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The rise and decline of *naqāʾiḍ* poetry

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REVIEWS

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF *NAQĀʾIḌ* POETRY

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This article will deal with the synchronic history and methods of composition, presentation and transmission of *naqāʾiḍ* poetry according to Abū ʿUbayda's book *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ: Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq*. Despite the fame gained by *naqāʾiḍ* poetry in the Umayyad era, many aspects of it are still ambiguous. Unfortunately, many of the scholars who have dealt with such aspects have arrived at their conclusions through a rapid treatment of only some of the accounts mentioned in various classical works. A considerable number of these studies neglect other accounts that seem to reveal important data concerning many aspects of the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry. In addition, in most cases they refrain from analyzing complete poems in order to support or disprove the conclusions they had extracted from the accounts. Such a method of analyzing and discussing the material at hand is insufficient. It is imperative to peruse all the available accounts and to make a profound analysis of each one, since each account may shed new light on the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry and the *naqāʾiḍ* contests. In addition to the accounts, analyses of the poems themselves are very important, since they examine the reliability and credibility of the prose accounts. They also enable the researcher to reach other conclusions concerning this subject; conclusions that are unobtainable through an examination of the accounts themselves.

As a first step in this direction, the present author has already devoted one paper to the examination of specific aspects of the *naqāʾiḍ* through the analysis of the material found in the anthology of Abū ʿUbayda's *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ: Naqāʾiḍ Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq*, both the prose accounts and the various complete poems. It has been shown that such analysis makes it possible to reach certain conclusions regarding the synchronic history of this poetic output, and also regarding the ways in which the *naqāʾiḍ* used to be composed, presented and transmitted. The first paper, published in 2008, examined these aspects in the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry in its formative age in the Umayyad era; i.e., in the period that precedes the engagement of the two poets Jarīr and al-Farazdaq against

each other in this poetic battle.[1] The present paper discusses aspects of the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry in its age of floresence and in its period of eclipse.

I
Approaching al-Baṣra: Jarīr and al-Farazdaq

1.1 The first poem recited — and perhaps composed — by Jarīr in al-Baṣra

The reasons for the first engagement of al-Farazdaq in the *naqāʾiḍ* contest are discussed in detail in our previous paper. It was shown that al-Farazdaq composed his first poem, *naqīḍa* no. 31, in order to try and convince Jarīr not to engage him in a poetic battle. The latter composed a poem with the same meter and rhyme letter [NJF 33]. Some of its verses are dedicated to the denunciation of al-Baʿīth, mainly referring to the lasciviousness of al-Baʿīth's mother [NJF 33:29–33, 36, 41–46]. Jarīr praises his own poetic skill and his decisive victory against his opponent [NJF 33:26–28, 35–37]. He also praises his kinsfolk, mainly the Yarbūʿīs [NJF 33:38–40]. He then turns to a denunciation of al-Farazdaq and narrates a certain story about this poet. It is not certain whether the events related in this story had actually occurred, either totally or partially, or they were merely Jarīr's phantasy. The story tells about a desert trip that al-Farazdaq took with a man nicknamed al-ʿAnbarī. Al-Farazdaq does not know the way, and both men get lost. Since their water had run out, al-Farazdaq drinks al-ʿAnbarī's urine and finds it as tasty and delicious as honey [NJF 33:47–57]. Some classical scholars mention this story, except for the urine drinking, and tend to believe that it really took place.[2]

This poem by Jarīr is very important because it seems to symbolize the end of a certain stage of the famous Umayyad *naqāʾiḍ* poetry and the beginning of a new one: it is the end of the life of the *naqāʾiḍ* in al-Yamāma and its commencement in al-Mirbad in al-Baṣra. However, there is no indication in the poem, or in any prose account, whether this *naqīḍa* was first composed and presented in al-Yamāma or in al-Baṣra. There is a clear indication that the number of verses in this poem was expanded in a certain period and presented in al-Mirbad. This shows

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[1]See Hussein, "The *naqāʾiḍ*."
[2]See the account in al-Marzūqī, *Kitāb al-azmina*, pp. 424–426. An allusion to this story is also made in Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 314–316.

that it was written, at least partially, when Jarīr became a resident of
Baṣra. Many members of his Yarbūʿ clan had migrated to Baṣra decades
earlier, during the reign of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (re. 13–23/634–644), so
that Jarīr was no stranger there.[3]

Abū ʿUbayda narrates that while reciting a certain poem, Jarīr stood
(*waqafa*) before al-Farazdaq in al-Mirbad. A full description of this place
was given by Saʿīd al-Afghānī in his book on the Arab markets and also
by Ch. Pellat in his entry in *EI²*. It was located to the west of al-
Baṣra, outside the town, between it and the desert. During the early
Caliphate a market was held there — apparently daily — for camels,
sheep, weapons, and dates. Warriors used to sell their share of booty in
it. During the Umayyad period, because of the prosperity in al-Baṣra,
al-Mirbad was known for its literary life, in addition to its function as
a market. Many poets used to visit the market place, with each poet
having a circle (*ḥalaqa*) in which he recited his poetry while surrounded
by his audience. A certain account in *Kitāb al-aghānī* shows that each
ḥalaqa had places where the audience used to sit.[4] Two or more poets
sometimes had one common circle. Houses were also built in al-Mirbad
and Ch. Pellat mentions that later, apparently in the ʿAbbāsī era, a
wide street ran from al-Mirbad to the center of al-Baṣra; this street ran
through al-Mirbad and al-Baṣra, and buildings were erected along this
street. In ʿAbbāsī times, al-Mirbad also became a place for studying and
teaching Arabic, especially grammar and vocabulary. Scholars used to
meet with Bedouins and write down what they needed to know about
Arabic. Poets used to visit al-Mirbad not only to recite their poetry but
also to improve their poetic skills by learning from the Bedouins about
Arabic poetics and gaining knowledge of their vocabulary.[5] Yāqūt al-
Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229) adds that, from the Umayyad era onwards, people
from different places and regions used to go to the market and recite and
listen to poetry.[6] There were roads inside the market,[7] and during the
lifetime of al-Farazdaq it included parks (*mutanazzahāt*);[8] such parks

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[3]See Khuraysāt, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, p. 221. This clan lived in the same region as the
Mujāshiʿ and the Nahshal clans.

[4]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 7, pp. 46–47.

[5]Al-Afghānī, *Aswāq*, cf. pp. 407–413, 418–423; Pellat, "al-Mirbad," vol. 7, pp.
113–114. See also Ḥammūr, *Aswāq*, pp. 208–210; Ḥusayn, *Fann*, pp. 20–24. Yāqūt
al-Ḥamawī mentions that it was later burnt and desolated; see *Muʿjam*, vol. 5, pp.
115–116. See also ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī, *Khizānat al-adab*, vol. 3, p. 85. The
author mentions here how the poet in the Umayyad era used to be surrounded by
his audience while reciting his poem. See also al-Marzubānī, *Kitāb nūr al-qabas*, p.
171. Al-Mirbad is described here during the Caliphate of ʿUmar, before the building
of al-Baṣra: a place containing white rocks.

[6]See also Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *al-Mushtarik*, pp. 392–393.

[7]Al-Sarrāj, *Maṣāriʿ*, vol. 1, p. 62.

[8]ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī, *Khizānat al-adab*, vol. 2, p. 68.

remained until the ʿAbbāsī era.[9]

At the time of one such recitation, both Jarīr and al-Farazdaq were wanted by the governor's men. Al-Farazdaq managed to flee, while Jarīr and al-Nawār, al-Farazdaq's wife, were arrested and put together in jail. Afterwards, Jarīr composed some verses and added them to his *naqīḍa* [NJF 33:58–65]. In these verses, he describes the romantic moments that both he and al-Nawār enjoyed together in jail, apparently alluding to a certain intercourse between them. Jarīr then asks a certain Abū Khālid, who is, according to Abū ʿUbayda, al-Ḥārith b. Abī Rabīʿa al-Makhzūmī, the governor of al-Baṣra, and brother of the well-known poet ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa (d. 93/712), not to give his enemy an opportunity to mock him. In the last three verses of the poem, Jarīr denounces a certain *ibn ḥamrāʾ al-ʿijān* (i.e., the son of a woman whose perinaeum is red, alluding to the fact she was not of Arab origin as well as of her fornication and slavery).[10] By using such a title, it is apparent that Jarīr alludes to al-Baʿīth al-Mujāshiʿī. Jarīr himself, in two previous locations in this poem, uses such a title to humiliate al-Baʿīth [NJF 33:29, 31].

Although Abū ʿUbayda does not mention clearly which poem Jarīr was reciting at the time of his arrest, it is almost certain that it was *naqīḍa* no. 33. The reason for such a conclusion is simple: when Jarīr decided to compose additional verses describing his relations with al-Nawār, he added the verses to poem no. 33, which is considered the counter-poem to the first poem composed by al-Farazdaq. It also indicates that this *naqīḍa* was still new when Jarīr was arrested, and was apparently the last *naqīḍa* that he composed before he was jailed. This account leads to the conclusion that Jarīr, after hearing *naqīḍa* no. 31 by al-Farazdaq, left al-Yamāma and went to al-Baṣra.[11] One can make two assumptions regarding the place in which Jarīr's *naqīḍa* was composed and presented. The first is that Jarīr composed the first part of his *naqīḍa* in al-Yamāma (not including the added verses), and then shortly afterwards went to al-Mirbad where he presented the poem once again for the audience in al-Baṣra. The second assumption is that Jarīr, after knowing that al-Farazdaq composed his *naqīḍa* no. 31, decided to confront him directly in al-Mirbad where he composed and recited the first part of the poem. According to both assumptions, it is likely that Jarīr recited this poem more than once. In other words, the recitation of the poem that occurred on the day of his arrest was not the first, since

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[9]Al-Ḥuṣrī, *Zahr*, vol. 2, pp. 346–347.

[10]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 1, pp. 167–168. About the term *ḥamrāʾ al-ʿijān*, see Lane, *Lexicon*, vol. 5, p. 1968.

