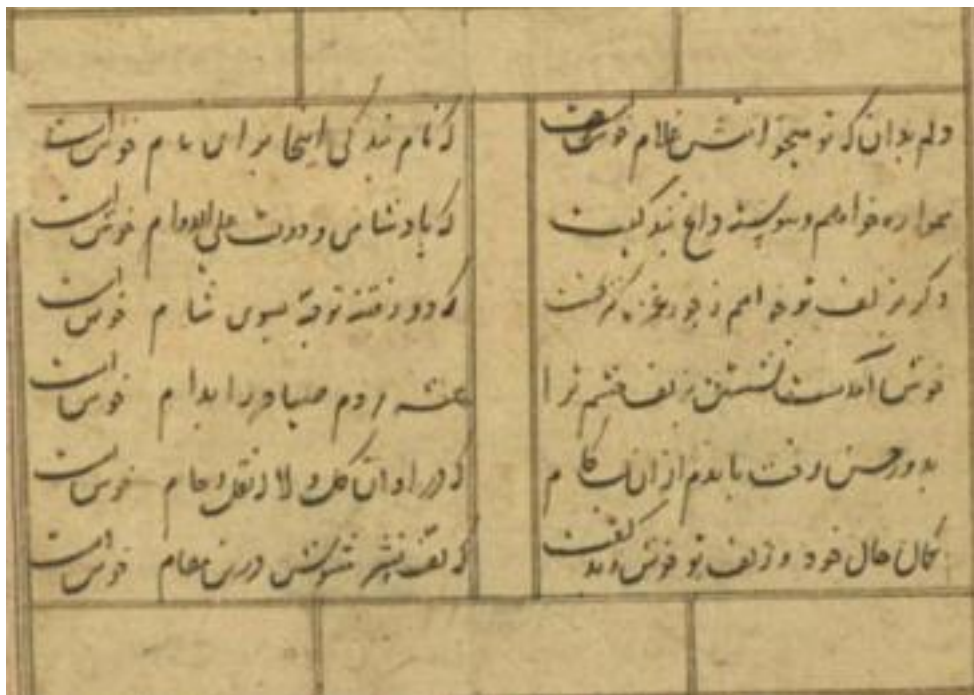


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THE PERSIAN VERNACULARIZATION OF THE RHETORICAL FIGURES

TAFSĪR AND LAFF WA-NASHR



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The Persian Vernacularization of the Rhetorical Figures *Laff wa-nashr* and *Tafsīr*¹

Little biographical information exists about the author of *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* (*Minutia of Poetry*), who introduces himself in the preface of the book as “‘Alī b. Muḥammad, known as Tāj al-Ḥalāvī.”² Recent research spells the name as Tāj al-Ḥalvā'ī or Tāj al-Ḥalvānī.³ *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* is one of the few extant medieval Persian books on the poetic art. Tāj wrote this book in imitation of the canonical manuals of classical Persian rhetoric, *Ḥadā'iq al-siḥr fī daqā'iq al-shi'r* by Rashīd al-Dīn Waṭwāṭ (d. 1182). In his manual of Persian rhetorical figures, *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Rāmī Tabrīzī (fl. fourteenth century) cites two verses by a Tāj-i Rūmī, who is suspected to be the same author of *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*.⁴ Rāmī also cites a verse by Tāj al-Dīn-i Ḥalvā'ī in his treatise on the Persian poetical descriptions of the beloved's body, *Anīs al-'Ushshāq*.⁵ Mīrzā Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī Sabzavārī (d. 1504) also cites him by the name Tāj al-Dīn-i Ḥalvā'ī in *Badāyi' al-afkār fī ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*.⁶ In a fragment (*qiṭ'a*) in *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, Tāj boasts of his talents in book binding.⁷ Different places of origin have been mentioned for Tāj: Anatolia, Aleppo, Shirvan in the Caucasus, and Qazvin in northern Iran. However, recent studies confirm Qazvin as Tāj's place of origin based on historical records of an influential family, known as the Ḥalvāniyāns in Qazvin in the fourteenth century and the verses he cites in his *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* are from poets who are known to have been active in the areas of Qazvin and Zanjan.⁸ The exact—even

¹ The author wishes to thank Rebecca Ruth Gould and Kristof D'hulster for their valuable review and feedback.

² 'Alī b. Muḥammad Tāj al-Ḥalāvī, *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, ed. Sayyed Mohammad Kazem Emam (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1929-1930), 1.

³ See Hamid Reza'i, “Naw-yāfta-hā-yā darbāra-yi mu'allif-i *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* va barkhī rūjāl-i ān,” *Adab-e farsi* 3–5 (2011): 159–174; and Arham Moradai and Nasim Azimipur, “*Daqā'iq al-shi'r* va mu'allif-i ān bar pāya-i taḥrīrī tāza-yāb az kitāb,” *Fasl-nama-ye zaban va adabiyat-e farsi* 75 (2013): 97–109.

⁴ Sharaf al-dīn Ḥasan b. Muḥammad Rāmī Tabrīzī, *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Sayyed Mohammad Kazem Emam (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1963), 31; also see *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, iii.

⁵ Rāmī, Sharaf al-dīn, *Anīs al-'Ushshāq*, ed. Abbas Eqbal (Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahami-ye Chap, 1936), 30.

⁶ Mīrzā Ḥusayn Vā'iz Kāshifī Sabzavārī, *Badāyi' al-afkār fī ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*, ed. Mir Jalal al-Din Kazzazi (Tehran: Markaz, 1990), 125.

