçma’i” (The Divans, 111).

Ahlwardt’s Preface is wide-ranging and informative. It forms a companion piece to his seminal Bemerkungen über die Aechtheit der alten arabischen Gedichte mit besonderer Beziehung auf die sechs Dichter nebst Beiträgen zum richtigen Verständnisse Ennābiga’s und ‘Alqama’s (L. Bambergs: Greifswald, 1872). After a brief overview of the importance and appeal of pre-Islamic poetry (like most nineteenth-century philologists, Ahlwardt was fascinated by origins), a survey of the various formats in which pre-Islamic poetry was collected, and a characterization of the collection of the Six Poets, Ahlwardt records the genesis of his project, from his first acquaintance with the Paris manuscripts in 1855 (and his
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subsequent inability to find a publisher for an edition, translation, and brief commentary) to his growing awareness of the challenge posed to al-Aṣmaʿī’s authoritative status in the tradition by the scattered fragments and verses of the Six Poets (many of these fragments and verses belonged to poems declared by al-Aṣmaʿī to be spurious, declarations often preserved in the commentary of al-Shantamarī). In his statement of editorial principles that follows (The Divans, viii–xi), Ahlwardt defends his application of the critical technique of emendation on the basis of the textual tradition, and his adoption of readings from other sources in addition to the primary manuscripts at his disposal, a variation on the textual-criticism technique of *emendatio ope codicorum*, i.e., emendation based on the manuscript tradition. He notes that he has resisted “the seducing charm of the critical function of expunging and transposing passages, of detecting and supplying gaps, of dissecting pieces and enjoining others” (The Divans, ix–x), preferring instead “the text that, in one form or other, has actually existed” (The Divans, x).

There follows, on pages xvii–xxvi, a full discussion of the ten manuscripts used for the edition of the diwans and the twenty-one sources used for the variants and fragments, with a very brief disquisition (The Divans, xxvii–xxviii) on the “integrity” and genuineness of “the ancient poems” “few of which appear . . . to be genuine and preserved entire” (The Divans, xxvii).

It is impossible not to be in awe of Ahlwardt’s control of his material; it is also difficult not to be overwhelmed, intimidated even, by the detail, scrupulosity, and ambition of his philology. What he produced is, in fact, a hybrid edition of Paris BNF Arabe 3273 (my MS 1, see list of manuscripts below, pages xxviii–liii) combined with readings adopted from Paris BNF Arabe 3274 (my MS 6), Gotha Orient-A-02191 (my MS 14), and other sources selected and incorporated at his discretion as editor. His text is thus very much a new text, one that is firmly rooted in the tradition but which offers a philologist’s synthesis of that tradition.

*Mawlawī’s Dīwān ‘Antarah*

In 1964, Muḥammad Saʿīd Mawlawī successfully submitted a thesis to Cairo University for the M.A. degree. This work, carried out under the supervision of the eminent literary historian Shawqī Ḍayf, was published that year by al-Maktab al-ʿIslāmī as *Dīwān ‘Antarah: Taḥqīq wa-dirāsah* (The Diwan of ‘Antarah: Edition
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and Study). It carries the subtitle Dirāsah ʿilmīyyah muḥaqqaqah ʿalā sitt nusakh makhṭūṭah (A Scholarly Study, Edited on the Basis of Six Manuscripts). The work is an excellent example of twentieth-century Arabic philology and it has facilitated my understanding of ‘Antarah’s poetry immensely. The present study would, I am sure, be quite different without having Mawlawī’s edition available.

The first part of the book is a monograph-length scholarly study devoted to ‘Antarah, covering four topics: his life; the sources of his poetry; poetic themes; and artistic characteristics (in ‘Antarah, Dīwān, 1–148). The second part of the work is devoted to the edition. It is divided into three parts: an account of the recensions of the diwan and its textual bases (Dīwān, 151–64); a description of the manuscripts (Dīwān, 165–76); and an evaluation of the manuscripts and editorial method (Dīwān, 173bis–77). The edition of the diwan and the commentary on it by al-Shantamarī come next (Dīwān, 179–314), followed by the poems included in al-Baṭalyawsī’s recension but not included in al-Shantamarī’s commentary (Dīwān, 315–30). The edition proper concludes with an appendix of fragments (Dīwān, 331–40).