[11]According to a certain account, Jarīr claims that his clan obliged him to go to al-Mirbad in order to engage in the poetic battle. He says that they sent him there to overcome his opponent poets. See Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 1, p. 428.

it is obvious from the account that the governor was familiar with the content of this poem previously and therefore wanted to punish Jarīr.

The account also informs us about the way the two *naqīḍa*s were presented by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq. Here, unlike the *naqīḍa*s presented by Jarīr and his earlier opponents in the formative age of the *naqāʾiḍ* contests, these two poets are located in the same place, apparently in a certain circle (*ḥalaqa*),[12] in al-Mirbad. Abū ʿUbayda mentions that Jarīr *wāqafa* al-Farazdaq. This verb literally means two persons confronting each other on a battlefield or in a contest or match.[13] Here it may be assumed that both poets stood facing each other surrounded by their audience, each reciting (or re-reciting) his *naqīḍa* while the other listened.[14] This account also shows that women used to attend the *naqīḍa*s presentations in al-Mirbad, at least those of the poets themselves.

However, it seems that the verses which describe the romantic relationship between Jarīr and al-Nawār were composed in prison because, as previously mentioned, Jarīr asks the governor not to let his enemies mock him, and begs him for his freedom. It is probable that Jarīr, after being freed, recited the whole *naqīḍa* in its new expanded version at another time, or perhaps several times, in al-Mirbad. If this was the case, then it is possible that the poets used to make certain changes, adding some verses, to the original version of their *naqāʾiḍ*.

As for the enemies mentioned by Jarīr, although their identity is not revealed either through the poem or through the prose account, they may have been al-Baʿīth himself since, among the verses that Jarīr adds to his poem, there are three in which he denounces him [NJF 33:63–65]. Although the reason for denouncing al-Baʿīth here is not known, two suggestions may be offered. The first is that al-Baʿīth was in al-Baṣra, and perhaps attended the presentations by the two poets in al-Mirbad, once when they were requested to do so, and once after Jarīr was arrested. It is possible that in an attempt to prevent al-Baʿīth

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[12]In many circumstances, the Arab audience used to be positioned in a circle around a performance; see Būtītsīvā, *Alf*, p. 35. Jayyusi mentions that each poet had a corner; see "Umayyad poetry," p. 410.

[13]Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, vol. 9, p. 360; Lane, *Lexicon*, vol. 8, p. 3058.

[14]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī mentions a certain account about Jarīr and al-Farazdaq in which he uses the verb *tawāqafa*, which has the same meaning of the verb used by Abū ʿUbayda. Here too, both poets are presented as standing each in front of the other, and surrounded by their tribes. Both poets, during that moment, are said to have recited their poetry against each other. A quarrel between Mujāshiʿ and Yarbūʿ occurs and leads Jarīr to compose two verses to denounce people who helped the Mujāshiʿ against the Yarbūʿ tribe. It seems that the two verses were composed orally at the moment of the quarrel; see *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 3, p. 73. Another account is told by the same author about Jarīr and ʿUmar b. Lajaʾ in which they stood in front of each other (*muwāqifuhu*), while many people surrounded both poets. See *ibid.*, vol. 19, p. 22.

from mocking Jarīr for his arrest, Jarīr decides to attack him. Another suggestion is that al-Baʿīth composed some verses — no longer extant — in which he mocked Jarīr for what happened to him. In response, Jarīr denounces him in this *naqīḍa*. Perhaps al-Baʿīth had been staying in al-Baṣra or in some place outside the city. If al-Baʿīth really was in al-Baṣra, then it is possible that after Jarīr moved there, al-Baʿīth also decided to live, or at least to visit, the city in order to continue participating in the poetic contest against his two rivals. It has been shown in our previous paper that al-Baʿīth continued to take part in the poetic contest even after al-Farazdaq became involved.[15]

As mentioned above, this incident occurred during the reign of al-Ḥārith b. Abī Rabīʿa l-Makhzūmī, the governor of al-Baṣra during the Caliphate of Ibn al-Zubayr; he held this position from 65/684–685 until 67/687.[16] This allows us to make a more accurate estimate of the date of the first *naqīḍa* by al-Farazdaq, poem no. 31, which was not composed in 68/687–688 as concluded in our previous article,[17] but apparently a year earlier; i.e., around 67/687 when Jarīr decided to leave al-Yamāma for al-Mirbad where he recited his counter-poem against al-Farazdaq.[18]

1.2 A textual analysis of two *naqīḍa*s by al-Farazdaq and Jarīr

The *naqāʾiḍ* between Jarīr and al-Farazdaq continued until the latter's death around 110/728–729, and lasted for about 43 years.[19]   Salma

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[15]See §2.4 in Hussein, "The *naqāʾiḍ*."

[16]Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd*, vol. 1, p. 392; Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 6, pp. 48–49; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *al-Nujūm*, vol. 1, pp. 218–219; al-Qāḍī, *al-Firaq*, p. 249; Ḍayf, *al-Taṭawwur*, pp. 175–176.

[17]See §3.2 in Hussein, "The *naqāʾiḍ*."

[18]Ḍayf estimates that the first *naqīḍa*s of Jarīr against al-Farazdaq had been composed between 65–67/684–687. See *al-Taṭawwur*, pp. 175–176. Nallino, Sezgin and al-Nuṣṣ mention that it occurred shortly after the year 64/683; see Nallino, *Taʾrīkh*, p. 174; Sezgin, *GAS*, vol. 2, p. 357; al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, p. 479. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Muḥtasib mentions the year 65/684–685, see *Naqāʾiḍ*, p. 127. On the other hand, Shākir al-Faḥḥām and Fakhr al-Dīn Qabāwa suggest 66/685–686 as the year of the beginning of the first *naqāʾiḍ* contest; see al-Faḥḥām, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 285; Qabāwa, *al-Akhṭal*, p. 95. However, as mentioned above, it seems that these *naqīḍa*s were composed in 67/687. This date is supported by al-Shāyib in his *Taʾrīkh*, p. 318. The year suggested by Ibrāhīm, i.e. 70/689–690, is impossible; see *Jarīr*, pp. 14–15.

[19]Some scholars mention that it lasted for 40 years; see van Gelder, "Naqāʾiḍ," vol. 7, p. 920; *idem*, "Al-Farazdaq," vol. 1, pp. 219–220; Marwa, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 62. Mardam's and al-Faḥḥām's assumption that the *naqāʾiḍ* contest between both poets lasted about 50 years (according to Mardam), or more exactly about 48 years (according to al-Faḥḥām) is reasonable only if we accept that al-Farazdaq died, according to some accounts, not in 110/728–729 but later in the year 114/732. See

Jayyusi believes that the Arab tribes that settled in Iraq welcomed this contest as a means of relief from inter-tribal tensions and found the interesting *naqā'iḍ* output of the two poets a source of entertainment and catharsis.[20] G.J.H. van Gelder holds a similar opinion.[21] However, only 76 *naqīḍa*s are extant in Abū ʿUbayda's book (38 by each poet). It is not known whether there were many other *naqīḍa*s composed by the two poets during their long stay in al-Baṣra, or only a few. This last assumption is likely, for, as mentioned above, both poets used to recite their old *naqīḍa*s for a certain time before composing new ones. It is worth noting that in most cases, al-Farazdaq was the one who started composing his *naqīḍa* and Jarīr was the one who composed the counter-poem to refute his opponent.[22] This is an indication that although at first al-Farazdaq did not like to engage in such poetic contests, once he was obliged to do so, he was so fascinated by them that he was the one who inspired his rival to compose most of his *naqīḍa*s.

Analysis of the poems themselves can shed more light on the methods used by the two poets for composing, presenting and also transmitting their *naqīḍa*s. Since it is impossible to analyze all the 76 poems in this paper, two samples have been chosen and another two poems will be analyzed at a later stage (§1.3.2 [B]). These first two poems, *naqīḍa*s nos. 39 (by al-Farazdaq) and 40 (by Jarīr), were not chosen arbitrarily but rather because in comparison with other *naqīḍa*s, they are more relevant to the three issues discussed in this paper. Both poems were composed after 73/692–693 since al-Akhṭal is mentioned in the poem of Jarīr [NJF 40:11]. As will be shown later, this poet was engaged in composing the *naqā'iḍ* around or a little before the aforementioned year (§1.6). Both poems have the same *kāmil* meter and the same rhyme letter *l*. The vocalization of the rhyme letter differs in both poems.

Mardam, *al-Farazdaq*, pp. 11–12; al-Faḥḥām, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 291. For other dates of the death of al-Farazdaq and Jarīr, see Sezgin, *GAS*, vol. 2, pp. 357, 360, and Ḥaqqī, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 25.

[20] Jayyusi, "Umayyad poetry," p. 409.

[21] Van Gelder, *The bad*, p. 30; *idem*, "Naqā'iḍ," vol. 7, p. 920; *idem*, "Jarīr," vol. 1, p. 412. Other studies that profess a similar opinion can be mentioned, such as al-Muḥtasib, *Naqā'iḍ*, p. 85. Iḥsān al-Nuṣṣ, Shākir al-Faḥḥām and Fawzī Amīn allude to this too. See al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, pp. 480–483, 523–527; al-Faḥḥām, *al-Farazdaq*, pp. 291–293, 312–314; Amīn, *Fī shiʿr*, pp. 145–146.

[22] In 25 sets of poems, al-Farazdaq was the beginner and Jarīr the refuter; these are nos. 31/33; 34/35; 39/40; 41/42; 45/46; 47/48; 49/50; 51/52; 59/60; 61/62; 63/64; 69/70; 71/72; 75/76; 81/82; 87/89; 90/91; 94/95; 96/97; 98/99; 100/101; 102/103; 105/106; 107/108; 110/111. On the other hand, only in 13 sets of poems Jarīr was the beginner: 43/44; 53/54; 55/56; 57/58; 65/66; 67/68; 73/74; 77/78; 79/80; 83/84; 85/86; 92/93; 112/113.

