

ARABICA-ISLAM

A. S. JAMGOTCHIAN, (Ed.), *Ibn al-Faqīh, Akhbār al-Buldān (Izvestia o Stranakh)*. Erevan, Izdatelstvo AKADEMII NAUK Armanskoī SSR, 1979 (22 cm., 319 pp.).

The value of Jamgotchian's painstaking and meticulous edition of the Meshhed fragments of Ibn al-Faqīh's compilation¹⁾ was enhanced by his introduction, translation of the text, notes and comments, a bibliography and a summary in English. The very important and hitherto unpublished chapters of Ibn al-Faqīh's compilation were thoroughly studied by Jamgotchian; this is attested to by a number of articles based on these fragments and published by him in Russian²⁾.

Some misreadings of the texts of the published fragments, misunderstandings and misinterpretations are elucidated and emended in the following lines.

P. 155, l. 8 is read by Jamgotchian :

وقتل ابن الزبير في جهادى الآخرة وهو أول من أتينا مدينة الإسلام
وهي واسط

and translated (p. 24, ll. 7-10) :

“Ибн Зубайр был убит в месяце джумади ал-ахира / октябрь — ноябрь 691 г./, и он был первым, кто пришел к нам в город ислама, т.е. Васит”.

The reading is not correct and the phrase is consequently misinterpreted. The pronoun *huwa* does not refer to Ibn al-Zubayr, as Ibn al-Zubayr was not the first man who came to Wāsiṭ. The phrase has to be vocalized : *wa-qatala bna l-zubayri*, “and he killed Ibn al-Zubayr”; the pronoun refers to al-Ḥajjāj, who indeed killed Ibn al-Zubayr. But al-Ḥajjāj was certainly not the first man who came to Wāsiṭ. The erroneous reading *atānā* is the cause of the trouble; the verb has to be read : *ibtanā* and the passage has to be read : ... *wa-qatala bna l-zubayri fī jumādā l-ākhirā, wa-huwa awwalu man ibtanā madīnata l-islāmī wa-hiya wāsiṭ*, and should be rendered : “... and he (i.e., Ḥajjāj) killed Ibn al-Zubayr ... and he (i.e., Ḥajjāj) was the first who built *madīnat al-islām*, i.e., Wāsiṭ”.

P. 155, l. 9 :

وَأوّل من اتخذ الحامل is rendered by the editor (p. 24, ll. 10-11) :
“И он был первым, кто изготовил перевязь меча”.

“*Maḥāmīl*” does not, however, denote “sword belts” but “litters on camels”. This is fully confirmed by Ibn Qutayba in his “*Ma‘ārif*”³⁾ and quoted by al-Mausūlī, *Ghāyat al-wasā‘il ilā ma‘rifati l-awā‘il*⁴⁾. The expression *wa-ḥamala fihā* is a convincing proof that *al-maḥāmīl al-hajjājīyya* refer to litters.

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¹⁾ Иби ал-Факих, *Ахбар ал-Булдан /известия о странах/*. Введение, перевод с арабского, издание текста и комментарии А. С. Жамкочана. Академия Наук Армянской ССР, Институт востоковедения, Ереван, 1979. (And see p. 21: Некоторые неопубликованные главы труда Ибн ал-Факиха «Ахбар ал-Булдан» по мешхедской рукописи.)

²⁾ See Ibn al-Faqīh, *op. cit.*, p. 130; and cf. O. Tskitishvili, Concerning The Tashkent Ms. of a Geographical Treatise by Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī, *JESHO*, XXIII (1980), 305, note 3 inf.

³⁾ Ed. Tharwat ‘Ukāsha, Cairo 1969, p. 553.

⁴⁾ Ms. Cambridge Qq 33 (10), fol. 159B; and see Bahshal, *Ta‘rikh Wāsiṭ*, ed. Gurguis ‘Awwād, Baghdad 1387/1967, pp. 44ult.-45sup.