Mawlawī also provides a survey of sources, verse order, and quotations for the forty poems and twenty-seven fragments of his edition (Dīwān, 341–60). A detailed table of contents (Dīwān, 361–63) is followed by eight indices: rhyme words (364–67); people (Dīwān, 368–78); places (Dīwān, 369–82); tribes and genealogies (Dīwān, 383–85); books (Dīwān, 386–93); Qur’anic verses (Dīwān, 393); poetic proof-texts (shawāhid) (Dīwān, 394–95); and battles (Dīwān, 396). A list of bibliographical sources (Dīwān, 397–404) is followed by eleven pages of corrections (Dīwān, 405–10).

Mawlawī consulted a total of nine manuscripts: six containing al-Shantamarī’s recension (my MSS 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 15) and two containing al-Baṭalyawsī’s recension (my MSS 17 and 20). He also incorporated readings from the copy of Ibn Maymūn’s anthology Muntahā l-ṭalab min ashʿār al-ʿArab (The Ultimate Poetry Collection of the Early Arabs), contained in Dār al-Kutub in Cairo (see my discussion of MS 21).

Mawlawī’s edition is meticulous, his documentation scrupulous, and his interventions considered. His approach to editing is essentially that identified by Wadād al-Qāḍī in her excellent article “How ‘Sacred’ is the Text of an Arabic Medieval Manuscript? The Complex Choices of the Editor-Scholar.” Al-Qāḍī notes the prevalence, among many Arab scholars in the second half of the twentieth century, of an attitude to editing as “the establishment of the text
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according to authorial intention” (“How ‘Sacred’ is the Text,” 21). By comparing the contradictory practices of two main exponents of this view, Hārūn and ‘Abd al-Tawwāb, she observes:

According to Hārūn, his view of editing meant that the editor should not interfere with his text by way of improving its style, replacing its words by better, nicer, or more appropriate words, correcting its presumably wrong attributions of citations, fixing its grammatical errors, adding explanatory sentences, or rectifying its identification of a person. ‘Abd al-Tawwāb, on the other hand, concluded from his definition that his editor should correct the distortions and corruptions of the text’s words and free it from what was added to or deleted from it.

Mawlawī wanted to make available to us the best possible edition of the diwan of ‘Antarah in al-Shantamari’s commentary according to what he understood the “authorial intentions” of both ‘Antarah and al-Shantamari to be, and he provides us with all the relevant resources to assess his choices. Therefore, in the process of making this diwan available, he provides us with a hybrid edition, a composite of the textual materials at his disposal, just as Ahlwardt did before him. And like Ahlwardt, Mawlawī’s edition is effectively a new text, one that offers a new philological synthesis of the tradition.

*Al-Tūmī’s Sharḥ al-ash‘ār al-sittah al-jāhiliyyah of al-Baṭalyawsī*


The edition is based on two of the four available manuscripts of al-Baṭalyawsī’s work: Istanbul Süleymaniye Feyzullah Effendi 1640 (my MS 17) and Vienna ÖN Codex Mixtus 781 (my MS 20). It is a very fine piece of scholarship. The annotations are clear, meticulous, and scrupulous. The Indices (*Sharḥ al-ash‘ār*, 539–677) are comprehensive and useful. Especially welcome is the Index of Lexemes,
an index devoted to words that are explained or discussed in al-Baṭalyawsī’s commentary (in Sharḥ al-ash‘ār, 605–77).

Al-Tūmī explains his editorial method on pages 14–16 of his Introduction to volume 2. His edition is based primarily on Istanbul Feyzullah Effendi 1640, compared with Vienna Codex Mixtus 781. In order to resolve any problematic readings that arose, he notes that he first tried to emend on the basis of internal evidence, looking in the commentary for a solution to a problematic word in a line of verse or vice versa. He then turned to the commentary of al-Shantamarī, or, where appropriate, to the commentary tradition on the Mu‘allaqāt, and then to other works on poetry from the classical tradition. If these sources failed to assist him in the resolution of a crux, he resorted to conjecture, ensuring that each case was clearly marked as such. In the case of mistakes that seem to stem from al-Baṭalyawsī himself, al-Tūmī notes that he marked them as such in the text, but left them untouched, without any emendation. He also notes that he applied modern orthography to the representation of his material, indicating on the first occasion the type of modernization applied (for example, where he provides a hamzah absent in the manuscript).

Al-Tūmī’s study belongs to the tradition of editing I have explored in relation to the works of Ahlwardt and Mawlawī. He exhibits a more cautious approach to hybridization than is apparent in the work of his predecessors, but his ambition is, in al-Qāḍī’s considered phrase, “the establishment of the text according to authorial intention.” And, once again, a new text is generated in the process.