1.2.1 Below is a table that includes the major themes and motifs in the two *naqīḍa*s. On the left side, two columns are presented that include the motifs and themes in al-Farazdaq's poem in addition to the number of verses in which they appear. On the right, the motifs and themes in Jarīr's *naqīḍa* are listed. In this half of the table, unlike the case of al-Farazdaq's poem, the motifs and themes are not arranged according to their appearance, but rather according to their correspondence with the motifs and themes in al-Farazdaq's poem. In other words, near each theme and motif by al-Farazdaq, the counter-theme and motif in the *naqīḍa* of Jarīr is mentioned. Sometimes a certain verse by Jarīr addresses more than one verse by al-Farazdaq; in this case, such a verse will appear more than once in the table.

Verses	Al-Farazdaq [NJF 39]	Verses	Jarīr [NJF 40]
1–4 5–7	Praising his house: and the *ḥubwa* (a cloak or a turban which a person wears; it is used here metaphorically, meaning the great and noble deeds) of his ancestors Zurāra, Mujāshiʿ and Nahshal Mocking Jarīr's base house	12–15 ⇐ (this sign shows that the verses by Jarīr refutes or address the verses by al-Farazdaq)	Jarīr denounces the House of al-Farazdaq's clans, and praises the House of his own clans
		16	He asks al-Farazdaq to stop praising his clan Mujāshiʿ and attempt to look for another clan to praise, such as Nahshal (Nahshal is more noble than Mujāshiʿ)

8–17	Praising the descendants of Ṭuhayya on battlefields. Then he praises his clan (perhaps Mujāshiʿ?), especially for killing kings in battle and likening their might and their noble deeds to a very large camel	40 ⇐ 51	Condemning Banū Ṭuhayya and the Mujāshiʿ clan Mocking al-Farazdaq for describing his tribes's swords (not to be taken literally; he apparently alludes to praising their valour in battles)
18	Praising the might of Banū Fuqaym b. Jarīr b. Dārim	17 ⇐ 51	Al-Farazdaq should not praise the Fuqaym clan since they killed his father Mocking al-Farazdaq for describing the swords of his tribes
19	Praising the might of several relative tribes called al-Rabāʾiʿ	51 ⇐	Mocking al-Farazdaq for describing the swords of his tribes
20	Praising the nobility of the descendants of ʿAdawiyya (wife of Mālik b. Ḥanẓala b. Mālik b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm)		
21	Praising the Barājim clans (sons of Ḥanẓala b. Mālik b. Zayd Manāt; a brother of Yarbūʿ b. Ḥanẓala)	18 ⇐	Al-Farazdaq should not praise the Barājim clans since they did evil to him

22–23	Praising Sufyān b. Mujāshiʿ b. Dārim and ʿUdus b. Zayd b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Dārim and Jandal b. Nahshal b. Dārim	41–42	Praising the descendants of his grandmother Jandala (here, it is likely that he especially chose the name Jandala because it sounds similar to the name Jandal mentioned by al-Farazdaq). Praising the two clans: ʿAmr b. Tamīm and Saʿd b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm
		⇐	
24–25	Jarīr and his clans cannot reach the *manhal* (i.e., source of water; but here it is a source of honor)		
26	The clothes of al-Farazdaq's tribe: they wear clothes of kings in peace and broad shields on battle fields	30	Al-Farazdaq should not mention the clothes of kings, since his clan betrayed al-Zubayr; their ally.
		⇐	
		51	Mocking al-Farazdaq for describing his tribes's swords

27	Praising their great forbearance which is like steady mountains; and their cruel act (*jahl*; lit.: ignorance) which is like the cruel act of the jinnis	36	⇐	Praising his clan's great forbearance which is like steady mountains; and their cruel act (*jahl*) which is very harsh (Jarīr uses the same first hemistich used by al-Farazdaq; the second hemistich is also similar to its counterpart in al-Farazdaq's verse)
		47–48		The Mujāshiʿ clan does not have any forbearance
29–32	Praising Ḥanẓala b. Mālik b. Zayd Manāt, Ḍabba, and their descendants	43–44	⇐	Al-Farazdaq's praise for his uncle and for the Ḍabba clan is useless for they are ignoble

33–35?	The testament of the genealogist Daghfal b. Ḥanẓala (of the tribe Bakr b. Wāʾil?) shows that the descendants of Ḍabba are more noble than those of Kulayb	37–39 ⇐	He asks al-Farazdaq to choose only nobles of the Quraysh tribe to judge between their clans; only they are the persons who can tell him which clan is more powerful and more noble
		45	Both the tribes of Muḍar and Rabīʿa have judged that Jarīr's clans are more noble than al-Farazdaq.
		43–44	Al-Farazdaq's praise for his uncle and for the Ḍabba clan is useless because they are ignoble
36–43	Praising some of their wars and their loyalty to their allies	25–30 ⇐	He denounces the betrayal of al-Farazdaq's clan with their ally al-Zubayr and the fornication of his sister Jiʿthin. Al-Farazdaq's clan should not therefore be praised
		51	Mocking al-Farazdaq for describing the swords of his tribes
44–45	Praising his uncle Ḥubaysh	43–44	Al-Farazdaq's praise for his uncle and for the Ḍabba clan is useless for they are ignoble

46–49	Jarīr's mother is not able to give birth to noble persons such as the relatives of al-Farazdaq; even if Jarīr eliminates the noise of his mother using her sharp clitoris and obliges her to do so.	49–50 ⇐	Al-Farazdaq's mother is not able to give birth to noble horsemen like those in Jarīr's clans; even if al-Farazdaq fornicates his mother and attempts to oblige her to do so.
	Mocking Jarīr's father while removing lice from his testicles (or while throwing them on the ground beneath his testicles) Jarīr was so busy with other things rather than doing noble deeds	56–60	Both al-Farazdaq's base grandfather and his base and prostitute grandmother Qufayra prevents al-Farazdaq from becoming a noble man
50–62	Praising his *naqīḍa*, naming it *al-fayṣal* (i.e. complete and arbiter). Praising the relationship between him and other earlier poets	22 ⇐	Al-Farazdaq should not mention his relationship with earlier poets; he should first defend his Mujāshiʿ clan which is cursed
63–64	Comparing between the base clan of Ghudāna b. Yarbūʿ (relatives of Jarīr) on one hand and the noble clan Mālik b. Zayd Manāt and Mālik b. Ḥanẓala on the other (relatives of al-Farazdaq)		

65	Jarīr steals the poems of al-Farazdaq	36 ⇒ (this sign shows that the verses by al-Farazdaq refute or address the verses by Jarīr)	Apparently al-Farazdaq alludes to verse no. 36 by Jarīr
66–67	Jarīr claims that he is a descendant of the Dārim clan. Noble persons would not let him ascribe himself to another father rather than his original base father ʿAṭiyya (apparently Dārim should not be understood here literally, but it may be a symbol of any other noble clan of the Tamīm tribe)	35 ⇒	Jarīr is a descendant of the *two mountains of Tamīm* (i.e., two noble branches of them). His House is built on a very high mountain
68–69	Jarīr claims that he is satisfied with the "House" that God gave to his tribe (House of Honor) Jarīr attempts to seek a father rather than his original one, but he would not be able to do so	12–15 ⇒ 35 46	Jarīr denounces the House of al-Farazdaq's clans, and praises the House of his own clans Jarīr is a descendant of the *two mountains of Tamīm*. His House is built on a very high mountain The House of Jarīr's clans is more noble than that of al-Farazdaq.

70–72	The intercourse between Jarīr's low-class mother and father, an incident that brought Jarīr to the world. He is as base as his parents. This prevents Jarīr from becoming a noble man and vanquishing al-Farazdaq	56–60 ⇒	Both al-Farazdaq's low class grandfather and his prostitute grandmother Qufayra prevent al-Farazdaq from becoming a noble man and overcoming Jarīr
73–74	Jarīr presents in his poetry a description of a lover who cries at seeing the *aṭlāl* (desolate abodes) of his beloved. His mother, on the other hand, does not feel such a lack with lovers, she has many slave men with whom to fornicate Jarīr cries because of his lost Umāma (his beloved?). Al-Farazdaq, instead of crying over a lost love, will present a very famous (harsh) verses against him	1–9 ⇒ 23	A sad love story: The *aṭlāl* of his beloved, his past relationship with her: she was very miserly and did not give him what he desired Al-Farazdaq's ignoble clan (descendants of Qufayra) looked for a very powerful poet (who is compared to a great and noble horse) to defend them (Jarīr alludes to the fact that this clan found al-Farazdaq, but he was not the poet that they looked for. It is likely that al-Farazdaq's declaration that he will compose a very harsh verse against Jarīr is a response to Jarīr's present claim that al-Farazdaq is too weak to defend his clan and to overcome Jarīr)

75–79	Jarīr asks about the *ḥubwa* of al-Farazdaq	24	Jarīr mocks the *ḥubwa* of al-Farazdaq
	Al-Farazdaq answers him: Jarīr's clans do not have such a *ḥubwa* because of their base origin and deeds. The *ḥubwa* of al-Farazdaq's clan is given to them by God. He praises his clan and denounces the Kulayb clan.	⇒	
80–88	Condemning the Ghudāna clan and presenting the fornication of al-Farazdaq with Jarīr's mother	23	Al-Farazdaq's ignoble clan (descendants of Qufayra) looked for a very powerful poet (who is compared to a great and noble horse) to defend them (Jarīr alludes to the fact that this clan found al-Farazdaq, but he was not the poet that they looked for)
89–98	The story of a Yarbūʿī man who drank the semen of a man of the Ḍabba clan. He mentions also that Jarīr is the only man in the world to become pregnant	⇒	
99–104		31–34	Condemns Mujāshiʿ: eating some base kinds of food; drinking urine; etc...
	The Kulayb clan gives Jarīr two choices: to be killed or to fornicate with his mother. He chose the second one	53	Al-Farazdaq cannot defeat Jarīr since he is castrated
		10–11	Jarīr's defeat of the three poets: al-Baʿīth, al-Farazdaq and al-Akhṭal

		52	He denounces the defeat of al-Farazdaq's clan in a war
		54–55	Condemning the women of the Mujāshiʿ clan, especially their long clitorises
		61	He asks someone to deliver his harsh poem to al-Farazdaq
		62	He praises the might of his clans (or perhaps his own poetic might?)