⁷ *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, 55.

⁸ “Naw-yāfta-hā ...,” 163.

approximate—dates of his life and death are not known. The editor of the 1930 edition of *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, Sayyed Mohammad Kazem Emam, accepts Eqbal Ashtiani's "proofless" speculation that Tāj flourished in the fourteenth century.⁹ Even if the signature of Tāj's son on a manuscript copied in 789 A.H./1387 as "Shahāb b. Tāj al-Ḥalwā'ī al-Qazwīnī" was not discovered,¹⁰ we could still conclude that Tāj was active in the fourteenth century from the inclusion of a certain rhetorical figure in his book. *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* is the earliest extant book in Persian rhetoric that has dedicated an entry to the rhetorical figure *laff-u-nashr*. None of the preceding classical Persian rhetoricians—Rādūyānī, Waṭwāt, Shams-i Qays Rāzī—mention *laff-u-nashr* in their canonical treatises. This, of course, makes sense when we consider that for the most part, premodern Persian rhetoric developed through the vernacularization of classical Arabic norms, and the trope *laff wa-nashr* only gained currency in Arabic terminology in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by al-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229) and al-Qazwīnī (d.738/1338).¹¹ Interestingly, around this time Kamāl Khujandī (d. 1400), Persian poet from Khujand in Central Asia, names *laff-u-nashr* while laying bare the poetic device in one of his *ghazals*¹²:

کمال حال دل و زلف تو خوش و بد گفت
که لف و نشر مشوش در این مقام خوش است

Kamāl described your heart and your hair as good and bad
because disordered *laff-u-nashr* is sweet on this occasion.

Laff-u-nashr, literally meaning "folding and unfolding," involves two sets of words that enter into correspondence across two hemistiches (*miṣrā'*) or two verses (*bayt*). A much-quoted example of *laff-u-nashr* is the following couplets ascribed to Firdawsī (d. 1020):

به روز نبرد آن یل ارجمند
به شمشیر و خنجر به گرز و کمند
برید و درید و شکست و بیست

⁹ *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, iv.

¹⁰ "Daqā'iq al-shi'r va mu'allif-i ān," 102.

¹¹ John Wansbrough, "Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'anic Exegesis," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 1968, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1968), 476.

¹² A manuscript image of the *ghazal* is reproduced on the cover of this Working Paper.

On the battlefield, our dear warrior
cut and tore apart and broke and tied up
other warriors' head and chest and legs and hands
with his sword and dagger and mace and rope.

An Arabic example, ascribed to Ṣāfi al-Dīn Ḥillī (d. 749/1348):

وجدی حنینی انینی فکرتی و لھی
منهم الیهم علیهم فیهم بهم

My passion, my yearning, my lament, my care, my grief
is for them, towards them, over them, about them, in them.¹⁴

As can be seen in the above examples, *laff-u-nashr* is a structuring device: interlocking phrases are arranged in such a way that they are broken down to their constituent parts, and then these parts are rearranged in different, though parallel, syntactic or rhythmic structures. It is the reader who has to surmise, and in more complicated instances, *devise* the relation between the parts which is not stated by the poet. The reader's role is underscored in classical definitions of *laff wa-nashr* in Arabic and Persian.¹⁵

In the above example ascribed to Firdawsī, four images are involved: On the battlefield, the brave warrior (S) (1) cut (V₁) the warriors' heads (DO₁) with his sword (IDO₁), (2) tore apart (V₂) the warriors' chest (DO₂) with his dagger (IDO₂), (3) broke (V₃) the warriors' legs (DO₃) with his mace (IDO₃), and (4) tied (V₄) the warriors' hands (DO₄) with

¹³ Quoted from Jalāl al-Dīn Humā'ī, *Funūn-i balāghat va ṣanā'āt-i adabī* (Tehran: Ahura, 2010), 180.

¹⁴ The verse and the translation are cited from "Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'anic Exegesis," 472.

¹⁵ One schema for *laff-u-nashr*, using symbols of set theory, could be as follows: first, three sets of analogy are defined:

1. {A [is [not]] [like] [B] [in x]}
2. {A₁ [is [not]] [like] [B₁] [in x₁]}
3. {A₂ [is [not]] [like] [B₂] [in x₂]}

Next, each set is broken down to its elements and then rearranged in new sets:

- 1*. {A, A₁, A₂}
- 2*. {B, B₁, B₂}
- 3*. {x, x₁, x₂}

Whereas the relation between the elements in the initial sets are figurative, the same elements are related in syntactic or rhythmic terms in the derived sets. In more complex examples, it cannot be easily determined which sets of ideas correspond to which, and it is left to the reader to imagine the relation between the sets.

his noose (IDO₄).¹⁶ The chronological pattern in which the acts are narrated in the poem is as follows:

- (1). S + V₁+ DO₁+ IDO₁
- (2). S + V₂+ DO₂+ IDO₂
- (3). S + V₃+ DO₃+ IDO₃
- (4). S + V₄+ DO₄+ IDO₄

Rearranged according to the following *laff-u-nashr* pattern, this yields:

1. S
2. V₁+ V₂+ V₃+ V₄
3. DO₁+ DO₂+ DO₃+ DO₄
4. IDO₁+ IDO₂+ IDO₃+ IDO₄

The re-arrangement helps the poet to intensify the horrors of the depicted battle more effectively than a chronological narration of the events could ever achieve. More complicated *laff-u-nashr* rearrangements put words in reverse or non-one-to-one correspondence, thus creating more ambiguity, and more pleasure, by engaging the reader's imagination.