P. 155, ll. 11-12 : Jamgotchian overlooked the fact that the quotation of Ḥumayd al-Arqaṭ contains three *rajaz* hemistichs; the first is in fact a curse : “May God bring shame sooner or later”; the second, “upon the first slave who made the litters”⁵⁾; the third hemistich reiterates the expression “slave” in an explanatory version : “The slave of Thaḳīf”, which was overlooked by the editor.

P. 155, l. 12 :

وهو أول من ضرب (له) الخيس [read : *al-khaysh*] has not been translated. The meaning of the phrase can be deduced from a passage in Ibn Tīqtaqā’s *al-Fakhrī*⁷⁾ about the inventions of al-Manṣūr : “... *wa-min jumlati mā khtarā ‘a ‘amalu l-khayshi l-kattāni fī l-sayfi* ...”. The coarse fabrics of linen used for this special kind of tent explains the expression “*duriba lahu l-khaysh*”, the first man for whom the [tent of] *khaysh* was erected⁸⁾.

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P. 156, l. 8 ثمّ بدا له (trans. p. 25, l. 6) has not been translated.
P. 156, ll. 14-15 :

وقال الوضاح بن عطاء لقد رأيت المقصورة بواسطة وإنه
ليغشها أربعون رجلاً شريف من آل اسلم بن زرعة الكلابي

is rendered (p. 25, ll. 18-21) :

“Говорит ал-Ваддах ибн Ата : Я видел в Васите зарешеченную комнату, в которой один из знатных людей рода Аслама ибн Зур‘а ал-килаби держал в заключении 40 человек”.

The *maqsūra* mentioned in this passage refers evidently to a part of the building of the mosque of Wāsiṭ; this *maqsūra* formed a conspicuous feature of the mosque⁹⁾. *Yaghshāhā* does not mean that a noble man of the people of Aslam kept 40 men in the *maqsūra* but merely that forty noble men of the clan of Aslam used to enter it; the subject of the sentence is, of course, forty people of Aslam.

P. 158, ll. 7-8 :

و استطاب ليلها واستعذب أنهارها واستمر أطعماها وشرابها

is rendered (p. 27, ll. 4-5) :

“и понравилась ему ночь, и обнаружил он, что реки /в том месте/ пресные, а пищи и питья недостаточно”.

The translation of the last part of the phrase is erroneous and is based evidently on a misreading of the verb; the editor seems to have read : *wa-stamarra aṭ‘āmahā*...; but the correct reading is : *wa-stamarra ‘a ta‘āmahā*, which has to be rendered : “and he found its food and drinks tasty”.

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P. 158, l. 15 :

... تخبره بهائم الأمر إليه قال وما هي قال بلاد سبخة

⁵⁾ *Awwalu ‘abdin* is missing in the translation; and see *L.‘A.*, s.v. ḥ ml, Beirut 1375/1956, p. 178, note 2.

⁶⁾ The word *lahu* of the facsimile (p. 272, l. 9) is missing here.

⁷⁾ Ed. ‘Awad Ibrāhīm and ‘Alī al-Jārim, Cairo 1938, p. 137.

⁸⁾ Comp. Dozy, *Supplement aux dictionnaires arabes*, s.v. khaysh; and see al-Tanūkhī, *al-Faraj ba‘da l-shidda*, Cairo 1357/1938, II, 39, l. 8 : *wa-ju‘ila lī fī l-zallāli khayshun wa-stakthartu mina l-thalji li-shiddati l-harri*.

⁹⁾ Comp. Bahshal, *op. cit.*, p. 44 sup.

is rendered (p. 27, l. 21):

“...чтобы вы передал о них ему /ал-Хадждажу/. Спросил /стражник/: “Какие?” Ответил /дихкан/: “Эта страна саранчи...”

One fails to find the locust (*saranča*) in the quoted passage (and see the same misinterpretation p. 27, l. 13 from bottom). The reading *bahā'im* or *bi-hā'im* is, of course, wrong; it should be read: *tukhbiruhu bihā, thumma l-amru ilayhi*: “you will report to him (about the three features [of the area]), then it is up to him to decide”; *bilād sabkha* means salty marshlands.