Six Early Arab Poets by Arazi and Masalha

The consequences of such hybridization are now absolutely fundamental to the modern reception of the diwan of ʿAntarah. Thus, in 1999, Albert Arazi and Salman Masalha published a new edition of Ahlwardt’s magnum opus, along with an extremely useful concordance of the six diwans: Six Early Arab Poets: New Edition and Concordance. They recognized “Ahlwardt’s impressive diligence, his breadth of knowledge and his scholarly reliability” (Six Early Arab Poets, 9), and their edition encompasses some fifty-five “readings different from Ahlwardt’s . . . based on secondary sources that were edited and published since the publication of Ahlwardt’s edition” (Six Early Arab Poets, 9). This book is a welcome contribution to our knowledge of the Six Poets and is the impressive product of
many years of “strenuous work” (*Six Early Arab Poets*, 21), but we have to recognize that, as an edition, it incorporates and perpetuates the hybrid character of Ahlwardt’s pioneering work.

Hybridization as a Feature of the Tradition

What is wrong with hybridization? Perhaps hybridity should not trouble us overmuch. It has, after all, been a part of the tradition of pre-Islamic poetry from its earliest codifications in writing. We know from the prefatory remarks provided by the commentators to JEM Poems 23, 24, 26, and 27 that there was some disagreement about the attribution of the poems to ʿAntarah.10 The remarks to JEM Poem 23 state that the poem was not included by al-ʿAṣmaʿī in his redaction. Therefore, the basic corpus of twenty-seven poems is presumably itself an instance of hybridization, a case of the amplification by a student or students of a teacher’s lectures. How much amplification and hybridization went into the corpus in the course of its transmission is impossible to identify because our earliest manuscripts provide us with no clear information. What clues we have seem to point to al-ʿAṣmaʿī’s pupil al-Sijistānī as the scholar with whom the twenty-seven-poem corpus originated, though we are unable to identify the genealogy of the forty-poem collection upon which al-Baṭalyawsī based his commentary.

Our earliest extant evidence also demonstrates that comparison and collation were important features of the reception history of the diwan. Thus, Paris BNF Arabe 3273 (my MS 1) demonstrates how its readings were emended and collated by a certain Ibn Jamāʿah on the basis of the readings of what we might call the “mainstream” Shantamarī tradition.11 In this respect, the scholars and copyists engaged with the diwan of ʿAntarah as they would with any other work.

Adam Gacek (“Taxonomy of Scribal Errors and Corrections in Arabic Manuscripts”) has shown how prevalent collation (*muʿāradah, muqābalah*) was, either accomplished on the basis of the copyist’s exemplar or on the basis of further copies in addition to the exemplar. He goes so far as to state that “some manuscripts, especially from the medieval period, exhibit many characteristics of primitive editions.”12 Collation was practiced to ensure accuracy, and was intended to facilitate deliberate correction. Gacek notes that it could “result in a primitive apparatus criticus” (“Taxonomy,” 219), though at a later stage of copying, correction often led to incorporation, whereby variants noted in one manuscript were “incorporated in a copy made from this exemplar”
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(“Taxonomy,” 219), and in this way a “contaminated tradition” would arise ("Taxonomy," 218). Presumably such techniques and practices were applied by scholars and copyists to the works they were copying because they sought to establish “the text according to authorial intention” in the most authentic copy they could possibly generate. In the process, the application of collation produced hybridization, in varying degrees at various stages of the transmission of the text. If hybridization is thus a feature of the very tradition of copying, and our modern editions emulate the tradition by continuing its practice of hybridization, now reproduced in modern formats, should we not accept this feature as part and parcel of our work as philologists and even see in it license to produce our own hybrids?

A Literary-Historical Edition

This question was uppermost in my mind when I started work on my edition of the diwan of ʿAntarah ibn Shaddād. In many ways, I see textual criticism as a practice-based discipline informed by theory, rather than as a theoretical conceptualization of how texts ought to be edited. Each text, it seems to me, poses its own unique set of challenges (however similar many of these challenges may be to those posed by other texts) and requires its own unique set of responses and solutions (however similar many of these solutions may be to those provided for other texts).

I decided to consider editing the diwan as a way of thinking about and exploring the strengths and weaknesses of an approach that embraces hybridization. I did not undertake such a task rashly or lightly. I am not a trained paleographer or an especially adept codicologist. I sought, rather, to produce my edition as a literary historian with a keen interest in the tradition, transmission, and reception of pre-Islamic poetry, one who wanted to excavate the evidence available in order the better to understand the contours of how the diwan has come down to us. In my discussion of the manuscripts, written from the point of view of a literary historian and not that of a codicologist, I set forth these contours and seek to evaluate the significance of the evidence that was uncovered in the process of excavation.