1.2.2 It is clear that the refuting poet does not deal with the themes and motifs in the same order as they appear in his rival's *naqīḍa*; rather the order is arbitrary. The following table, which presents the numbers of verses in the poem of Jarīr and their counter-verses in the *naqīḍa* of al-Farazdaq, clarifies this point:

Jarīr [NJF 40]		Al-Farazdaq [NJF 39]
12–16	⇒	1–7
17, 51	⇒	18
18	⇒	21
22	? ⇒ 50–62	
25–30, 51	⇒	36–43
30, 51	⇒	26
36, 47–48	⇒	27
37–39, 43–45	⇒	33–35
40, 51	⇒	8–17
41–42	⇒	22–23
43–44	⇒	29–32/33–35/44–45
49–50, 56–60	⇒	46–49
51	⇒	19

1.2.3 The first table shows that many verses in the first poem by al-Farazdaq include a refutation of other verses that appear in the *naqīḍa* of Jarīr which were composed later. The following table clarifies this:

Al-Farazdaq [NJF 39]		Jarīr [NJF 40]
65	⇒	36
66–67	⇒	35
68–69	⇒	12–15/35/46
70–72	⇒	56–60
73–74	⇒	1–9/23
75–79	⇒	24
80–104	⇒	23/31–34/53

An examination of al-Farazdaq's poem would reveal that in the second half of his poem, i.e. in verses 65–104, this poet alludes to some motifs and themes that appear in the *naqīḍa* of Jarīr.

Aḥmad al-Shāyib noticed that sometimes the first poem includes references to some verses in the second poem which was composed later. In an attempt to explain this incongruity, al-Shāyib makes certain assumptions. First, he assumes that the verses of the first poem that refer to the second poem are not a part of the original *naqīḍa*, but are verses that were erroneously added to it because they have the same meter and rhyme. Second, he assumes that the first poet was able to predict what his opponent might say and therefore could compose a refutation in advance. Third, he assumes that the *naqīḍa* was composed in more than one stage.[23] The first two assumptions cannot stand, at least not in the case of the two poems discussed here. It is clear that al-Farazdaq's verses do have some connection to the verses of the first part of his poem, and that they are not erroneously attached to the original *naqīḍa*. It is also difficult to assume that al-Farazdaq really was able to predict all the numerous motifs mentioned in Jarīr's poem.

The third assumption by al-Shāyib is more convincing because it really seems that al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* was composed in two stages. The first included the composition of verses 1–64 (or perhaps verses 1–62).[24] Jarīr's *naqīḍa*, which includes only 62 verses, addresses these verses. We can now understand why Jarīr's poem was not as long as al-Farazdaq's. Apparently, it was a counter-poem composed in response to the first version of al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* which has almost a similar number of verses, and not a complete version of the poem. Then, after hearing Jarīr's counter-poem, al-Farazdaq decided to add many other verses (vv.

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[23]Al-Shāyib, *Taʾrīkh*, pp. 308–309. Iḥsān al-Nuṣṣ also believes that some of the *naqāʾiḍ* of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq were composed in more than one stage; he does not examine this statement in any of his studies, but mentions it in one of his footnotes; see *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, p. 426, n. 1.

[24]It is also difficult to determine whether verses 63–64 in al-Farazdaq's poem were composed in the first stage or in the second because it seems that the two verses were not directly refuted by Jarīr, nor did they directly refute other verses in Jarīr's *naqīḍa*.

63 or 65–104) to his *naqīḍa*, in order to refute Jarīr's motifs and themes. As shown in the table above, just as in the case of Jarīr's poem, al-Farazdaq also does not treat the motifs and themes in Jarīr's *naqīḍa* according to their original order (but rather treats them arbitrarily to some extent).

1.2.4   In the light of the last two tables, an important question should be raised regarding the reason leading each of the two poets to abandon the order of themes and motifs that appear in the counter-*naqīḍa*. Although there is no definite answer, this may be related in some degree to the way the two *naqīḍa*s were transmitted and perhaps even composed. It is not unlikely that both poets received the poem orally rather than from a written source, and that each composed his *naqīḍa* depending on the themes and motifs that he could recall from his rival's *naqīḍa*. It is quite probable that a poet who becomes acquainted with a poem through oral transmission sometimes fails to recall the exact order of all of its components. Although such a conclusion is plausible, it can be neither proved nor disproved. Neither can the question whether both poets composed their *naqīḍa*s orally be clearly answered.

The analysis of the two tables enables us to suggest four ways in which the *naqīḍa*s were composed, transmitted and presented:

1. Al-Farazdaq composes the first part of his poem in advance, then recites it, apparently in al-Mirbad. Jarīr comes to al-Mirbad and listens to al-Farazdaq's recitation. He then takes some time to compose a counter-*naqīḍa* in which he refutes the themes and motifs that he was able to remember of his opponent's *naqīḍa*. Some time later, he recites his own poem in al-Mirbad. The time taken to compose his counter-poem is not known. As shown later (§1.3.1 [A–B]), each of the two poets used to compose a poem in only one night, and perhaps this was also the time needed to compose the counter-*naqīḍa*. After al-Farazdaq listens to Jarīr presenting his counter-*naqīḍa*, he adds more verses to his poem, referring to his rival's counter-poem. We do not know whether the poet, after composing the additional part of his poem, presents the audience with the complete *naqīḍa* or recites only the new part. Both options are possible.[25]

2. The second way is the same as that mentioned above, but instead of the rival poet going to al-Mirbad to hear his opponent's *naqīḍa*, some transmitters presumably acquainted him with it. When one examines

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[25]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī mentions an account about Jarīr and ʿUmar b. Lajaʾ in which both met in al-Mirbad. ʿUmar recited a *naqīḍa* in which he refutes an older one composed by Jarīr. This gives the impression that Jarīr's *naqīḍa* was recited previously, and that ʿUmar prepared his counter-*naqīḍa* before he came to al-Mirbad; see *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 19, p. 22. This supports the above-mentioned assumption.

the *naqīḍa* of Jarīr, one finds that towards its end he asks someone to deliver his poem to al-Farazdaq [NJF 40:61]. This may indicate that the two poets, unlike the case concerning the presentation of the two previous *naqīḍa*s (nos. 31 and 33 [see §1.1]), were facing each other while reciting the *naqāʾiḍ*. However, this is not definite proof since such a statement by Jarīr need not be understood literally.

3. A third option, which seems to be less likely, is that al-Farazdaq prepares his poem ahead of time and then recites it. Jarīr attends the recitation and is required to compose orally a counter-poem by which he refutes the major themes and motifs raised by his rival. Immediately afterwards, al-Farazdaq composes other verses of his poem (the second part of it), this time orally too, in order to refute Jarīr.

4. A fourth way, which also seems unlikely, is that the entire process of the *naqāʾiḍ* composition was done orally, both the first and second parts. All the *naqīḍa*s are composed and recited in al-Mirbad itself, in the presence of the rival poets and their audience.

Al-Faḥḥām, depending on a certain account in *Kitāb al-aghānī*, mentions another way in which al-Farazdaq used to compose one verse and then send it to his rival Jarīr in order to challenge him to compose a counter-verse.[26] Afterwards, each of them composed the entire *naqīḍa*. Al-Faḥḥām's conclusion needs to be well examined, since the account itself seems to be doubtful. It deals with two verses that are extracted from two *naqīḍa*s by al-Farazdaq and Jarīr. The narrator mentions that the two verses were composed before these two *naqīḍa*s and were added to them later. The two *naqīḍa*s are discussed in §1.3.2 (A–B), and they are said to have been composed orally during the recitation process. Abū ʿUbayda does not make any allusion to the fact that these two verses in question were composed some time before the composition of the two *naqīḍa*s.

1.3 Prose accounts and additional verses supporting the textual analysis

It is interesting that the conclusions based on a textual analysis of the ways in which these two poets composed, presented and transmitted their *naqīḍa*s in al-Baṣra are supported by prose accounts and other poetic verses in Abū ʿUbayda's book.

1.3.1 Written or previously-prepared composition of the *naqīḍa*
Some accounts in Abū ʿUbayda's book show that at least the first of

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[26] Al-Faḥḥām, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 304.

any *naqīḍa* pair was composed some time before he presented it in al-Mirbad. Such accounts support at least one of the first three assumptions mentioned in §1.2.4.

A. One of the accounts mentioned by Abū ʿUbayda is the story of the quarrel between Jarīr and another poet called al-Rāʿī al-Numayrī (d. ca. 96–97/714–715).[27] The author mentions more than one version of this account, all of them describing Jarīr's anger which was aroused due to being ill-treated by Jandal, al-Rāʿī's son. This was the impetus for the composition of a very harsh *naqīḍa* against al-Rāʿī. The account, in all its versions, also tells about Jarīr's anger caused by al-Rāʿī voicing support of al-Farazdaq in his poetry.