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P. 158, l. 17:

وهي بلاد أعمار أهلها قليلة

is rendered (p. 27, l. 24):

“эта страна мало заселена”.

The translation is however erroneous. (See the same misinterpretation p. 158, l. 3 from bottom = p. 27, l. 10 from bottom); *a'mār ahlihā qalīla* means that the span of life of its people is short. Consequently al-Ḥajjāj answers: “This is (i.e., the lifetime-K) according to God's will”.

* *

P. 159, l. 3:

... ان فلانة جارية من جواريه كان مائلاً إليها أصابها لمم

is rendered (p. 28, ll. 1-2):

“...что с одной из его невольниц, которой он был увлечен, случилось несчастье”.

Jamgotchian's translation saying that the slave-girl favoured by al-Ḥajjāj was “smitten by a disaster” led evidently to several errors in translation. The expression *q̄sābahā lamam* denotes, however, here: “she was hit by a touch of insanity”. According to Jamgotchian's translation 'Abdallāh b. Ḥilāl, the so-called Ṣadiq Iblīs, orders al-Ḥajjāj to cut off her knots (*aḥilla 'anhā, porvi svyaz' s ney*) and al-Ḥajjāj responds: “I shall do it” (*af'alu, sdelayu*). But the correct reading is: *aḥullu 'anhā*; it is an interrogative sentence: “Shall I untie her (i.e. her knot)?”; it is asked, of course, by 'Abdallāh b. Ḥilāl. Al-Ḥajjāj's answer is: “*if'al*”, “do it”. Jamgotchian's misunderstanding becomes graver after the Friend of the Devil, 'Abdallāh b. Ḥilāl, starts to act.

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P. 159, l. 6:

فلما زال ما كان بها

is rendered by him (p. 28, l. 8):

“и так как ее несчастья не кончились”.

This is, however, exactly the opposite: after the action of the Friend of the Devil the troubles of the slave-girl ceased; *fa-lammā zāla mā kānā bihā* should be rendered: “when the troubles (of which she suffered) ceased”.

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P. 159, ll. 6-7:

قال له الحجاج : ويحك إني أخاف أن يكون هذا القصر محتفر

is rendered (p. 28, l. 10):

“Я боюсь, что этот дворец придется разрушить”.

Jamgotchian reads evidently “*muḥtafir*” and translates that the palace is to be ruined. The correct reading is, however, “*muḥtaḍar*” (properly, *muḥtaḍaran*); al-Ḥajjāj expressed his fear that the palace was *muḥtaḍar*, i.e., occupied by some demons, who dwelt in it¹⁰). The Friend of the Devil, 'Abdallāh b. Ḥilāl, is said to have entered (the court-K) walking proudly between two rows; Jamgotchian remarks that this passage (p. 28, l. 12-13)

“пришел ... раскачиваясь между двумя рядами...”

is incomprehensible to him. (p. 28, note 1).

/нам непонятно это место/

It may be remarked that *khātara* signifies a form of gait expressing pride, strength, haughtiness, elegance or self-confidence; walking between two rows of courtiers, attendants or slaves signifies the high position of the person. This form of behaviour was frowned upon by the Prophet; special chapters in compilations or treatises were compiled to explain and comment on the utterances of the Prophet forbidding standing up in two rows upon the entrance of an important person. The Prophet is reported to have denounced this custom in very sharp terms: *la'ana llāhu man qāmat lahu l-'abīdu ṣufūfan, qiyāman*¹¹).

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P. 159, l. 9:

وفي يده قلة محتومة

is rendered (p. 28, l. 14):

“а в его руке закрытый кувшин”.

A more accurate translation seems to be: “and in his hand was a sealed earthenware bottle”. It is clear that a sealed bottle is more suitable for purposes of magic than a covered jar.

