

3 Means of stabilization

Learned scribes developed a system of stabilizing the text, i.e. of controlling variance, using a number of devices designed to protect the poem against deviations from the author's text. The major types of text stabilization which have been discerned in the examination of the manuscript copies of the poems of Ibn Zurayq, al-Ūshī, Ibn al-Wardī, al-Laḡānī and of the prose text of al-Sanūsī will be discussed in the following.

3.1 Deletion

Deletions or cancellations of text (*ḍarb*),⁷⁰ done by crossing out, blackening or scratching out letters or single words or groups thereof, are, of course the most frequently employed means of text control. They constitute an act of self-correction on the part of the scribe (one example of a correction of misspelling by the scribe is Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/1, a manuscript where he crossed out a whole word in the last verse, i.e. v. 77b) or an intervention by a (later) user of the manuscript (one example of cacographic correction made over erasures, and not necessarily done by the scribe, can be found in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/2, fo. 40r).

In Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/7, short slanted strokes have been used to cross out words written erroneously. Likewise, words written at the wrong place in a verse, e.g. as with the last word in the first hemistich of v. 64 in Ibn al-Wardī, BSB Cod.arab. 1235, were deleted through blackening.

The deleted expressions were corrected or replaced by an alternative expression. These corrections may either have been made over the erasures or they were entered elsewhere, above or below the deleted word, or as a gloss in the margin.

3.2 Substitution

Words have been crossed out to be replaced (*badal*)⁷¹ by an alternative expression (e.g. Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/4, in the outer margin, ad v. 36b). In Ibn Zurayq, Ms. Glas. 37, an alternative expression has been written above the line (v. 20b); however the word which was meant to be substituted has been left

⁷⁰ Cf. Gacek 2007, 224; id. 2009, 48.

⁷¹ Cf. Gacek 2007, 227 (under the heading “conjectures”); id. 2009, 80, 235.

untouched. Also in another Yemenī copy of Ibn al-Wardī, BSB Cod.arab. 1235, a word in v. 26b, *al-naḥw*, meant to be substituted, has not been crossed out. Instead, the variant expression *al-nuṭq*, marked *ṣaḥḥ* in the margin, was connected by a stroke⁷² with the place of reference, i. e., with the word to be substituted. Elsewhere in the above manuscript of Ibn Zurayq (v. 14a) the word *al-dahr* was crossed out and substituted by the semantically justifiable, variant expression *Allāh* written above *al-dahr*.

3.3 Addition

Another means of correcting text in a manuscript copy, next to substitutions, was the addition (*ziyādāt*)⁷³ of those parts of the poem which had been omitted. Words omitted were supplemented either underneath the line (Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/2, fo. 40r, 41v; -Sanūsī, We. 1793 = Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2007/3), or above it (Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt. no. 3999/4), or in the (inner and outer) margins (Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/4, fo. 48r). Words and single letters omitted by the scribe have been added in the margin of -Sanūsī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2007/3, and the place of insertion in the line has been marked by a slanted stroke.

An omitted expression may have been supplemented beneath the base line and connected with the place of insertion through a stroke of two dots⁷⁴ (-Laqānī, SBB, Hs. or. 4831). Often however the additions entered in the margin lack any indication as to where they were meant to be inserted (e.g. -Sanūsī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2007/3, fo. 55r).

The words added may be marked with certain signs, letters or words; mostly the expression *ṣaḥḥ*, i.e. correction (literally: “it is correct”), or an abbreviation thereof is employed.⁷⁵ In -Ūshī, SBB, Hs. or. 4950, the letter *ṣād* is added beneath the line after inserting an expression which had been omitted (cf. fo. 51v).

Omitted letters have been added above the line in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/8, fo. 76r, and a hemistich added in the outer margin of fo. 76r, has been marked by the word *ṣaḥḥ*. Also, in -Sanūsī, Ms. Süleymaniye Carullah Ef. 2125, fo. 5, an omitted word has been added above the line and marked with the letter *ṣād*, abbreviating *ṣaḥḥ*.

⁷² Gacek (2007, 221) discusses these marks, mainly curved lines, under the heading “reference marks or correction signs”.

⁷³ Cf. Gacek 2007 223,v; id. 2009, 235.

⁷⁴ Gacek (2007, 221) mentions a “continuous or dotted line linking the place of omission with the omitted word (insertion) inscribed in the margin”.

⁷⁵ On the expression *ṣaḥḥ* and its abbreviations cf. Gacek 2007, 223-24.