My investigations suggest the following findings:
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- There are two main traditions of the poetry of ʿAntarah: a twenty-seven-poem tradition and a forty-poem tradition.
- The twenty-seven-poem tradition is associated with al-Aṣmaʿī and may have been produced by his pupil al-Sijistānī.
- The twenty-seven-poem tradition was used by al-Shantamārī as the basis for his commentary.
- The provenance of the forty-poem tradition is unknown.
- The forty-poem tradition was used by al-Baṭalyawsī as the basis for his commentary.
- The two traditions converge in that the forty-poem tradition contains all the poems in the twenty-seven-poem tradition, in addition to thirteen poems not included in that tradition.
- The forty-poem tradition (as extant in al-Baṭalyawsī's commentary) is distinct from the twenty-seven-poem tradition, in terms of the range and number of poems it contains, the sequence of its poems, the verse order of several of its poems, and many of its readings.
- Two of the manuscripts, Paris BNF Arabe 3273 and Istanbul Süleymaniye Nuruosmaniye 3849, belong to the twenty-seven-poem tradition that goes back to al-Aṣmaʿī, but are independent of each other and of the MS tradition of al-Shantamārī's commentary.
- Paris BNF Arabe 3273 represents the earliest testimony of the twenty-seven-poem tradition, and its pre-collated text is independent of the MS tradition of al-Shantamārī's commentary.
- Istanbul Süleymaniye Nuruosmaniye 3849 represents the earliest eastern, non-Maghribī, testimony of the twenty-seven-poem tradition, and is independent of the MS tradition of al-Shantamārī's commentary.
- The al-Shantamārī tradition itself comprises manuscripts that reproduce the poetry and commentary on all six poets; manuscripts that reproduce the poetry and commentary on a number of poets; manuscripts that reproduce the poetry but do not reproduce al-Shantamārī's commentary in full, yet clearly depend on it for their comments, presented often in an abbreviated form as supralinear or marginal remarks.
- One manuscript contains the twenty-seven-poem tradition supplemented with one poem from the forty-poem tradition, i.e., it represents a hybrid of the twenty-seven and forty-poem traditions (see comments on MS 16 below).
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- The versions printed in Ibn Maymūn’s anthology are closer to the versions of the poems as reproduced by al-Baṭalyawṣī than they are to the twenty-seven poems in the al-ʿAṣmaʿī and al-Shantamarī traditions.

On the basis of these findings, therefore, I would argue that any attempt to generate an edition that is, say, a hybridizing synthesis of the manuscripts in the al-Shantamarī tradition (MSS 3–15) and of the twenty-seven-poem tradition as extant in Paris BNF Arabe 3273 (MS 1), or Istanbul Süleymaniye Nuruosmaniye 3849 (MS 2), or both, would result not only in the occlusion of the evidence provided by the manuscripts as they have survived, but also in the distortion of that evidence.

I would also argue that it is implausible to attempt to synthesize or harmonize the readings of the al-Shantamarī and al-Baṭalyawṣī traditions, or even the al-Baṭalyawṣī tradition and Ibn Maymūn’s selection, despite the similarities these two share. Such an attempt to harmonize these traditions through hybridization would quite simply occlude both the distinct contours of the diwan of ‘Antarah ibn Shaddād, and its transmission and reception history.17

Accordingly, in order to demonstrate the topography of this reception history, I have prepared five editions of the poetry of ‘Antarah for this study. In order to limit, insofar as is possible, the consequences of hybridization, I have confined each edition to one base manuscript and constructed the apparatus criticus on the basis of the readings of the base manuscript, eschewing emendation unless absolutely in extremis.18 These five editions are based on the following manuscripts:

- Paris BNF Arabe 3273 (MS 1, with a full apparatus criticus based on a collation of all the manuscripts available to me).19
- Istanbul Süleymaniye Nuruosmaniye 3849 (MS 2, collated with Paris BNF Arabe 3273, its nearest neighbor outside of the al-Shantamarī tradition).
- Rabat Khizānah Ḥasaniyyah 2126 (MS 3, collated with all other manuscripts dependent on the al-Shantamarī tradition, i.e. MSS 4–15 and 16).
- Istanbul Süleymaniye Beyazit B5385 (MS 18, collated with the other three extant manuscripts in the al-Baṭalyawṣī tradition, i.e., MSS 17 and 19–20).20
- Istanbul Süleymaniye Laleli 1941 (MS 21, Ibn Maymūn’s anthology).21
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In the next section, I survey the manuscripts used in the current edition. Seven manuscripts, either unconsulted or consulted but excluded from this edition, are detailed in the Appendix to this volume.