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P. 159, l. 10:

فقال أيها الأمير تأمر بالقصر أن يُمسح ثم تدفن هذه القلة في وسطه

is rendered (p. 28, l. 15):

“... ты прикажи, чтобы убрали этот дворец”.

But *masaḥa* does not mean here clearing or cleaning; it denotes in fact surveying the palace in order to put the earthenware bottle in its midst.

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¹⁰) See about the privies occupied by demons and the injunction to invoke at the entrance of the privies Ibn 'Adiyy, *al-Kāmil fī l-du'afā'*, Ms. Ahmet III 2943-I, 67a ult.-67b, l. 1: *inna hādhihi l-ḥuṣhūsha muḥtaḍaratun fa-idhā dakhalaḥā aḥadukum fa-l-yaqul: a'ūdhu bi-llāhi mina l-khubthi wa-l-khabā'ithi...*; al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, Hyderabad 1344 H, I, 96; L'A, s.v. ḥsh sh.

¹¹) See al-Mu'āfā b. 'Imrān, *Kitāb al-zuhd*, Zāhiriyya, ḥadīth 359 (*majmū'a*), fol. 246b; and comp. *ib.*, the utterance of the Prophet: *idhā ra'aytumunī fa-lā taqūmū kamā tu'azzimū l-a'ājimu ba'duhā ba'dan*; al-Jassās, *Aḥkam al-qur'ān*, Qustantīniyya 1335 (reprint), III, 95. But see a contradictory tradition: al-Zurqānī, *Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, Cairo 1325 H, II, 134; ... *qumna lahu 'alā arjulīnā saffayni yuhayyihī kullu rajulin minnā...*

P. 160, l. 5 :

قد أهدى الى الحجاج فيلاً فحملن (؟) البطائح في سفينة

is rendered (p. 29, ll. 9-10) :

“...подарил ал-Хадждаджу слона, которого Ибн ал-Батаих привез на корабле...”

But Ibn al-Baṭā'ih is an absolutely unknown person, who evidently does not exist. The correct reading is: *min al-baṭā'ih* and should be translated: “and he sent as a gift an elephant to al-Ḥajjāj; the elephant was carried from the Baṭā'ih¹²) on a ship”.

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P. 160, l. 16 :

فقد أجليت من في عملي من الأباط

is rendered (p. 29, l. 5 from bottom) :

“Я выгнал всех работавших у меня набатейцев”.

But the governor of Baṣra, al-Ḥakam b. Ayyūb, did not expel the Nabateans who had been working for him; he expelled in fact all the Nabateans who dwelt in the city, in the region of Baṣra, entrusted to him (*fī 'amalī*); whether they worked or not made no difference at all.

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P. 161, l. 17 :

حضرت الحسين بن عمر الرستمي وكان من أكابر قواد المأمون وهو
سيل الموبد بخراسان ونحن في دار ذي الرئاستين عن النوروز والمهرجان
is rendered (p. 31, ll. 5-10) :

“Я присутствовал у ал-Хусайна ибн Омара ар-Рустами, который был из ведущих командиров Ма'муна /813-833 гг./, а также Са'ул ал-Муаббаза в Хорсане. Когда мы были в доме /этого/ человека, занимавшего два поста, я спросил его об ан-Нурузе и Михраджане...”

But a person called Sa'ul al-Mu'abbadh does not in fact exist. The passage should be read: ... *wa-kāna min akābiri quwwādi l-ma'mūn wa-huwa yas'alu l-mūbidha bi-khurāsān wa-naḥnu fī dāri dhī l-rī'āsatayn, 'ani l-nūrūz* ... It is plausible that information about the practices of Nūrūz and Mihrijān and their origin could be asked of the Mūbidh. Dhū l-rī'āsatayn is, of course, al-Faḍl b. Sahl.

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P. 162, l. 3 from bottom :

وقال الهيثم بن عدي سألت عبد الله بن هلال صديق ابليس عن اسم
عامر واسط فقال زربة

is rendered (p. 32, ll. 27-29) :

“Сказал ал-Хайсам ибн Ади: Я спросил Абдаллаха ибн Хилала, “Друга дьявола”, об имени строителя Васита. Он ответил: Зарба'а”.