Additions or other corrections could be supplemented in the margins, on the basis of a parallel manuscript referred to by the expression *nuskha*⁷⁶ (“manuscript”) or *biḥi nuskha* (-Ūshī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2408/2). Such additions however could result in a contamination of the transmission.

Whole verses omitted may have been added, as in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3998, where v. 57 has been added written vertically on the inner margin of the folio (see fig. 5 for an analogous phenomenon detected in a copy of al-Ūshī’s *Qaṣīda*).⁷⁷



Fig. 5: Al-Ūshī: *Bad' al-amālī*, 1136/1723-24; omitted v. 51 has been added, in the left margin, marked with the letter *šād* (it is not discernible where the verse was meant to be inserted; Princeton, no. 5014, fo. 13r).

76 Cf. Gacek 2007, 218, 222, 228.

77 For another example also see fig. 25 (al-Shāṭibī, *Ḥīrz al-amānī*).

3.4 Correction of verse divisions

Verses divided into hemistichs at the wrong place have been corrected in some manuscripts, e.g. in -Laqānī, Ms. Spr. 1956, v. 117 (= fo. 8r, l. 7), by adding a coloured drop-shaped marker after the first word of the second hemistich.

3.5 Vocalization

Another device for realizing text control are vocalizations added to an ambiguous expression which could be read in different ways if lacking the vowel signs (e.g. *ṭuruqan*, for *ṭarqan*, in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/2, v. 11a). Vowel signs may of course have been entered wrongly, in which case the text is destabilized, as e.g. in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 3999/9, v. 59b (*li-wa'ẓin*, instead of *la-wa'ẓun*) where the affirmative prefix *la-* has been misinterpreted as the prepositional *li-*.

3.6 Glosses

The glosses (Arabic: *ḥāshiya*, pl. *ḥawāshin*)⁷⁸ in the manuscripts of didactic poetry – as well as in other genres – are of an atomistic nature, i.e. they comment on the contents of one expression in a single verse only.⁷⁹

Explanatory glosses or comments are mostly written in the margins but they may also have been inscribed between the lines or the columns (e.g. in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Süleymaniye, Baghdatlı Vehbi 1612, fo. 14v, between the hemistichs).

Glosses include synonymous or other alternative expressions which may have been derived as variant readings from other copies (e.g. -Üshī, Ms. Ahlwardt no.

⁷⁸ Cf. Gacek 2007, 230.

⁷⁹ Whereas the comments found in the manuscripts of the poems may be described as atomistic, the explanations included in the copies of the (anonymous) commentaries on al-Üshī, *Sharḥ Bad' al-Amālī*, Princeton no. 2272,8 and no. 2273, are extensive. Nevertheless, the means applied to achieve textual stability do not seem to differ categorically from those found in the manuscripts of the poems. In Ms. Princeton no. 2272,8, indications are given as to how to read individual words of a verse commented upon and the commentary says, e.g. ad verse 64b, to read the expression *ishtī'āl* with letter *'ayn* and no diacritical dots – an instruction the scribe ignored by writing *ishtighāl*. Within the text of a commentary there is of course more space to mention the names of authorities whose comments are adduced. And yet, in Ms. Princeton no. 2273, explanations are given anonymously and, relating, for instance, to the pronunciation of the term *nakāl* / *nikāl* in v. no. 19, they are merely introduced as *'alā riwāya*, i.e. “according to some tradition”.

2408/1, fo. 79r: *ih̄tibāl* for *iḥ̄timāl*, ad verse 57b; Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2408/5, fo. 54r: *bi-l-faraḥ* for *bi-ʾjtidhāl*, ad verse 60b).

3.6.1 Content-related explanations

Semantic glosses, i.e. glosses intended as an explanation of some words in a verse may begin with the expression *ay*, which is Arabic for “that means”, or they may end with the word *sharḥ*, “commentary”, mostly written underneath.⁸⁰

3.6.2 Explanations by synonyms

Mostly the explanations included in the glosses are of a lexical nature and adopt the form of *x=y*. A lexical explanation of this format has been entered in the margin of fo. 14v of Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Baghdatlī Vehbi 1612, e.g. *iktifāʾ*, *ay: ijtizāʾ*, which means that the former word is explained by a synonym.

In -Ūshī, SBB Hs. or. 4950, a single word is written above the line to explain a rare or otherwise difficult expression given in the text (e.g. the word *taʾthīr*, in v. 59a; fo. 52r, l. 5).

In Ibn Zurayq, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 8507, a single lexical gloss has been entered in the margin of fo. 96r which has otherwise been left blank. The gloss explaining the noun *daʿa* has been introduced by the often encountered formula “the intended meaning is, etc.” (*al-murād min al-daʿa ilkh.*).