In order to convince al-Rāʿī not to support al-Farazdaq any more, Jarīr meets him on Friday in the mosque and reminds him that he is a stranger, while the two poets, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, are cousins even though they denounce each another every "morning and evening," as Jarīr says. This rivalry is not sufficient cause for al-Rāʿī to come between them since he is not involved in their mutual denunciation. After this attempt, which seems to have been successful, Jarīr makes another attempt to convince al-Rāʿī to support him instead of supporting al-Farazdaq. Al-Rāʿī accepts the offer, and both set to meet on the second morning in al-Mirbad. They really meet and each begins, according to Abū ʿUbayda, "to ask his brother to speak" (*yastanbithu maqālata ṣāḥibihi*). Since the agreement was for al-Rāʿī to support Jarīr, it is likely that this statement indicates that the two poets began to compose verses praising each other. The verses here seem to have been composed orally. (This sentence can also mean that each of the two poets recited some of his poems, not only praise ones but any other poems, in the attendance of the other.) Jandal sees his father in the company of Jarīr and reproaches him for agreeing to meet such a person. Jarīr returns angrily to his house and sits alone in a room. Some people ask him what had happened, but he declines to answer. After some time he tells them that he was composing a poem against al-Rāʿī, which he has not yet finished. The next morning he goes to al-Mirbad where he finds al-Rāʿī and his son, and recites his poem. Al-Rāʿī composes three verses attempting to refute Jarīr's poem but then decides not to compose any more *naqīḍa*s against Jarīr.[28]

This account shows that the first *naqīḍa* was sometimes composed

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[27] About his life, see Weipert, "al-Rāʿī," *EI*[2], s.v. According to Weipert, he lived for some time in Iraq, mainly in al-Baṣra. Al-Ziriklī mentions the year 90/709 as the year of his death, see al-*Aʿlām*, vol. 4, p. 340. His tribe was a north Arabian one which once inhabited mainly the western heights of al-Yamāma; see Della Vida, "Numayr," *EI*[2], s.v.

[28] Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 1, pp. 427–430.

and prepared before its recitation in al-Mirbad. Although the time Jarīr
needed for composing his *naqīḍa* was not so long — less than a day —
it was not composed at the moment of its presentation in al-Mirbad. It
also seems that al-Rāʿī's three verses were composed immediately after
Jarīr finished reciting his poem. If this really was the case, then one
may assume that this account supports assumption no. 3 in §1.2.4 which
suggests that the first poet used to prepare his *naqīḍa* at home, but the
second used to compose his counter-*naqīḍa* orally immediately after the
first had finished. However, the present version of the account shows that
although Jarīr composed his poem at home, he did not write it down.
It presents him sitting calmly in his room, thinking but not speaking,
and composing the poem in his mind. However, this information is
contradicted by another version of the account according to which Jarīr
dictated his *naqīḍa* in his chamber to a *rāwiya* (transmitter) of his called
al-Ḥusayn.[29] Despite this disparity between the two versions, both of
them related that the first *naqīḍa* was prepared sometime before it was
presented to the audience. But the later version does not say whether
Jarīr, after dictating his poem, recited it from a written version or he
learnt it by heart and then recited it. In this later version, Jarīr is said
to have composed the poem in two stages. One was completed on the
same night after the quarrel with al-Rāʿī's son, while the second was
completed some time later. This account gives us no information as to
when the second stage of composing the *naqīḍa* took place. Abū ʿUbayda
does not mention whether this occurred before or after the first part of
the poem was presented to an audience.

From this account, it is possible to derive further information re-
garding the composition or the presentation of the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry in al-
Mirbad. The above-quoted sentence by Jarīr, that he and al-Farazdaq
used to denounce each another morning and night is very important,
although this should not be understood literally; i.e., it should not in-
dicate that both poets used to present their *naqīḍa*s every day, as some
scholars believe.[30] Rather, it simply indicates that both poets either

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[29]It seems that Jarīr had more than one transmitter; in another *naqīḍa*, he mentions
another *rāwiya*, named as Waʿwaʿa and nicknamed Marbaʿ [NJF 101:82]. Al-Farazdaq
also had more than one *rāwiya*; see Abū ʿUbayda, *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 1049. A common
rāwiya for both poets is mentioned as well. See Sezgin, *GAS*, vol. 2, p. 358.

[30]Ḍayf, *al-Taṭawwur*, pp. 163–165, 181; Jumʿa, *Jarīr*, pp. 24–25, 25; al-Muḥtasib,
Naqāʾiḍ, p. 88; al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, p. 481; ʿAbd Allāh, *al-Taqlīd*, p. 178; Amīn,
Fī shiʿr, p. 146. None of these scholars explain how they reached this conclusion.
They also say that the audience used to clap enthusiastically and call out jubilantly
and loudly or even whistle during the recitation of the *naqīḍa*. Jayyusi adds that
the audience used to laugh very heartily; see "Umayyad poetry," p. 410. However,
although this may be true regarding the *naqāʾiḍ* audience, the authors do not base
their statement on any definite sources.

used to produce many new counter-*naqīḍa*s frequently, or at least they
used to compose a limited number of *naqīḍa*s (perhaps not much more
than the number of poems gathered by Abū ʿUbayda, see §1.2), but that
they used to present these *naqīḍa*s repeatedly for their audience before
composing new ones. This second assumption may be better supported
than the first, since it has previously been shown that the *naqā'iḍ* poems
really used to be recited more than once.

Another important point that may be derived from the account is
the specific place in al-Mirbad where the *naqīḍa*s used to be recited.
The account gives the impression that Jarīr met al-Rāʿī in a certain
place in al-Mirbad which he frequented. However, another version of the
poem supplies more details about this location. It is a *finā'* of al-Rāʿī
in which he was seated on that morning. The word *finā'* indicates a
yard, normally said to be in front of a house.[31] It is not known whether
this yard was connected to a certain house. If it was not, then one may
assume that the poet normally had a yard in al-Mirbad where he used to
sit and present his poetry. If it really was connected to a house, then we
may assume that al-Rāʿī possessed a house in al-Mirbad with a yard in
which he used to sit.[32] This would then show that this *naqīḍa* by Jarīr
was not presented in a particular place, which was used only for reciting
the *naqā'iḍ*, but was presented near the house of the rival poet. Here,
it may be assumed that the audience gathered round the two poets to
hear their poems.

The second version of the account alludes to two different years when
this incident occurred. The first was after Jarīr had spent seven years in
al-Baṣra. It is most probable that this incident occurred around the year
74/693. The second year was the one following the killing of Qutayba
b. Muslim, the governor of Khurāsān who rebelled against the Umayyad
caliph. Bosworth dates this incident to 96/715.[33] If we accept the date
offered by al-Ziriklī (see note 27) as the year of al-Rāʿī's death, then we
must assume that the second year could not possibly be that referred to
in the poem.

B. In addition to this account, which shows that the first poet used to
compose his poem sometime before presenting it to his audience, there
is another by Abū ʿUbayda that presents al-Farazdaq during one of his

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[31]Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān*, vol. 15, p. 165; Lane, *Lexicon*, vol. 6, p. 2451.

[32]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī mentions that there was a circle in the "higher place" of
al-Mirbad (*aʿlā l-mirbad*) where al-Farazdaq, al-Rāʿī and their audience used to meet.
This account shows that there was a certain place in this circle where the audience
used to sit and where Jarīr recited his poem in the presence of the two other poets. It
indicates that the *rāwiya* of al-Farazdaq attended also the same place; see *Kitāb al-
aghānī*, vol. 7, pp. 42–43, 48. A similar account is also found in al-ʿAbbāsī, *Maʿāhid*,
vol. 1, pp. 264–266.

[33]See "Ḳutayba b. Muslim," *EI²*, s.v.

visits to Medina. There he is challenged by an inhabitant of Medina
who meets him in the mosque. The man recites a poem by Ḥassān b.
Thābit (d. ca. 40/661) and asks al-Farazdaq whether he can create such
a highly artistic composition. Al-Farazdaq leaves the mosque angrily.
On the same night he visits a mountain in Medina near which he halts
his camel, lies down and composes a poem [NJF 61]. The next day he
returns to the same mosque and recites his poem in the presence of an
audience which included the same man who had challenged him. Al-
Farazdaq begins the poem by presenting an imaginary illicit love affair
between him and a certain married woman [NJF 61:1–31]. He then
praises the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (re. 65–86/685–705) with
only two verses [NJF 61:32–33],[34] and afterwards praises his clan [NJF
61:52–100, 112–115], denounces Jarīr's clan and Jarīr himself [NJF 61:72,
101–111, 113–115]. At the end of the poem he praises the Saʿd tribe
[NJF 61:116–119]. According to this account, it seems that al-Farazdaq
composed the poem in his mind, rather than dictating it.

If this account is to be believed, we learn that the *maqīḍa* was recited
in a mosque. It is amazing that it was permissable to recite *naqāʾiḍ*,
especially uncouth ones, in mosques. No clear explanation for this seems
possible. However, van Gelder tells us about a religious scholar who,
moments before prayers, did not hesitate to recite obscene verses by al-
Farazdaq. This may show that in some religious circles, reciting impolite
invective verses was not considered a desecration.[35] In his book on the
history of Arabic literature, Carlo Nallino states that mosques, at least
in the first century of Islam, were not intended for religious affairs only,
but were also used for other social, political and general affairs. Only in
the ʿAbbāsī era did the Muslim mosques become a place for exclusively
religious matters.[36]

Jarīr in his turn composes a counter-*naqīḍa* [NJF 62]. There is no
indication that he was also in Medina at that time and therefore we do
not know whether he received al-Farazdaq's poem through a professional
transmitter who brought it from al-Medina, or from people who heard
the poem in Medina, and then brought it to al-Baṣra. It is also possible

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[34] Verses 34–51 are problematic. They include a description of a camel journey
by the poet and his comrades and they include a description of very harsh and cold
nights. It is not clear whether these verses, especially the camel journey, are connected
with the praise. In other words, it is not known whether the aim of the journey was to
reach the patron's court as poets sometimes do in their panegyrical ode; see Jacobi,
"The camel-section," pp. 1–22. It is possible that these verses are not connected with
the patron's praise, but to the self-praise mentioned from verse no. 52 onwards.

[35] Van Gelder, *The bad*, p. 34. Another account shows that al-Farazdaq used to
recite his poetry in a certain circle in the mosque of al-Baṣra; see Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih,
Kitāb al-ʿiqd, vol. 4, p. 52.

[36] Nallino, *Taʾrīkh*, p. 154.

that al-Farazdaq himself, after returning to al-Baṣra, may have presented his poem to the Baṣran audience, perhaps in al-Mirbad.