Jamgotchian could indeed not find the name of the builder (*'amir*) of Wāsiṭ, nor could he find any traces of a person called Zarba'a¹³). *'Amir* denotes here the *jinn* or the demon

¹²) See *ET*², s.v. al-Baṭīha (M. Streck — Saleh al-Alī).

¹³) P. 32, note 1.

of Wāsiṭ¹⁴); Zauba'a is a well-known devil¹⁵). This explains why Zauba'a — enjoying, as a devil, longevity — could meet al-Ḥajjāj and his successors, the governors of Wāsiṭ.

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P. 163, l. 18 :

وإني لأرجو أن أنال بثمتهم / من الله أجرا مثل أجر المرابط

is rendered (p. 33, l. 5 from bottom) :

“Я желаю получить за то, что осуждаю их, воздаяние от Аллаха, подобно воздаянию коням”.

It is a rather strange wish to be granted the reward of a horse. In fact, Bashshār b. Burd asks God to be given in return for his defamatory verses against the people of Wāsiṭ the reward of a warrior (*murābiṭ*) stationed on the frontier.

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P. 168, l. 15 :

أتيت أبا جبيرة في براتا / فقال الحق بأهلك يا غلام

is rendered (p. 40, l. 10) :

“Пришел я к Абу Джубайру в Бираса, и он сказал: Получай то, что ты и твои близкие заслуживаете”.

The translation of the second hemistich is erroneous: there is nothing indicating that the young Arab was requested to accept what he and his kindred deserve. The verse should be translated: “I came to Abū Jubayra at Barāthā, and he said: ‘join your people, oh young man’”.

The following verse: *وهاك دجاجة فتعش منها* says: “and take the chicken and eat it for supper”.

P. 168, l. 12: *فأسأله ان يحمله* does not mean (p. 40, ll. 3-4) :

“и попросил дать ему /съестных/ припасов”.

He did not ask for food, he asked for a riding beast (in order to return to his abode, as he was a Bedouin and stayed as a stranger in 'Irāq).

The story of the young Bedouin with the governor of the Sawād caused 'Umar to impose on the people of the Sawād specific obligations. He ordered them to help people who had arrived at some place in the Sawād, and who were for some reason deprived of means for continuing their journey, and enable them to reach their destination by providing them with riding beasts. This is formulated as “*ḥamlu l-tunqa'i*” (p. 168, l. 17); Jamgotchian's translation: *помогать неимущему* (p. 40, l. 16), “to help the poor”, seems to be inaccurate.

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P. 176, verse 1 :

يا راكب العيس لا تعجل بنا وقف / يحي دار السعدى ثم ينصرف

is rendered (p. 46) :

“О всадник, едущий на буром верблюде, не торопи нас, остановись у места жительства ас-Са'ды, а потом уже удались”.

¹⁴) See G. W. Lane, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, s.v. 'amr; Abū Nu'aym, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, Hyderabad 1397/1977, p. 302: ... *inna bi-l-madīnati nafaran mina l-jinni qad aslamū fa-man ra'ā min hādhihi l-'awāmiri shay'an fa-l-yūdhinku*; and comp. 'Abd al-Razzāq, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Rahmān al-A'zamī, Beirut, X, 434, no. 19616.

¹⁵) See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, Cairo 1314H, VI, 44; Abū Na'aym, *op. cit.*, p. 304, l. 3; Lane, *op. cit.*, s.v. zb'a.

Some words in the second hemistich are misread and misunderstood. Instead of *yajī* read *nuhayyi*; instead of *dāra l-sa'dī* read *dāran li-su'dā*; instead of *yaṣarīf* read *nansarīf*. The correct translation is: "Let us greet the abode of Su'dā, then we shall depart".