An explanatory gloss in the (upper) margin which interprets (*ay: yumnaʿ*) an expression in the text (*yuzād*) is marked with the letter *mīm* (-Laqānī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2044, fo. 11v). *Yumnaʿ* probably relates to the expression *yuradd* in v. 112b which is misspelt as *yuzād* in this manuscript.

Lexical explanations can assume the form of translations into another language: Plenty of lexical explanations, in the form of Malay translations, have been entered in the wide spaces above and below the lines, in -Sanūsī, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 2007,⁷ (=Schoemann XI, _{3a}), written obliquely against the reference word. Turkish lexical glosses may be found especially in the manuscripts of al-Ūshī’s poem (e.g. Hs. or. 4496, v. 36b; Ms. Diez A oct. 50) which was most popular in the countries in which Turkish or some other Turkic language is spoken.

⁸⁰ Cf. Gacek 2007, 230, for other expressions and signs introducing glosses.

3.7 Syntactical explanatory markers

In order to make the inter-relationship of the parts of a sentence explicit, such grammatical terms as *mubtada'*, *khavar* and *maf'ul* have been entered in the manuscripts. The first two of these terms have been added beneath certain expressions in v. 37a and in v. 122b of -Laqānī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2045. In Ibn Zurayq, Ms. Ahlw. no. 7607,1 (Glas. 37), ad v. 40a, the term *maf'ul* has been written above a word referred to. The terms *mubtada'* and *khavar* can also be found, written beneath the line by some user of the manuscript, in a tenth/sixteenth century copy of 'Abd al-Karīm al-Qushayrī's mystical tract *'Uyūn al-ajwiba fī funūn al-as'ila* (Ms. Amasya, Bayezid II Halk Kütüphanesi, no. 2931, e.g. *mas'ala* 130, 131).

3.8 Signs of reference

The glosses include signs of reference (*khaff al-takhrij*, *'alāmat al-takhrij*, *'atfa*, etc.)⁸¹ comparable to the reference marks in our modern footnotes. Sometimes these glosses, entered in the margins, are headed by a *sign resembling certain Arabic numerals*.⁸² Ideally, the numerals are written both in the margin and at the place of reference in the text, in reality however they are mostly written only in one of the two places.

A gloss, written in the margin of the first folio of Ibn al-Wardī, BSB Cod.arab. 1235, has been marked with a sign resembling the Arabic numeral seven.⁸³ A sign resembling this numeral, marking the addition of an omitted phrase, can be found both above the place of insertion and in front of the marginal gloss in Ms. Ahlw. no. 2007,3 (We. 1793), fo. 52r, a copy of al-Sanūsī. A *sign resembling the Arabic numeral six (or letter 'ayn in the initial position?)* is found both as a heading of an explanatory gloss in the margin and above the word it refers to in the text (-Sanūsī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2007,8 = Pm. 203). *Signs of reference resembling the numerals three, four and five*, on p. 81 of the same manuscript, have been entered beneath the lines, *each numeral having been written twice*, obviously to indicate the place of reference for some of the glosses entered in the margins.

In -Laqānī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2045, signs resembling the Arabic numerals *two, three and four* have been used as signs of reference. Some of the numerals have

⁸¹ Cf. Gacek 2007, 221.

⁸² Cf. Gacek 2007, 220-222.

⁸³ Cf. Gacek 2007, 221.

been placed both within the text and in the margins where the pertinent poetical expression is commented on (fo. 2r).

A correction entered in the margin, viz., a synonym or variant, has been marked with a sign resembling the *numeral two* and with the letter *khā'* for *khaṭṭ*. The Arabic numeral has also been placed above the word referred to in the text (Ibn Zurayq, Ms. Ahlwardt no. 7607,1 = Pm. 193,1, fo. 29v, ad v. 32a).

In Ibn Zurayq, Ms. Pm. 193,2, a correction in the margin has been marked with the *numeral two* which is also written above the place of reference in the text. The marginal gloss is also headed with the letter *zā'* (fo. 53v).

In a number of the manuscripts surveyed signs were also used as reference markers which *resemble certain letters of the Arabic alphabet*. In -Laqānī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2045 (=Mq. 618), a sign resembling the letter *'ayn* in the initial position has been used to mark an expression in the line which is commented upon in the margin (v. 37a). The same sign, explained by Gacek (2007, 222) as a mark pointing to the margin (*'alāmat al-raj' ilā l-hāmish*), has also been written above the expression *ay* which introduces the relevant gloss in the margin. In an undated copy of Ibn Mālik's poem of 1000 verses on grammar, *al-Alfiyya* (BSB Cod.arab. 2053), the letters *ṭā'* and *kāf* have been used besides numbers as signs of reference.