An analysis of the two poems shows that in verses 116–119 of his poem, al-Farazdaq alludes to verses 75–78 of Jarīr's *naqīḍa*. This indicates that al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* was composed in two stages. Verses 116–119 were composed in the second stage.[37] Three conclusions may therefore be drawn regarding the composition and the presentation of these two *naqīḍa*s. The first is that Jarīr was also in Medina, and that both poets presented their poems according to one of the four methods mentioned in §1.2.4. The second is that when Jarīr was in al-Baṣra and became familiar with al-Farazdq's poem, he composed a counter-*naqīḍa*. Afterwards al-Farazdaq, having heard his rival's *naqīḍa* while in Medina or after his return, added some verses to his original poem in which he refutes Jarīr's *naqīḍa*. This analysis supports the second method presented in §1.2.4. The third is that al-Farazdaq composed his *naqīḍa* in Medina, but recited the poem after his return to al-Mirbad. Jarīr composed his *naqīḍa* to refute him, and then al-Farazdaq composed other verses to refute Jarīr's *naqīḍa*. This may have occurred according to the first or third method mentioned in §1.2.4.[38] However, whichever of these three conclusions is correct in the case of these two *naqīḍa*s, this account can be considered as an additional proof that the first *naqīḍa* was composed some time before it was presented and recited.

C. A third and final account by Abū 'Ubayda explains that al-Farazdaq had a *rāwiya* called Ibn Mattawayhi. This *rāwiya* used to write down al-Farazdaq's poetry, but it is not clear when and how he used to write the poems. The account presents both persons on one of their visits to the poet 'Umar b. Laja' (d. 105/724) when he came to al-Baṣra. In the house where he was staying, 'Umar met some young men (*fityān*) who were recording his panegyrics. It seems that they were not transmitters, or at least not professional ones. The account gives the impression that they were ordinary young men who were interested in 'Umar's poetry and therefore asked him to recite some of it so that it could be written

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[37]See the account in Abū 'Ubayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 2, pp. 546–548. In verse 95, al-Farazdaq praises the fact that his tribes had two houses: one in al-Ka'ba and one in Jerusalem. It is not unlikely that he alludes here to the Dome of the Rock which was built by 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān around the year 72/691–692; see Grabar, "Ḳubbat al-Ṣakhra," *EI²*, s.v. If this really was the case, then the poem must have been composed after that date.

[38]The comparison made in §1.4 between the structure of al-Farazdaq's poem and that of Ḥassān shows that the first three parts in both poems are almost identical. Al-Farazdaq adds other two parts to his poem which are not found in Ḥassān's poem: the denunciation of Jarīr and his tribe and praising the Sa'd tribe. It is likely that these two parts were added later to the *naqīḍa*. If so, then this shows that the original and first version of the poem was not planned to be a *naqīḍa* at all.

down and saved for their personal enjoyment. Al-Farazdaq tells ʿUmar
that a relative of his called Shabba b. ʿIqāl sent him a written message
and told him that a Banū Jaʿfar clan denounced Shabba, and claimed
that he lacked the skill to compose poetry and therefore was in need of
al-Farazdaq's help. Since the latter did not know the flaws of the Banū
Jaʿfar, he sought ʿUmar's help, since he knew them very well. ʿUmar
told al-Farazdaq about their flaws and al-Farazdaq wrote them down (or
perhaps his *rāwiya* did so).[39]

This account does not reveal any facts that could shed more light
on the composition process of al-Farazdaq's poetry, such as how he used
the material received from ʿUmar for composing his poem. By writing
down the flaws he gives the impression that he had prepared his poem
before reciting it. It is likely that he learned about these flaws and then
composed the poem in the presence of his *rāwiya* who wrote down the
verses as they were being composed. If this was the case, then the poem
was not composed orally.

It is noteworthy that the 92-verse poem that al-Farazdaq composed
to denounce the Jaʿfar tribe does not include any reference to Jarīr or
to his clans.[40] Since we do not know whether any poems were composed
by the Jaʿfar tribe to refute al-Farazdaq's poem, it is doubtful that we
can consider it a *naqīḍa*. It seems also that, in composing this poem, al-
Farazdaq was influenced by some earlier poets such as Tamīm b. Ubayy
b. Muqbil (d. after 35/656 or even shortly after 70/690) and Aʿshā Bāhila
(lived in the second half of the sixth century).[41] Such influence is not
apparent — at least not to the present author — in the *naqāʾiḍ* found in
Abū ʿUbayda's book. This may show that there is a certain difference
between this poem and the *naqāʾiḍ*, perhaps in the composition process
which seems to be more sophisticated and more artistic here than in the
naqāʾiḍ. This issue cannot be adequately dealt with here, and is worthy
of an independent study. But if this assumption is correct, then it would
be possible to differentiate between two kinds of al-Farazdaq's poetry,
and presumably also of that of Jarīr. The first is the regular poems that

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[39]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 2, pp. 907–908.

[40]Abū ʿUbayda does not quote the poem, it is a *rāʾiyya*, *ṭawīl*, and found in al-
Farazdaq, *Dīwān*, vol. 1, pp. 362–370.

[41]Compare the motifs in verses 33–34, 37 and also the phrase *a-lam taʿlamī annī*
(do not you know that I ...) which opens verse 33 in al-Farazdaq's poem with the
motifs and the opening phrase in verses 5–7 in poem no. 4 of Ibn Muqbil, in Tamīm
b. Ubayy b. Muqbil, *Dīwān*, pp. 22–39. The same poem appears also as poem no. 35
in Ibn Maymūn, *Muntahā*, vol. 1, pp. 291–301. See also the similarity between the
motifs, images and some of the expressions between vv. 34–37 in al-Farazdaq's poem
and vv. 6–10 of the poem, by Aʿshā Bāhila, in ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī, *Khizānat
al-adab*, vol. 1, pp. 92–97. The poem appears also in Geyer (ed.), *Kitāb al-ṣubḥ*, pp.
266–268.

they composed in different circumstances and to meet different needs such as denunciation or praise. This kind of poetry is found in the *dīwān*s of the two poets. The second kind is the *naqā'iḍ*, which does not seem to have gained the same artistic attention from these two poets. These poems are found in the book by Abū ʿUbayda. The two previous accounts mentioned above that claim the two poets used to compose an entire *naqīḍa* in one night, may support this assumption.

Since this account does not deal with the composition of the *naqā'iḍ* poetry, we cannot tell whether al-Farazdaq also used to dictate his *naqīḍa*s to his *rāwiya*.[42]

D. In addition to the prose account by Abū ʿUbayda, a certain verse by Jarīr may indicate that the *naqīḍa* was sometimes dictated and then recited from a written source. In *naqīḍa* no. 101, Jarīr talks about a *ṣaḥīfa*, i.e. a flat and smooth surface prepared for writing, such as papyrus and parchment,[43] [NJF 101:87]:

> *hādhī ṣ-ṣaḥīfatu min qufayrata fa-qra'ū*
>
> *ʿunwānahā wa-bisharri ṭīnin tuṭbaʿu*
>
> This *ṣaḥīfa* is from Qufayra. Read
>
> its title. With the worst of clays it is sealed

We cannot be certain what Jarīr means by claiming that the *ṣaḥīfa* is from Qufayra, nor to which *ṣaḥīfa* he alludes. This phrase may be understood in two ways. The first is to assume that Jarīr is speaking about a certain *ṣaḥīfa*, of which we know nothing except that it contains something shameful against Qufayra. The second is to assume that the *ṣaḥīfa* is merely Jarīr's present *naqīḍa* containing invective verses against Qufayra. If by using the word *ṣaḥīfa* Jarīr is really alluding to this *naqīḍa*, this may imply that the *naqīḍa* was prepared and written before it was recited and presented to the audience. Since the verse in hand is obscure, one should handle it very cautiously.

1.3.2 Oral (or: not previously-prepared) composition of the *naqīḍa*

Another kind of account shows that the two poets used to compose their two *naqīḍa*s orally during the presentation process in front of an audience.

A. This account tells us about Jarīr who borrowed a horse of noble breeding from Abū Jahḍam ʿAbbād b. Ḥuṣayn who was, according to Abū

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[42]Renate Jacobi alludes to the fact that both poets sometimes dictated their poetry to their *rāwī*s, but does not discuss this issue in detail. She concludes that in the Umayyad era, the oral transmission of the poetry was gradually replaced by writing. See Jacobi, "Rāwī," *EI*[2], s.v.

[43]Ghédira, "Ṣaḥīfa," *EI*[2], s.v.

'Ubayda, the chief of police in al-Baṣra (*kāna ʿalā aḥdāthi l-Baṣra*).[44]
He wore a shield, took up a weapon (another version of the poem shows
that even the shield was borrowed from the same man), and went to
al-Mirbad where he started composing and reciting his *naqīḍa* to his
audience. Al-Farazdaq in turn put on some expensive clothes of a var-
iegated kind (*thiyābu washy*), and also wore a bracelet. According to a
certain version al-Farazdaq also mounted a mule and then approached a
cemetery of the Ḥiṣn tribe where he began composing and reciting his
counter-*naqīḍa*. In his book on the Arabic theater in the medieval Arab
world, Moreh quotes such an account, and he assumes that this change
of dress by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq was perhaps the vestige of a dramatic
ritual that attempts to communicate with the world of the ancestors.
Accordingly, Moreh believes that the act of cursing a rival's ancestors
in this ritual attire may bear magical significance.[45] Without reference
to this particular account ʿAlī al-Jundī offers a different interpretation:
poets, from pre-Islamic times onwards, used to change their clothes and
sometimes their hairstyle, while reciting their poems as a means of at-
tracting an audience and keep them attentive during the recitation.[46]

The account shows that both the composition and the recitation of
the two poems occurred orally and in rotation. Several versions of this
account relate that the the poets recited their works at the same time
and that during this process the verses of each poet were related to
his rival by others. The poet listened to his rival's verses, composed
counter-verses, and these were then relayed back to the first poem, and
the process was repeated. This event took place during al-Ḥārith b.
Abī Rabīʿa al-Makhzūmī's reign in al-Baṣra (see §1.1), i.e., in 67/687.[47]
In other words, this happened a very short time after Jarīr moved to
al-Baṣra.