A modern Persian comparative glossary of Persian and European literary terms equates *laff-u-nashr* with *epanodos* ("the repetition of a group of words in reverse order"), with an example from 2 Corinthians 2: 15-16 (Cited from King James Version): "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life?"¹⁷ However, *epanodos* should be distinguished from *laff-u-nashr* in that *epanodos* is focused on the part-by-part restating of an already stated argument. While *epanodos* presupposes the regression and repetition of the speech, *laff-u-nashr* lacks the presupposition of something which is stated completely to be re-iterated in parts.¹⁸

Wansbrough suggests that "*laff wa-nashr* incorporates both the mannerist figure *versus rapportati* and the exegetic instrument *subnaxio*, or gloss."¹⁹ *Versus rapportati* or "correlative verse" is "a literary style and subgenre in which lines or stanzas exhibit two (or

¹⁶ S, V, DO, and IDO represent "subject," "verb," "direct object," and "indirect object," respectively.

¹⁷ See Sima Dad, *Farhang-i iṣṭilāḥāt-i adabī* (Tehran: Morvarid, 2002), 417.

¹⁸ See "Epanodos," in *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, ed. Richard A. Lanham (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 67.

¹⁹ "Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'anic Exegesis," 470

more) series of elements, each element in the first corresponding to one in the same position in the second, respectively.”²⁰ An example from Greek is “You [wine, are] boldness, youth, strength, wealth, country/ To the shy, the old, the weak, the poor, the foreigner.”²¹ And another example from Phillip Sydney’s *Arcadia*: “Vertue, beautie, and speech, did strike, wound, charme / My heart, eyes, ears, with wonder, love, delight.”²² However, as Wansbrough has correctly indicated, *versus rapportati* is aligned with a specific sub-type of *laff wa-nashr*, known as “ordered [*murattab*].” As we will see, the elements of *laff wa nashr* in Arabic and Persian can correspond to each other in reverse order (*laff-u-nashr-i ma’kūs*) or without any order at all (*laff-u-nashr-i mushawwash*).

Epanodos has more affinity with the rhetorical figure *tafsīr* (also called by Shams-i Qays as *tafsīr va tabyīn*). *Tafsīr* literally means “exegesis,” “gloss,” and “explication”.²³ Similarly to *epanodos*, *tafsīr* is concerned with the recapitulation and reiteration of already stated ideas. Wansbrough sheds important light on the evolution of *laff wa-nashr* in Arabic science of rhetoric out of *tafsīr*. *Tafsīr* is a rhetorical figure in which something is mentioned vaguely in a verse (or hemistich) to be explicated in the next verse. Wansbrough illustrates how Qur’anic exegetes developed *laff wa-nashr* by adapting the rhetorical figure *tafsīr*, originally a profane figure, to the exigencies of Qur’anic interpretation. Wansbrough speculates that in the course of this adaptation the name *laff wa-nashr* replaces *tafsīr* in order to avoid the ambiguities that might have been raised by the use of the latter word in an exegetic context. He uses the example of *laff wa-nashr* to support his more general theory that “proliferation of rhetorical figures in the writings of the late medieval scholiasts appears to be

²⁰ Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan (Eds.), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 242.

²¹ *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 242.

²² Quoted from for *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 242. The source also cites other verses from Shakespeare and John Milton.

²³ Throughout this working paper, I use “explication” for *tafsīr* because of its etymological relation to *explicare* (unfolding).

a consequence not so much of concern for stylistic embellishment as of preoccupation with the meaning of the Qur'an.”²⁴

Thus through a close study of the examples (*shawāhid*) for both rhetorical figures Wansbrough draws a clear trajectory of the invention, symbiosis, and separation of *tafsīr* and *laff wa-nashr*, and the ultimate replacement of the former by the latter in Arabic treatises. In this evolutionary history, the invention—more precisely, naming—of *tafsīr* in Arabic is ascribed to Qudāma b. Ja'far (d. 932) in his *Naqd al-shi'r*, and established by Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī (d. 1005) in his *Kitāb al-ṣinā'atayn*. *Laff wa-nashr* first appears and is defined in *Miftāh al-'ulūm* by al-Sakkākī (d.1229), though it was mentioned earlier ambiguously in *Sirr al-faṣāḥa* by Ibn Sinān al-Khafājī (d. 1074) in the context of another rhetorical figure, *tanāsub*. Al-Khaṭīb al-Qazwīnī (d.738), in his *Talkhīṣ al-miftāh*, elaborates a systematic classification of *laff wa-nashr*, which is accepted by his successors. *Laff wa-nashr* is either separated (*mufaṣṣal*) or composite (*mujmal*); and the separated type of *laff wa-nashr* is further divided into ordered (*murattab*), reversed (*ma'kūs*), and confused (*mukhtalaṭ* or *mushawwash*). Through a close study of the process by which a Qur'anic verse changed its function from an example for the *tafsīr* to an example for *laff wa-nashr*, Wansbrough concludes that *laff wa-nashr* “owes its birth to exegetic speculation”²⁵ The verse is Qur'an 28:73:

و من رحمته جعل لكم الليل و النهار لتسكنوا فيه و لتبتغوا من فضله.

(“Of His mercy has He appointed for you night and day, that in that you may rest, and that you may seek His bounty, and that perhaps you may be thankful.”)

Wansbrough remarks that this verse was used by al-'Askarī as an example for *tafsīr* but al-Sakkākī was the first one who related it to *laff wa-nashr*. This remark, however, is not correct. It was grammarian and philologist al-Mubarrad (d. 898) who first used this verse in

²⁴ “Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'anic Exegesis,” 469.

