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In *Al-Karmil* Volume 7 (1986) we publish seven articles. In the first of these, 'Palestinian Poetry and Diglossia,' Hannā Abū Ḥannā explores the influence of the colloquial ('*āmmiya*) on Palestinian poetry over half a century, from the early 1920s till the end of the 1960s. The poetry after 1948 reviewed by Abū-Ḥannā is that which has been published in Israel.

The study focuses on the interaction between *fuṣḥā* and '*āmmiya*, and traces the impact of colloquial phrases and elements of folklore — songs, proverbs, imagery etc. — on the Palestinian poetry reviewed.

A distinction is made between two phases of influence: the first is individualistic and does not express a general trend, while the second is expressive of an ideological outlook.

Fahid Abū Khaḍrā in his article 'On Arabic Prosody' puts forward a hypothesis according to which all primary metrical feet used in traditional Arabic poetry originated from two basic rhythmic patterns containing either three or four long syllables, by way of regular deletion of one quiescent letter (*sākin*). The resulting primary feet are combined to form the ideal meters in accordance with a certain principle of harmony, which is closely related to the 'rule of deletion.' This rule, as postulated by the author, also regulates the permissible quantitative deviations from the primary feet and from the ideal meters, which are grouped in three circles instead of the five suggested by al-Khalīl. Abū-Khaḍrā hopes that by observing this rule it would be possible to move toward establishing a simplified prosodic system, free from theoretical speculations and unnecessary controversies.

The third article, 'The Art of Humor in al-Sāq 'Ala al-Sāq,' discusses the artistic means employed by this nineteenth-century author in conveying humorous and satyric themes. As shown by Sulaymān Jubrān, Shidyāq resorts stylistically to a variety of classical rhetorical patterns (*saj'*, *jinās*, *tibāq*, etc.), while in subject matter topics relating to sex and women he often treats in a humoristic manner.

As to the structure of his humorous pieces, Jubrān singles out two major types: (1) verbal humor (*bayāni*) based on linguistic manipulations making such pieces in fact intranslatable to other languages; and (2) topical humor based on such devices as exaggeration, contrast, transposition, etc. Very often Shidyāq combines both types, thus creating for his reader complex humor of great effectiveness.

In 'Intertextuality within a Literary System,' Sasson Somekh discusses some of the basic concepts of intertextuality, with special reference to modern Arabic literature. In the first part of the article three types of intertextual relationship are identified: linear allusions (quotations); dialogic variations; and ironic references. Examples from neo-classical and modern Arabic poetry are adduced to illustrate these types.

The second part of the article focuses mainly on intertextuality in modern Egyptian prose-fiction. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sharqāwī's novel *al-Ard* is discussed in the light of Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's *Zaynab*; Shukrī 'Ayyād's short story 'An Old Friend' in the light of Najīb Maḥfūz's Cairene Trilogy; and Sofī 'Abdalla's short story 'Eight Eyes' in the light of Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm's short play 'Death Song.'

For medieval Arabic literature the famous scholarly contest between the Basran grammarian Sībawaihi and his Kufan rival al-Kisā'ī — which became well-known under the title 'the Zunbūriyya Question' — probably formed the culminating point in a lasting competition between two linguistic schools representing two distinct scientific methods. Modern critical studies, however, have maintained that it would be an exaggeration to speak of contrasting methods in the case of these two regional schools.

In his study of 'the Zunbūriyya Question,' based on a careful comparison between old grammatical treatises and later literature about this contest, Rafi Talmon concludes that the substantive details mentioned about it are nothing but literary fiction meant to turn into more popular and vivid topics what otherwise would have remained tiring theoretical debates which have their place only in grammatical scholarly work. This fiction then rapidly became the pivot of a growing lore of literary traditions about the controversies between the ancient schools of Arabic philology in Basra and Kufa.

George Kanazi's article deals with a unique poem of the Syrian poet Ibn Muṅīr at-Tarābulūsī (473/1080–548/1153). Kanazi gives a brief biographical sketch of the poet, establishes the text of his long poem *al-Qaṣīda at-Tarariyya* relying on several manuscripts and some published sources, and offers an analysis of the poem which stresses the uniqueness of its style and content.

Amikam Marbach argues that *Zaynab*, by Ḥusayn Haykal, belongs to the realm of fiction and not to that of autobiography. Whereas Dr. Badr, a representative of the autobiographical approach, insists that as an immature literary work *Zaynab* contains two loosely related plots moving along two different lines, Marbach maintains that it is a novel which owes its existence to its own internal organization and development. The author's detailed examination is intended to show that, contrary to Badr's view, the stories of Ḥāmid and Zaynab are so interlocked as to complete each other and create one coherent whole. Far from being a historical document purporting to provide an 'exact copy' of reality, *Zaynab* is to be approached from within as an autonomic work of art.

This volume's book review section contains a critical review by David Semah of Tova Rosen-Moked's *The Hebrew Girdle Poem (Muwashshah) in the Middle Ages*, published in Hebrew by Haifa University Press in 1985.