A sign looking almost like the initial letter *sīn* has been written above a marginal gloss (a variant) as well as above a deleted word in the line of the poetical text in Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 3999/4. This is one of the tilde-like marks mentioned by Gacek (2007, 221) as examples of logographs, i.e. symbols representing words.

In another copy of Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlw. 3999/5, a *curbed stroke* or short line, resembling letters *lām* or *rā'*, has been written both above two variant expressions in the text and in the margin, thereby marking the reference.

Another means of connecting a marginal gloss with the related expression in the text is "overlining" (-Laqānī, Ms. Ahlw. no. 2045=Mq. 618, fo. 2v, ad v. 37a); but such marking is used less frequently.

In a manuscript of al-Sanūsī, Ahlwardt no. 2007,8 (= Pm. 203), the letter *ḥā'*, i.e. *intahā* ("[the gloss] has ended"),⁸⁴ has been employed as a sign of reference. On p. 83 of this paginated manuscript the same letter has been used as a sign both in the main text (above the line) and in the margin. Here the gloss ends with the expression *sharḥ*, i.e. "commentary". A gloss written above the line on p. 85 (l. 3) ends with letter *hā'*. In this manuscript the letter *hā'*, marking the end of a marginal gloss, may also have the form of a small heart. In some places this

84 Cf. Gacek 2007, 220.

letter has been written with an appendix, as it were, and in other places, without. Elsewhere in this manuscript (p. 83) the letter ك *kāf* has been used as a reference sign both in the text and in the margin where it is placed above an explanatory gloss signed *sharḥ*.

In Ms. Süleymaniye, Hacı Selim Aga 657, a copy of al-Laḡānī, a *small prefixed circle* or “circular device” (*dā’ira*, *dāra*)⁸⁵ has been used as an insertion marker. In v. 53 the word خلق *khalq* had been omitted in the first hemistich and was added in the margin, perhaps by an alien hand, with a small prefixed circle to mark the place of insertion.

3.9 Collation

Signs were entered in the margins in order to testify the completion of a collation procedure. However, in the present corpus of manuscripts such signs are found only very rarely. The letter *nūn* (= *nuskha*) marking a gloss in the margin of fo. 79r of -Üshī, Ahlw. no. 2408/1, may refer to a manuscript, either to the copyist’s own exemplar or to one with which he compared his copy. Such marking offers testimony of a collation procedure.⁸⁶

Occasionally commentaries on the poems were also subjected to a collation with other manuscripts; the letter *khā’* written in the margin of Ms. Princeton no. 2273 (fo. 176v) refers to *khatt*, probably the exemplar.

3.10 Abbreviations⁸⁷ of authorities

The phenomenon of sigla used as abbreviations for the names of authorities is well known in the field of Koranic sciences where the “readers” or *qurrā’* are sometimes referred to in this way.⁸⁸ The sigla are sometimes explained in lists

⁸⁵ Cf. Gacek 2007, 220.

⁸⁶ Cf. Gacek 2007, 218-9.

⁸⁷ Exceptionally single words such as the expression *ḥīna’idhin* have been abbreviated, by letter *ḥā’*, throughout the text of al-Sanūsī in Ms. Ahlw. no. 2007,4 (= Dq. 97, e.g. fo. 57r); on other abbreviations cf. Gacek 2007, 220. Letters used as abbreviations may also be found in the margins of BSB Cod.arab. 2048: ‘*ayn* for ‘*adad* = number; *ṣād* for *ṣaḥīfa* = page; *kāf* for *kurrāsa* = quires; *qāf* for *waraq* = leaf.