²⁵ “Arabic Rhetoric and Qur'anic Exegesis,” 481

connection, though ambiguously, to *laff wa-nashr*, in his *al-Kāmil*, before al-Sakkākī and even before al-‘Askarī. Before citing this verse, al-Mubarrad writes “Arabs wrap up [*taluffu*] two different subjects, then add an explicative, trusting that the listener refers each to its subject.”²⁶ Comparison with al-Sakkākī’s definition of *laff wa-nashr* shows the similarities to al-Mubarrad’s description: “It consists of wrapping up two elements in a (single) utterance, succeeded by an expression which includes reference to one and the other (but) without designation, relying on the hearer/reader to refer back each of them to that to which it belongs.”²⁷

Tafsīr is present in the oldest extant manual of rhetorical figures in Persian, Muḥammad b. ‘Umar ar-Rādūyānī’s *Tarjuman al-balāgha* (written circa 1088-1114), in two types of *jalī* (explicit) and *khafī* (implicit). Rādūyānī explains the implicit type first and then proceeds to the explicit type. The implicit explication (*tafsīr-i khafī*), according to Rādūyānī, “is when the poet makes a verse or hemistich [*miṣrā’ ī yā baytī gūyad*] in which a number of different things are mentioned one after the other [*dumādum*] and without explication [*bī tafsīr*], and then the poet explicates those vague things in another hemistich, in an obscure manner [*marmūz*].”²⁸ *Tafsīr-i jalī*, as is suggested by its name, differs only in the explication being explicitly made. For the explicit explication he adduces two verses by ‘Unṣurī. Shams al-‘Ulamā Garakānī (d. 1927) uses this verse as an example for *laff-u-nashr* in *Abda’ al-badāyi*²⁹:

یا ببندد یا گشاید یا ستاند یا دهد
تا جهان بر پای باشد شاه را این باد کار
آنچ بستاند ولایت آنچ بدهد خواسته
آنچ بندد پای دشمن آنچ بگشاید حصار

He either ties up, or opens, he either takes or gives.
May the king be busied with these as long as the world lasts;

²⁶ Abi ‘I-‘Abbās Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil fi al-lughat-i wa l-adab*, vol.1 (Cairo: Dar al-fikr al-‘Arabī), 107.

²⁷ “Arabic Rhetoric and Qur’anic Exegesis,” 479

²⁸ Muḥammad b. ‘Umar Rādūyānī, *Tarjuman al-balāgha*, ed. Aḥmed Ateş (Tehran: Asatir, 1983), 86.

²⁹ Shams al-‘Ulamā Muḥammad Ḥusayn Garakānī, *Abda’ al-badāyi*, ed. Hosayn Ja’fari (Tabriz: Ahrar, 1993), 303.

what he takes is kingdom, what he gives is wealth,
what he ties up is the enemies' legs, what he opens is fortresses.³⁰

And another example by Aḥmad Manshūrī:

بدست و تیغ و جام و جان میاسای از چار آیین
چنان کز نامه فتحت نیاساید همی رهبر
بدست از چیز بخشیدن بتیغ از کینه آهختن
بجام از باده روشن بجان از مدت بی مر

With your hands, sword, cup, and life, never rest from four rites
and the leader will not rest from the news of your victory:
With your hands from being generous, with the sword from taking revenge,
with the cup from clear wine, and with your life from long rest.³¹

In order to clarify the one-to-one correspondence between the parts of an implicit *tafsīr*, Rādūyānī paraphrases two *bayts* from 'Unṣūrī's *mathnawī* of *Khing but, surkh but* about two huge idols, which are believed to be the Buddhas of Bamiyan that were destroyed by Taliban in 2001:

همه نام کینشان بپرخاش مرد¹
دل جنگجوی و بسیج نبرد²
همی توختند و همی تاختند³
همی سوختند و همی ساختند⁴

A literal translation of 'Unṣūrī's verses read like³³:

All revenge, while roaring like men¹
with warrior hearts, and mobilization for battle;²
sought and attacked,³
burned and started.⁴

And 'Unṣūrī' paraphrases: "That is, they sought revenge, they attacked while roaring, they burned warriors, and started mobilization for the battle."³⁴

Rādūyānī adduces two other examples for the implicit type of *tafsīr*, one by Qamarī and the other by Muḥammad 'Abduh. The former reads:

کلاه و تخت و بتان و دعا و دولت و عز

³⁰ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 87.

³¹ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 88.

³² *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 86.

³³ For easy detection of the correspondence, the hemistiches are subscripted.

³⁴ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 86.

[May] The crown and the throne, and the idols, and the prayers, and happiness, and glory
[fall] over you, under you, in front of you, behind you, and to your right, and your left.

And the latter:

چنانکه نیست نگاری جو تو دگر نبود
چو من صبور و چو تو رازدار برنایی
ترا و من رهی و خواجه را کسی بجهان
بحسن و صبر و سخاوت ندید همتایی³⁶

As there is no sweetheart like you, there is no one ever
like me patient, and like you, young and trustworthy.
In this world, you, I—the servant—and the master
have no likeness in beauty, patience, and generosity.