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P. 176, verse 6:

أما أنا لك أن تنهاك تجربة / عنها وما كان من وعد ومن خلف
is rendered (p. 46, verse 6):

"Я же твой, даже если удерживает тебя от /любви/ Опыт или какие-нибудь угрозы и разногласия".

Both the reading and the translation are erroneous. "*Ammā anā laki*" rendered by Jamgotchian "I am yours" should be read: "*amā āna laka*", which should be translated "Has the time not come"? The following parts of the verse are dependent on the interrogative sentence, the verse has to be rendered: "Has not time come that experience, [her] promise and [its] breach would bar you from keeping bond with her"?

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P. 176, verse 7:

دع عنك سعدى فسعدى عنك نازجة / و اكفف هواك وعد القول
في لطف

is rendered (p. 46, verse 7):

"Оставь Са'ду, а Са'да...!/?/

Сохрани мне любовь свою и верни обратно ласковые слова".

The correct reading is: "*fa-su'dā 'anka nāziḥatun*" and translated: "Leave Su'dā as Su'dā is remote". The second hemistich does not recommend preserving the love, as translated by the editor; it has to be rendered: "and stop your affection (for her-K) and render your words gentle". The verse is a rather typical example of the *khurūj*, the turning from *nasīb* to another matter¹⁶).

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P. 176, verse 13: أشقى على التلف does not mean: "спасал его от гибели" (p. 47, verse 13), "he saved him from death". It means: "he was on the brink of death".

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P. 177, verse 22:

أقام فيهم قناة العدل فانتصبت

is rendered (p. 48, verse 22):

"Он провел для них каналы справедливости, которые стали прямыми".

This translation is erroneous: it is not a canal of justice; it is

the spear of justice, straight, right and symmetrical which was set up, as against a distorted and crooked one.

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P. 206, l. 16:

وهم الذين بنوا الطرح

is translated (p. 85, l. 12):

"Они построили ат-Тарх".

The correct reading is *al-Sarḥ*: They built the Tower of Babylon.

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P. 206, l. 20:

ليس في ولد آدم شرّ من الخوز ولم يكن منهم بني قحط ولا نجيب
is rendered (p. 85, l. 19):

"Нет среди сыновей Адама людей злее чем хузы, кахты и наджибы не происходят от них".

But no Kaḥṭs or Najībs are mentioned here. The text should be read:

ولم يكن منهم نبيّ قطّ ولا نجيب

and rendered: "no prophet was ever born from among them (i.e., the Khūzistānī people — K) nor a noble person".

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P. 206, l. 3 from bottom:

وقال علي ... على مقدمة الدجال رجل خوزي يقال له مهران

is rendered (p. 85, l. 24):

"Сказал Али..., что антихристом будет хузистанец по имени Михран".

The Antichrist is however not a man from Khūzistān; only the head of his vanguard will be a Khūzistānī called Mihrān.

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P. 206, penult.-ult.:

وقال عمر رضي الله عنه : لئن عبت اليّ قابل لأبيعن الخوز ولا جعلن
أثمانهم في بيت المال

is rendered (p. 85, ll. 25-26):

"Сказал Омар, да будет доволен им Аллах, что дабы не порочить

Кабила, надо продать хузистанцев и выручку положить в казну".

But 'Umar did not have Cain in mind at all and *'ibtu* in the text is just a clerical error. 'Umar says in this utterance: لئن

عشتُ اليّ قابل لأبيعن ...

"If I am alive until next year I shall sell the Khūzistānī people and deposit the money in the treasury of the state".

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¹⁶) See al-'Askarī, *al-Sinā'atayn*, ed. 'Alī al-Bijāwī and Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo 1371 1952, p.452 seg.; Tha'lab, *Qawā'id al-shi'r*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Mun'im Khafāji, Cairo 1367 1948, p. 50.

The notes and corrections recorded in this review were put down at random, while reading the book. The Meshhed

fragments are of great importance and we are grateful to Professor Jamgotchian for the edition of this valuable text.

Beth Hakerem, July 1981

M. J. KISTER

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