According to this account, al-Farazdaq chose to recite his *naqīḍa* not
in al-Mirbad itself, but in a cemetery. The reason for this is unclear.
Some verses of the *naqāʾiḍ* material show that the governor harassed the
two poets, especially al-Farazdaq, and even demolished his house twice

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[44]About the police system in the ʿAbbāsī era, see Ibn Jaʿfar, *al-Kharāj*, pp. 65–76.
[45]Moreh, *Live theatre*, p. 29.
[46]Al-Jundī, *al-Shuʿarāʾ*, pp. 39–43.
[47]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 1, p. 320; vol. 2, pp. 624, 650, 683–684.
Depending on this account, Ḍayf concludes that the *naqāʾiḍ* audience used to move
from one circle to another in order to listen to the *naqīḍa*s of the rival poets. See
al-Taṭawwur, p. 164. This statement is unreliable. The present account is the only
one which relates that people used to move from one poet to another because the
two poets were not allowed to join each other. In addition, the account does not
tell us that the audience used to move from poet to poet — only some transmitters,
professional or unprofessional, used to do this; the account gives the impression that
the audience of each poet remained in its place, either in al-Mirbad or in the cemetery.

[NJF 63:43]. This was the same governor who once jailed Jarīr (see
§1.1).[48] Jarīr himself says that the governor attempted to prevent both
poets from composing *naqā'iḍ* poetry and that al-Ḥārith destroyed his
house. He asks him to take whatever he wants from both sides but to let
them present their poetry [NJF 64:90–93]. For some reason, the chief of
police Abū Jahḍam supported Jarīr against al-Farazdaq, and therefore
the relationship between Jarīr and al-Ḥārith became better than that
between al-Ḥārith and al-Farazdaq. This led al-Farazdaq to claim that
his bad relationship with the governor was due to the Kulayb clan's
incitement against him; he accuses them of being those who demolished
his house [NJF 63:42, 50]. It may be that these incidents induced both
poets not to recite their *naqīḍa*s in the same place. The cemetery was
chosen by al-Farazdaq because he was apparently too scared to remain
in al-Mirbad. Muslim cemeteries were often built outside the ramparts
of the town, close to its gates.[49] Al-Farazdaq sought a place from which
he could easily flee should the governor's police pursue him.[50]

This information gives the impression that if the governor had not
harassed al-Farazdaq, then both poets might have been able to meet in
al-Mirbad in order to compose and present their *naqīḍa*s.[51] It is therefore
possible that the two poets, in more peaceful circumstances, used to
gather in al-Mirbad to present their *naqīḍa*s. This may support the
fourth method suggested in §1.2.4: both poets used to meet to compose
and recite their *naqīḍa*s orally and in rotation. This account suggests a
possible explanation of the verb *wāqafa* mentioned by Abū ʿUbayda and
other scholars (§1.1) in this context: this might indicate that the two
poets used to recite their *naqīḍa*s in rotation.

Later classical sources mention another version of this account. The
oldest source for this version was Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī (d. 231/845) in
his *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shuʿarāʾ*. He mentions that this took place when the
governor al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf invited Jarīr and al-Farazdaq to his palace
in al-Baṣra, and asked them to wear the clothes their ancestors used to

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[48]It is impossible to accept al-Faḥḥām's assertion, in which he claims that Jarīr
was imprisoned while the two poets were reciting their *naqīḍa*s nos. 63–64; see *al-
Farazdaq*, p. 303. It was shown previously that when Jarīr was captured he was
reciting the first *naqīḍa* that he ever composed against al-Farazdaq, see §1.1. In
addition, the content of al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* indicates that Jarīr had a good rela-
tionship with the governor.

[49]See Ory, "Maḳbara," *EI*[2], s.v.

[50]Shākir assumes, without giving any proof, that the place mentioned in the poem
was a cemetery before al-Baṣra was built, but afterwards became a market, although
people continued to call it *maqbara*; see Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, p.
557, footnote 2.

[51]Another version of the same account, also told by Abū ʿUbayda, shows that both
poets composed and recited their two *naqīḍa*s simultaneously in the same al-Mirbad.
See Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 1, p. 320.

wear in pre-Islamic times. Both wore the attire mentioned above (Ibn Sallām explains that in addition to the shield, Jarīr took a sword and a lance). Each poet then recited a verse in which he praised his own attire and mocked his rival's. The two verses were taken from *naqīḍa*s nos. 63–64 which, according to the previous account, had been recited in two different places. Afterwards, both poets went to two different places; Jarīr to the cemetery and al-Farazdaq to al-Mirbad.[52]

This version seems problematic, since both poets address al-Ḥārith b. ʿAbd Allāh in their *naqīḍa*s, but do not address al-Ḥajjāj [NJF 63:43–47; NJF 64: 90–93]. It is known that al-Ḥajjāj governed al-Baṣra later, in 75/694.[53] This means either that Ibn Sallām's account was totally fabricated, or that if it is true, it deals with a re-presentation by the two poets of the same two *naqīḍa*s composed during al-Ḥārith's governorship.

B. Due to the importance of the material provided by this account regarding the oral composition and rotational presentation of some of the *naqīḍa*s, the reliability of this material should be examined by a textual analysis of the two *naqīḍa*s said to have been composed on that occasion. Unfortunately, unlike poems nos. 39–40 analyzed above (§1.2–1.2.4), a textual analysis of these two poems, nos. 63–64, seems to be more complicated. In most cases it is difficult to show exactly which motifs of one *naqīḍa* are counterparts of those in the other *naqīḍa*. Even when this is possible, it is very difficult to prove exactly which are the refuting motifs and which are the refuted since both verses fulfill both functions at once.

According to our own understanding of the two *naqīḍa*s, it seems that the refuting and refuted verses are the following:

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[52]Ibn Sallām, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 406–407. See the same account in Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 7, p. 67; Ibn Ḥamdūn, *al-Tadhkira*, vol. 5, pp. 162–163; al-ʿAbbāsī, *Maʿāhid*, vol. 1, p. 268; al-Azdī, *Badāʾiʿ*, pp. 329–330. Abū al-Faraj mentions two verses of the two *naqīḍa*s in another place in his book, and mentions that they were composed while al-Farazdaq was in al-Baṣra and Jarīr in al-Yamāma; see *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 19, p. 32. This account contradicts all the accounts mentioned previously in the classical books including Abū ʿUbayda's book and, therefore seems doubtful.

[53]See Dietrich, "al-Ḥadjdjādj b. Yūsuf," *EI*[2], s.v.

	Al-Farazdaq [NJF 63]	Arrows showing refuter-refuted relation	Jarīr [NJF 64]
			1–38 (mentioning several love affairs and a camel-section; these verses have no counterpart in the *naqīḍa* of al-Farazdaq)
Part 1	1–20	←	39–61
Part 2	21–39	⇄	62–78
Part 3	40–93	⇄	79–96

As shown in this table, the two *naqīḍa*s can be divided into three parts, each including verses that have the refuting-refuted relationship.

1. In the first part, al-Farazdaq opens his *naqīḍa* with praise for his clan's successful wars [NJF 63:1–17], and then attacks the Kulayb clan by describing its ignoble shepherding methods. He denounces Jarīr for receiving such a legacy from his father, and for wearing low-class clothes from birth [NJF 63:18–20]. It seems that verses 39–58 of Jarīr's *naqīḍa* are the counterpart of these verses by al-Farazdaq. Here, Jarīr praises his clans' might, especially on the battlefield, and their excellent and courageous protection of their property, which consists mainly of their camel-herds. In addition, Jarīr presents the relationship between his clans and other noble clans of the Tamīm tribe, the ʿAmr b. Tamīm, the Ḥanẓala b. Mālik b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm, and the Saʿd b. Zayd Manāt. These verses seem to be a refutation of al-Farazdaq's claims. He first accords his clans equal standing: it is not only his rival's clans who are of noble origin and experts in war, but his own clans as well. Secondly, mentioning the camels and their protection may be understood as a refutation of al-Farazdaq's claim that Jarīr's kinsfolk are shepherds. Since camels, in ancient Arabic poetry, are normally described as property that Bedouins used to loot in their raids and wars, Jarīr is probably boasting that the camels were taken by his clans following victory on the battlefield.

Al-Farazdaq's praise of his own clan and his denunciation of Jarīr provoked Jarīr too to praise his clan; he also threatened to castrate al-Farazdaq. Clearly this threat here should be understood metaphorically. It is clear that Jarīr is alluding to his anticipated poetic victory. After refuting al-Farazdaq's verses, Jarīr adds three more in which he compares himself to the moon that dazzles al-Farazdaq's eyes. He asks him whether he can reach such a moon; this is also an allusion to the

height of Jarīr's poetic skill which cannot be attained by al-Farazdaq [NJF 64:59–61].

2. In the second part, al-Farazdaq wonders how Jarīr can relationship with al-Farazdaq's clans and yet denounce al-Farazdaq [NJF 63:21]. He is apparently referring to Jarīr's claim that his clans were related to the three noble Tamīmī clans mentioned above, which according to al-Farazdaq, were more closely related to his own kin than to Jarīr's. In addition, al-Farazdaq mocks Jarīr by comparing his father to a donkey and by accusing him of being descended from slaves. [NJF 63:22–23]. Al-Farazdaq then attacks Jarīr's desire to defame the might and nobility of al-Farazdaq's clan. Al-Farazdaq claims that it is easier for Jarīr to move the mountain Qaṭan from its place rather than to award his clan the same noble qualities attributed to al-Farazdaq's clan or Dārim. Here, al-Farazdaq is apparently seeking to invalidate Jarīr's praise of his clan's wars, since this is not sufficient to elevate his clan to Dārim's noble status. In order to prove his claim, al-Farazdaq praises some unnamed wars in which his clan defeated Jarīr's clan and in which they captured their women [NJF 63:24–35].