Except for Manshūrī's and Qamarī's verses, Rashīd al-Dīn Waṭwāt's Persian examples for *tafsīr* are the same as Rādūyānī's. Waṭwāt only adds two Arabic examples and defines the explicit type first. The main difference is that he highlights the movement from vagueness to clarity in his definition of *tafsīr*: "when the poet uses an expression (*lafz*) which is vague and in need of explication, then he repeats the same expression to explicate it."³⁷ According to Waṭwāt, the only difference between implicit and explicit types is that the vague expression is not repeated in the former. Shams-i Qays dismisses the distinction between the implicit and explicit types of *tafsīr* altogether and introduces the rhetorical figure in the name of *tafsīr va tabyīn* (explication and clarification). Shams-i Qays's examples are more varied. Except for the example cited from 'Unṣurī for the explicit *tafsīr*, his other five examples are not adduced by Rādūyānī or Waṭwāt. For instance, Shams-i Qays cites a *bayt* by Mu'izzī, which has been adduced by Garakānī for *laff-u-nashr*³⁸:

در معرکه بستاند و در بزم ببخشند
ملکی بسواری و جهانی بسؤالی³⁹

³⁵ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 86.

³⁶ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 87.

³⁷ Rashīd al-Dīn Waṭwāt, *Ḥadā'iq al-sihr fī daqā'iq al-shi'r*, ed. 'Abbas Eqbal (Tehran: 1929-1930), 78.

³⁸ *Abda' al-badāyi'*, 302.

³⁹ Shams-i Qays Rāzī, *Al-mu'jam fī ma'ā'ir-i ash'ār-i l-ajam*, ed. M. Qazvini and Modarris-Razavi (Tehran: Khavar Bookseller, 1935), 275.

In the battlefield he takes and in the feast he gives:
a kingdom with a horseman and a world on a beggar's request.

Another illustrative example which he cites from Azraqī:

با هیبت تو بریزد اندر گه جنگ
نیزی ز سنان زه ز کمان پر ز خدنگ
با جود تو زی کف تو دارد آهنگ
پیروزه ز کان در ز صدف لعل ز سنگ

In fear from you, on the battlefield, there fall
sharpness from spears, strings from bows, and feathers from arrows.
Because of your generosity, toward your hands depart
turquoise from the mine, pearls from the shells, and rubies from the stone.⁴⁰

As is clear from the examples above, it is very difficult to distinguish between implicit *tafsīr* and *laff-u-nashr*. This becomes complicated with the emergence of *laff-u-nashr* in Tāj's *Daqā'iq al-shi'r* and the co-existence of the two tropes, *tafsīr* and *laff wa nashr*, in his treatise as well as in the subsequent manuals by Rāmī and Kāshifī.

Tāj introduces the trope of explication under the same rubric as Shams-i Qays—though in reverse collocation as *tabyīn va tafsīr*—and almost exactly with the same definition: “when the poet mentions a number of descriptions briefly to be elucidated [*mubayyan*] and interpreted [*mufassar*] in another verse or hemistich, while reiterating the same [*lafz*].”⁴¹ He adduces three examples for *tabyīn va tafsīr*, two of which are identical with Shams-i Qays's examples. In addition to the verse by 'Unṣurī, which we saw earlier in Rādūyānī, the other example that Tāj apparently reproduces from Shams-i Qays is a verse by Mu'izzī, who is unidentified in Tāj's entry:

اندرین مدت که بودستم ز دیدار تو فرد
جفت بودم با شراب و با کباب و با رباب
بود اشکم چون شراب ناب در زرین قدح
ناله چون زیر رباب و دل بر آتش چون کباب

All this time I was alone from you
I was coupled with wine, with *kabab*, and with *rubab*;
my tears were like pure wine in the golden bowl

⁴⁰ *Al-mu'jam*, 275.

⁴¹ *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, 69.

my cries sounded like *rubab* and my heart was on fire like *kabab*.⁴²

The other example Tāj uses for *tafsīr*—not in *Shams-i Qays* or *Rādūyānī*—are two *bayts* that are variably found in the *Dīvāns* of both Mu‘izzī and Ḥāfiz:

سال و مال و حال و فال اصل و نسل و بخت و تخت
بادت اندر شهریاری برقرار و بر دوام
[سال فرخ] مال وافر حال نیکو فال خوب
اصل ثابت نسل باقی تخت عالی بخت رام

May the years, wealth, health, and omen, origin, descendants, luck, and throne
be everlasting and never-ending in your kingdom:
happy years, growing wealth, great health, good omen;
unmixed origin, enduring descendants, imperial throne, tame luck.⁴³

Importantly, Tāj is silent about the implicit and explicit subdivisions of *tafsīr*, which might arise from the difficulty of differentiating between implicit *tafsīr* and *laff-u-nashr*. All three examples he offers for *tafsīr* would fall under the “explicit” category because they involve the re-iteration of the explicated words. When he proceeds to a very brief chapter on *laff-u-nashr*, which as we saw was unprecedented in the *balāgha* treatises before him, he defines the rhetorical figure as “*laff* is ‘wrapping up [*dar pīchīdan*] and *nashr* is scattering [*parākanda kardan*], and in *balāghat* it is when the poet describes a collection [*majmū‘*] and then describes that collection one by one (in order) in one hemistich or one verse.”⁴⁴ He gives two examples for *laff-u-nashr*, one Persian and the other Arabic. The Persian verse is cited from ‘Abd al-Vasi‘ Jabalī:

نباشد چو جبین و زلف و رخسار و لبت هرگز
مه روشن شب تیره گل سوری می احمر⁴⁵

Never resemble your forehead and tresses, and cheeks, and lips:
the bright moon, dark night, rose flower, red wine.

His Arabic example is a verse by an anonymous author:

عیناک و حاجباک نبل و قسی

⁴² *Daqā‘iq al-shi‘r*, 70.