⁸⁸ Angelica Neuwirth (EI² 9,365b, art. “al-Shāṭibī”) explains that in al-Shāṭibī’s *ṭawīl*-poem on Koranic readings *Ḥirz al-amānī* or *al-Shāṭibiyya* the sigla were introduced as a new mnemonic device: “The sigla pointing at particular readers, transmitters or transmitter groups, appear in

included at the beginning or at the end of a given text.⁸⁹ In the copies of the didactic poems surveyed here, abbreviations for authorities - or authoritative manuscripts - have however not been detected. Model figures of the history of Islamic theology like Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal are mentioned by name in glosses commenting on the contents of a verse (e.g. -Ūshī, Ms. Ahlwardt, no. 2408/2). In a manuscript of al-Sanūsī (Ahlwardt, no. 2007,8 = Pm. 203), a commentator is referred to in a gloss (*al-Shaykh raḥimahū Allāh*) without mentioning his name. In Ms. Süleymaniye Hüsni Paşa 231, a copy of al-Ūshī, there is an explanatory gloss in the margin of fo. 48v, on the subject of apostasy, relating to verse 44 *wa-la yuqḍā bikufrin*, starting with the words *wa-min aḥkām al-ridḍa*, and signed – a rarity – by one Muḥammad al-Madani (*katabahū al-Shaykh M.*).⁹⁰

3.11 Place of insertion of manuscript notes relating to control of text variance

Notes written with the intention of checking text variance may in fact be inscribed at any place in the manuscript, not only in the margins or between the lines. In a copy of Ibn al-Wardī, Ms. Ahlwardt, no. 3999/3, the scribe mentions in a note following the colophon that, in one manuscript, he discovered some verses which were apocryphal, i.e. not composed by the author but with which he would like to conclude his copy of the poem.

the written verse simply as initial letters of single words used within the discussion of the particular Qurānic lemmata. In order to be recognizable they they had to be marked by a particular colour or repeated over the word in which they appeared.” A Maghribi Koran manuscript featuring these sigla in the margins is BSB Cod.arab. 2759 (dated 1264/1847-8). A reproduction of a page from an Indian Koran exhibiting analogous marginalia is included in Seidensticker 2011, 90. A page from a manuscript of Ibn al-Jazarī’s poem *Ṭayyibat al-nashr fī qirā’at al-‘ashr* which likewise features the above sigla is Gacek 2009, 178 (lemma: page layout).

⁸⁹ E.g., at the end of BSB Cod.arab 2575 including the *Ḥirz al-amānī*.

⁹⁰ In a copy of the didactic poem on the law of inheritance, *al-Urjūza al-Raḥbiyya*, by Ibn al-Mutaqqina (d. 577/1181-2 or later), the semantic glosses entered in the margins include not only the quotation of the expression explained, viz., *qawluhū*, but many of the marginalia are also signed by the authorities quoted, e.g. Sibṭ [al-Māridīnī] (BSB Cod.arab. 2054, part 6).

3.12 Evaluation

A comparison of the means of text stabilization listed above with Gacek's categories of corrections of scribal errors allows us to make the following minor modifications or additions (mainly owing to the different type of material consulted): *Deletions* of scribal errors as a major means of text control is mentioned by Gacek (2007, 224). It may be added that, in the surveyed manuscripts, cancellations were made not only by the scribe but also by later users of the manuscripts. As to *substitutions*, the findings in our manuscripts show that a word or phrase to be substituted may either be deleted (crossed out) or left untouched; the second possibility may be interpreted as a sign of deferential acceptance of variation. As to the *omissions* supplemented in the manuscripts surveyed, it has been noticed that not only were individual words added, mostly in the margins by the scribe or other users, but also single hemistichs or whole verses. The cause of the addition of hemistichs may have been (as, e.g. in al-Ūshī, Ms. Princeton 3563, fo. 53r, insertion of v. 61 between 52 and 59) a different verse sequence memorized or inscribed in the manuscript which the user employed as his reference. Another type of scribal error not mentioned by Gacek in his essay is again related to the nature of the examined material, i.e. poetry. There are some instances where *verses have been divided at the wrong place* (e.g. al-Ūshī, in Ms. Spr. 1956, v. 62 and Göttingen, 8^oCod. Ms. arab. 176, v. 13) and, accordingly, verse markers have been placed in the line incorrectly (and it may be assumed that the error has been noticed by the scribe or any other user). The layout of the text in columns allowed for the insertion of glosses not only in the margins and between the lines, as is the case in manuscripts of prose works, but also in the interspace between the hemistichs (e.g. Ibn al-Wardī, in Ms. Süleymaniye, Baghdath Vehbi 1612). An important role in manuscripts of poetry is also played by *vocalizations*. The erroneous substitution of *sukūn* by a vowel or vice versa may result in a transgression against the metre, be it Rajaz or Qariḍ. A means of text stabilization detected both in the manuscripts of the poetical corpus as well as in those of other works are the *syntax markers* used to make the inter-relationship between the parts of a sentence explicit. Finally, quite a large number of signs resembling either individual letters of the Arabic alphabet or numbers have been found to be used in the manuscripts as *reference markers* which supplement the data given in Gacek's article.