⁴³ *Daqā‘iq al-shi‘r*, 70

⁴⁴ *Daqā‘iq al-shi‘r*, 70.

⁴⁵ *Daqā‘iq al-shi‘r*, 70.

Your eyes and eyebrows are arrows and bows;
[your] forelock and forehead dawn and evening.⁴⁷

Similarly, Rāmī has two separate chapters on *tafsīr* and *laff-u-nashr*, with the difference that he retains the distinction between explicit and implicit types of *tafsīr*. He defines explicit *tafsīr* as “when the poet mentions some vague things in the first *bayt* and then explicates [*tafsīr*] and repeats [*takrār*] in another *bayt*.”⁴⁸ His example is:

گه ربايد گاه نوشد آن حريف فتنه جوى
گه گشايد گاه بندد آن نگار سيم بر
آنچه بربايد دل ما آنچه نوشد جام مى
آنچه بگشايد قبا و آنچه بر بندد كمر⁴⁹

That belligerent beloved! Sometimes he steals, sometimes he drinks.
That silver-bodied sweetheart! Sometimes he unties, sometimes he ties.
What he steals is our heart, what he drinks is wine in the cup,
what he unties is his robe, what he ties is his belt.

His definition for the implicit *tafsīr* is ambiguously similar to the explicit type with the only difference that he uses the word *taḥqīq* (verification) instead of *tafsīr* (explication), and there is no emphasis on the repetition. The replacement of the word *taḥqīq* does not apparently make a significant difference. It is used in the sense of “explication.” As can be inferred from his example for the implicit type, however, it seems that the point of difference for him is the lack of repetition with the words to be explicated:

لاله و نرگس و بنفشه چراست
همچومن صبح و شام و ليل و نهار
تيره دل ناتوان دل پريشان حال
از رخ و چشم و زلف آن دلدار⁵⁰

The tulip, the narcissus, the violet; how are they
like me night and day, day and night?
Dark-hearted, frail, distressed
by the sweetheart’s cheeks, eyes, and tresses.

⁴⁶ *Daqā`iq al-shi`r*, 70.

⁴⁷ The translation is quoted from “Arabic Rhetoric and Qur’anic Exegesis,” 478.

⁴⁸ *Hadā`iq al-ḥaqā`iq*, 116.

⁴⁹ *Hadā`iq al-ḥaqā`iq*, 116.

⁵⁰ *Hadā`iq al-ḥaqā`iq*, 117.

Introducing *laḥf-u-nashr* placed at the beginning of a chapter he dedicated to ten fashionable poetic devices among his contemporaries (*ba taṣarruf-i mutu'akhhirān*),⁵¹ Rāmī offers a nuanced typology of *laḥf-u-nashr* in seven sub-divisions with examples that are most likely his own work and written for the purpose of exemplifying the rhetorical figure. Rāmī, himself an accomplished poet and rhetorician, wrote *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq* to the order of Jalayerid Sultan Uways (r. 757/1356-776/1374), named in the preface of his treatise, and in response to the popular conviction in his time that Waṭwāt's manual "is cryptic [*mujmal*] and in need of explication [*tafṣīl*]." ⁵² Waṭwāt's Arabic examples evoked similar reactions on the part of Tāj who found Waṭwāt's work full of "obsolete [*ghayr-i muṣṭalaḥ*] examples and words and verses that are uncommon [*ghayr-i mutadāvil*] in our times, and disgusting and boring to repeat for the delicate minds."⁵³ The structure of pre-modern Persian rhetorical manuals was borrowed from Arabic treatises: first, a trope is introduced, then the definition is given, and concluding an example or examples are offered to illustrate it. The rhetorical figure is usually introduced by its Arabic name. Occasionally, a Persian equivalence is provided, as for example when Rādūyānī's suggests, when describing the trope *mutazādd* (antithesis), "the Persian word for *mutazādd* is *ākshīj*."⁵⁴ However, it is in *shawāhid* (*loci probantes*) that important aspects of the comparatism involved in the vernacularization of classical Arabic models by Persian rhetoricians are revealed through the choice or reconstruction of Persian verses for the norms and terms originally defined within Arabic poetics and with respect to the specifications of Arabic language. Except for Waṭwāt who used both Arabic and Persian examples for his entries, other classical treatise mostly use Persian verses—found in the poets' *dīvāns* or composed for the purpose of illustration.

⁵¹ *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 129

⁵² *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 2.

⁵³ *Daqā'iq al-shi'r*, 2.

⁵⁴ *Tarjumān al-balāgha*, 31.

In the following I give a full translation of the typology of *laff-u-nashr* according to Rāmī with his *shawāhid* for each sub-type:

1. When the poet describes two things; to be clarified, they depend on a second verse:

قطره را گر آب روی تازه دارد روزگار
ذره را گر بر کشد از خاک چرخ چنبری
قطره کی موج افکند بر روی دریای محیط
ذره کی پهلو زند با آفتاب خاوری⁵⁵

Even if a drop of water is refreshed by the turn of times;
even if a speck of dust is raised from the earth by the convoluted fate:
How can a drop make a wave on the ocean?
How can a speck of dust touch the rising sun?

2. When the poet gives two descriptions in the first verse, vaguely, and clarifies in the second verse, out of order:

بر کنار جو اگر یک لحظه بگشایی نقاب
در میان باغ اگر روزی خرامان بگذری
از توهم خشک گردد پای سرو سرفراز
وز خجالت زرد گردد روی گلبرگ طری⁵⁶

If you unveil your face at the river bank;
if you stroll through the garden someday:
The rising cypress will dry in illusion;
fresh petals turn yellow in embarrassment.

3. When it's vague but not in disorder.

مخالفانرا سرها کند بروز قتال
معاندان را تنها کند بگاہ و غا
ز یکدگر متفرق بتیغ چون دبران
بیکدگر متصل به تیر چون جوز⁵⁷

He beheads his opposers in the day of war.
He makes the enemies desperate on the battlefield:
Disjoined from each other like stars;
sewn to each other by an arrow like Gemini.

4. It's neither vague nor in disorder.

گل ارچه بشاهدیست انگشتنما
سرو ارچه بنیکویبست بستان آرا
اینک رخس ای گل تو قدم رنجه مکن
اینک قدش ای سرو تو بالا منما⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 130.

⁵⁶ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 131.

⁵⁷ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 131.

Even though the rose is famed for its beauty;
 even though the cypress adorns the garden with its grace.
 Here comes her face! Don't show up, rose!
 Here comes his tall body! Don't boast of your height, cypress!

And sometimes the description takes place in one verse, as in:

تا خرقة پشمینه را بازار دعوی بشکنی
 طرف کله را برشکن بنمای زلف پرشکن⁵⁹

To prove the falsity of those who wear woollen cloaks,
 raise the corner of your hat and show your curly tresses.

Another example:

خرقه صوفی باده صافی
 برکش و درکش درده و بستان⁶⁰

The Sufi's cloak, the clear wine:
 Put on [this] and take off [that]; give [this] and take [that].

5. When a verse is divided into four parts: three *saj*'s (internal rhyme) and one *qāfiya* (end rhyme), and the verse's interpretation depends on the second verse, part by part.

زلفت که تا بم میبرد چشمت که خوابم میبرد
 لعلت که آبم میبرد یکدل به قصد جان من
 اینم زمانی میکشد وانم زمانی میکشد
 وینم دمی خون میخورد من در میان بی خویشتن⁶¹

Your tresses that make me impatient; your eyes that lull me to sleep;
 your ruby lips that make me sweat; all invading my heart.
 This one drags me; that one kills me;
 the other one drinks my blood; I'm selfless in the midst of all.

6. When the poet likens four similar things to each other in one verse, and then justifies [the likeness] in the second verse:

تیغ و رخشت که هست برق و براق
 دل و دستت که هست ابر و بحار
 آن یکی مهرتاب و گردون سیر
 وین یکی درفشان و لولو بار⁶²

⁵⁸ *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 132.

⁵⁹ *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 132.

⁶⁰ *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 132.

⁶¹ *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 133.

⁶² *Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 133.

Your sword and horse are lightning and swift;
 your heart and hands are a cloud and seas.
 One shines like the sun, and roams around the skies;
 the other scatters pearls and pours gems.

7. It is in two rhymes and can be read in three different ways in such a way that the order and the composition of verses are not changed:

Type a.

خط جان بخشش ای پری پیکر
 خال مشکینت ای پری رخسار
 همچو بر لاله نقطه عنبر
 همچو بر گرد ماه خط غبار⁶³

Your life-giving beard, you fairy-bodied;
 your black spot, you fairy-faced:
 like the tulip's spot,
 like the dust around the moon.

Type b.

خال مشکینت ای پری رخسار
 خط جان بخشش ای پری پیکر
 همچو بر گرد ماه خط غبار
 همچو بر لاله نقطه عنبر⁶⁴

Your black spot, you fairy-faced;
 Your life-giving beard, you fairy-bodied:
 like the dust around the moon;
 like the tulip's spot.

Type c.

خط جان بخشش ای پری رخسار
 همچو بر گرد ماه خط غبار
 خال مشکینت ای پری پیکر
 همچو بر لاله نقطه عنبر⁶⁵

Your life-giving beard, you fairy-faced:
 like the dust around the moon;
 your black spot, you fairy-bodied:
 like the tulip's spot.

Rāmī's typology is as inventive as his examples. Some of these examples cannot be identified as *laff-u-nashr* (e.g. second example of type 4) and some cannot be distinguished

⁶³ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 133.

⁶⁴ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 134.

⁶⁵ *Hadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq*, 134.

from simple *tafsīr*. Vā'iz Kāshifī Sabzavārī's *Badāyi' al-afkār fi ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār* retains the symbiosis of *laff-u-nashr* and *tafsīr*, with further distinguishing between “*murattab* [ordered]”/“*confused* [*mushawwash*]” and “explicit [*muṣarraḥ*]/implicit [*mubham*]” subtypes.⁶⁶ Kāshifī prefers the word *tabyīn* (clarification) over *tafsīr*; yet, he subdivides the trope into the conventional *tafsīr-i jalī* and *tafsīr-i khafī*. As is clear from his definition, he assumes moving from vague enumeration in one *bayt* and clarification in another as essential to this rhetorical figure. He offers no new examples for *tabyīn* besides those already mentioned in *Shams-i Qays* or *Tāj*. However, in his description for *laff-u-nashr*, the emphasis is laid on structuring and correspondence: “*laff* lexically means ‘wrapping up’ and *nashr* is scattering. This device is terminologically used when the poet enumerates some things separately [*bar sabīl-i tafṣīl*], then brings in a number of words each corresponding to the proper antecedents. Because at first words are wrapped up and next they are scattered, this device is called *laff-u-nashr*, and it is in two types, ordered and confused.”⁶⁷ For the ordered type (when the words correspond to each other in the same arrangement), he gives this example:

چشم و خط و زلف و خال و قد و خد یار هست
نرگس و ریحان و سنبل مشک و سرو و یاسمن⁶⁸

The beloved's eyes and beard and tresses and mole and height and cheeks are narcissus, basil, hyacinth, musk, cypress, and jasmine.

As a variation in which wrapping up and scattering takes place across two *bayts*:

رخسار و زلف تست که هنگام اعتبار
خط و لبان تست که در وقت امتحان
زیباتر است از مه و خوشبویت ز مشک
خرمتر از جوانی و روشنتر از روان⁶⁹

Your cheeks and your tresses, when verified,
your beard and your lips, when tested,
are more beautiful than the moon and more fragrant than musk;
are fresher than youth and more transparent than the spirit.

⁶⁶ *Badāyi' al-afkār fi ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*, 143.

⁶⁷ *Badāyi' al-afkār fi ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*, 143.

⁶⁸ *Badāyi' al-afkār fi ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*, 144.

⁶⁹ *Badāyi' al-afkār fi ṣanāyi' al-ash'ār*, 144.

And in defining the confused type in which the two sets are in correspondence but not in order, he gives the example:

ابروی دلدار و مژگانش به هم
راست چون تیر و کمان افتاده است⁷⁰

The sweetheart's eyebrows and eyelashes
are exactly like arrows and bows.

For the confused type that takes place in more than one type, the example is:

از آرزوی روی تو ای ماه دلفریب
وز اشتیاق قد تو ای سرو گلعدار
رفتم به باغ و سینه شد از غصه چاک چاک
دیدم به ماه و دیده شد از رشک اشکیار⁷¹

Desiring your face, O seductive moon,
longing for your height, O rose-covered cypress,
I went to the garden: My heart was torn apart in grief;
I looked at the moon: My eyes filled with tears in regret.

Then he cites some unidentified experts (*fuḏalā*) who introduce another division into the trope *laff-u-nashr*: If the word (*lafẓ*) in *laff* is repeated in *nashr*, it is *muṣarraḥ*, if not it is *mubham*, which is reminiscent of *tafsīr*. Thus a combination of “*murattab* [ordered]”/“*confused* [*mushawwash*]” and “*explicit* [*muṣarraḥ*]/*implicit* [*mubham*]” sub-types generates four permutations. For *muṣarraḥ murattab*, the example he gives is the same as the example Rāmī gives for his first type.

قطره را گر آب روی تازه بخشد روزگار
ذره را گر برکنشد از خاک چرخ چنبری
قطره کی موج افکند بر روی دریای محیط
ذره کی پهلو زند با آفتاب خاوری⁷²

For *mubham murattab*:

ای لب لعل و خط سبز تو کرده منفعل
لعل را اندر بدخشان مشگ در چین و چگل⁷³

Your ruby lips and grayish stubble ashame
ruby in Badakhshan and musk in China and Chegel.

For *muṣarraḥ mushawwash*:

ز چشم و زلف توام زار و بیقرار و دلم

⁷⁰ *Badāyi` al-afkār fī ṣanāyi` al-ash`ār*, 144.

⁷¹ *Badāyi` al-afkār fī ṣanāyi` al-ash`ār*, 144.

⁷² *Badāyi` al-afkār fī ṣanāyi` al-ash`ār*, 144. For translation, see p. 12 above.

⁷³ *Badāyi` al-afkār fī ṣanāyi` al-ash`ār*, 144.

ز زلف تست پریشان ز چشم تو بیمار⁷⁴

Your eyes and tresses make me desperate and restless and my heart
is disturbed by your tresses and sick by your eyes.

And finally, for *mubham mushawwash*:

افکند زلف و عارض آن ماه مهرتاب
گل را به آب و سنبل پریچ را به تاب⁷⁵

The tresses and cheeks of that moon—shining like the sun—threw
the rose into the water, the curly hyacinth into curls.

Kāshifī ends his typology by suggesting that all types of *laff-u-nashr* “are agreeable to the mind and pleasant to the disposition [*tibā*].”⁷⁶

The classification of *laff-u-nashr* into “ordered,” “disordered,” “reverse,” and “mixed” has been accepted by modern Persian rhetoricians. Yet, a satisfactory distinction between *laff-u-nashr* and *tafsīr* is yet to be theorized, if this distinction is deemed necessary to retain. In his modern textbook on Persian rhetorical embellishments, *Zīb-i sukhan* (1968), Iranian scholar Maḥmūd Nashāt explains that *laff-u-nashr* differs from *tafsīr-i khafī* by the emphasis of the latter on the movement from ambiguity to clarity (hence explication) and in the former being rather of a syntactic nature: “In *laff* the subject is stated, in *nashr* the predicate.”⁷⁷ Persian literary scholar Mir Jalāl al-Dīn Kazzāzī prefers to dismiss *tafsīr* in his textbook on Persian literary aesthetics, *Badī* (1994). In a future working paper, I’ll show the importance of retaining the distinction between *tafsīr* and *laff-u-nashr* as serving two different aesthetic functions: representation and performance.

⁷⁴ *Badāyi’ al-afkār fī ṣanāyi’ al-ash’ār*, 145.

⁷⁵ *Badāyi’ al-afkār fī ṣanāyi’ al-ash’ār*, 145.

⁷⁶ *Badāyi’ al-afkār fī ṣanāyi’ al-ash’ār*, 145.

⁷⁷ Mahmud Nashat, *Zīb-i Sukhan* (Tehran: Sherkat-e sahami-ye chap va entesharat-e Iran, 1967), 316.

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