At the end of this part, al-Farazdaq attempts to refute Jarīr's claim that his poetry is superior. Al-Farazdaq claims that he has surpassed Jarīr in this respect and that his Kulayb clan attempted to drive him away before al-Farazdaq devours him. Al-Farazdaq uses the same simile used by Jarīr; he likens himself to a dazzling moon. In addition, he compares himself to death from which no one can be rescued [NJF 63:36–39].

In his turn, Jarīr creates new motifs in verses 62–78 to denounce al-Farazdaq, and at the same time attempts to refute some of al-Farazdaq's motifs. First, he refers to the garments they wore during the composition and recitation of the two *naqīda*s. Jarīr says that he took up arms, and he then mocks al-Farazdaq's attire, which makes him look like a laughing-stock dressed in the two ornamented belts and bells of the *kurraj* play.[54] Clearly, by making such a comparison between his rival and the *kurraj* actor or dancer, Jarīr is trying to defame al-Farazdaq, showing that he is not a noble, but merely a *mukhannath*. His colorful clothes and his bracelet proved this. This simile leads Jarīr to ask al-Farazdaq's clan to perfume him and to prepare him to be a bride. The husband is clearly Jarīr himself [NJF 64:62–64].

Afterwards, in response to al-Farazdaq's previous simile in which he likened himself to death, Jarīr likens himself to Time (*dahr*) which is

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[54]The *kurraj* isa wooden stick shaped like a horse; the dancers, who wore women's robes, mounted them and performed several dances. The dancers were *mukhan-nathūn*, i.e., men who acted like women. See Moreh, *Live theatre*, pp. 27–37, cf. 25–27, 29–31, 37; Snir, "al-ʿAnāṣir," pp. 156–157.

more powerful and more eternal than death [NJF 64:65]. In response to al-Farazdaq's claim that the Kulayb clan attempted to drive Jarīr away in order to save him, he says that al-Farazdaq's clan was also foolish because it asked al-Farazdaq to defend it against Jarīr. Here, al-Farazdaq is likened to a monkey who faces great waves in a sea that symbolizes the rough poetry composed by Jarīr. The monkey is drowned and swallowed by a great whale, who is Jarīr himself [NJF 64:66–67]. With these verses Jarīr claims that he is more powerful in poetic contest than his rival.

Jarīr also attempts to refute another of al-Farazdaq's claims, saying that al-Farazdaq will never be able to make his clan nobler, or at least possess the same nobility as his own clan. He uses the same motif as his rival — it is easier for al-Farazdaq to move the mountain Qaṭan than to make his clan as noble as Jarīr's. Jarīr also suggests that al-Farazdaq should kill his ancestor who has prevented him from being as noble as Jarīr. At the end of this part, Jarīr denounces the fact that al-Farazdaq did not avenge his father's assassination. He says that the strap of al-Farazdaq's sword, with which he ties the sword to his body, is cut off, and that al-Farazdaq has no sword or does not know how to use it. In other words, he alludes to his weakness and baseness [NJF 64:68–78].

3. In the third and last part, al-Farazdaq alludes to ʿAbbūd b. al-Ḥuṣayn and al-Ḥārith b. Abī Rabīʿa's ill-treatment of him. He wonders whether he was thus treated because he denounced Jarīr. He reminds al-Ḥārith that Ziyād (r. 45–53/665–673), the former governor of al-Baṣra, could not catch him, and that al-Ḥārith would also never succeed in doing so. Al-Farazdaq accuses the Kulayb of being responsible for this treatment and says that although they succeeded through al-Ḥārith in demolishing his house, they would never be able to demolish the nobility of his ancestors [NJF 63:48–51]. Al-Farazdaq asks Jarīr whether he should kill Kulayb, his clan's ancestor, because he could not grant him a status as noble as that of al-Farazdaq by his Dārim clan [NJF 63:75].

In addition, al-Farazdaq compares the difference between his and Jarīr's poetic skills. He likens himself to a strong lion that preys on his rivals, and alludes to the fact that the Kulayb sent Jarīr to compete with him, wrongly assuming that by doing so they would defend themselves from his attacks [NJF 63:53–58]. Al-Farazdaq compares himself to a sea with very rough waves and Jarīr to a fox drowning in these waves [NJF 63: 71–74]. It is clear that by invoking these metaphors, al-Farzdaq is refuting Jarīr's attempt to prove his superior talents by alluding to himself as a whale.

In response to Jarīr's mocking remarks about his garments, al-Farazdaq mocks him for wearing a shield. He sarcastically wonders what use has a shepherd for battle dress, and compares Jarīr to a pregnant

woman, saying that putting a shield on the bloated belly of such a woman is useless [NJF 63:59–61,72]. Al-Farazdaq also refutes another simile in which he was likened to a bride, with Jarīr as his bridegroom. Al-Farazdaq retorts that Jarīr is a woman whom he had impregnated by anal intercourse [NJF 63:62–65]. He then refutes what Jarīr said about the sword strap, saying that he does have a sword with many straps, and that he can never be separated from it; this is a metaphor for his bravery and might. He claims that Jarīr's father has neither straps nor swords, and that he has nothing to hang on his shoulder but a water sack, usually carried by shepherds [NJF 63:66–67, 79].

Al-Farazdaq goes on to mock Jarīr who takes his father to the market and presents him to the people. Al-Farazdaq says that Jarīr does so because he wishes not to sell him but to replace him with a nobler father — Mujāshiʿ — one of the noble ancestors of al-Farazdaq. Here, it is possible that al-Farazdaq is refuting the last motif mentioned by Jarīr in which he is accused of not avenging his father's assassination. This accusation may be less serious than attempting to replace the living father with another one. However, no one in the market agrees to take Jarīr's father, since, as al-Farazdaq claims, he is a donkey [NJF 63:68–69].

At the end of the poem, a comparison between al-Farazdaq's noble origins and Jarīr's base one is made. Jarīr's clan is compared to a herd of donkeys [NJF 63:77–82]. Al-Farazdaq blames Jarīr for not attempting to praise his father (apparently alluding to the Kulayb clan) or looking for an attribute, even a forged one, with which he can praise such a father, but for trying instead to replace him [NJF 63:83–87]. Then al-Farazdaq praises his Mujāshiʿī origin and compares it to a star that Jarīr can never reach [NJF 63:88–91]. The poem ends with two verses in which al-Farazdaq denounces Jarīr's poor physical appearance (his weak hands and fingers), and asks him whether he can refute these motifs, apparently alluding to those in this last part of his *naqīḍa* [NJF 63:92–93].

In response, Jarīr also denounces al-Farazdaq's lowly origins, saying that he is not the noble Ṣaʿṣaʿa's son, but the son of a slave black-smith who fornicated with Laylā, Ṣaʿṣaʿa's wife. He mentions that al-Farazdaq's fingers are made for holding blacksmith's tools [NJF 64:79, 82, 86–89]. He even mocks his appearance which resembles that of a donkey [NJF 64:81], and refutes al-Farazdaq's mockery of his appear-ance and his donkey-origin.

Even the story of Jiʿthin, al-Farazdaq's sister, who was raped by some Minqar men, is mentioned [NJF 64:83–85]. It may be that Jarīr wants to emphasize that al-Farazdaq was of base origin, and thus refutes what his rival's previous claims about his noble origins.

At the end, Jarīr also addresses al-Ḥārith as al-Farazdaq had done in the third part of his *naqīḍa*. He asks him to do as he wishes but to let both poets compose and recite their *naqīḍa*s. Jarīr here takes the opportunity to mock al-Farazdaq's house that was demolished by the *wālī* and once again he mocks his base origin [NJF 64:90–96].

This analysis of the two *naqīḍa*s shows that the scenario laid out in above-mentioned account is possible. The two *naqīḍa*s can be divided into several parts; each part addresses its counterpart in the rival's *naqīḍa* and adds new motifs that are then refuted by the following part of the rival *naqīḍa*. Perhaps after al-Farazdaq had composed the first part of his poem, Jarīr composed another part in which he refutes his rival and so on until the end of the two *naqīḍa*s. As suggested above, each poet might have learnt of his rival's verses when they were delivered to him by people who had heard them elsewhere (al-Mirbad and the cemetery of the Ḥiṣn tribe).

One final comment is called for. It concerns verses 1–38 in the *naqīḍa* of Jarīr in which the love affairs and the camel-section were presented. Jarīr might have decided to compose such a long part as a prelude to his poem in order to fill up the time until receiving the first part of his rival's *naqīḍa*.

C. A verse by al-Farazdaq may show that both poets used to meet during the recitation process. In his ʿ*ayniyya*, al-Farazdaq asks Jarīr to see whether he can find for himself gracious and noble fathers such as those of al-Farazdaq in order to praise them "once they are gathered in the *majāmiʿ* or the places of assembly." The verse reads [NJF 66:8]:

(*ṭawīl*)

ulāʾika ābāʾī fa-jiʾnī bi-mithlihim

   idhā jamaʿatnā yā jarīru l-majāmiʿu

Those are my fathers; bring me, O Jarīr, [fathers] like them

   once the places of assembly gather us together

The verse clearly shows that they used to meet at the same place to recite their *naqīḍa*s. However, it is not clear whether the second poet used to recite his poem in the same place immediately after the first poet finished. If this were the case not all the verses of the two *naqīḍa*s could have been were composed and prepared before the recitation, since at least the second poet, the refuter, must have had to hear his rival's poem first in order to see which meter and rhyme he should use. This verse may support the account regarding the oral (previously unprepared) composition of the second *naqīḍa* at least.[55]

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[55]The conclusion derived from this verse may be totally different if the second

D. In addition to the above-mentioned account, a *naqīḍa* by Jarīr may also show that some of the composition process took place orally (without any previous preparation). This is poem no. 48 (*lāmiyya* in *kāmil*) in which Jarīr begins eight of its verses with a repetition of the same phrase in which he calls to the Ḍabba clan, the relatives of al-Farazdaq who are denounced in the poem (*yā Ḍabba*; i.e., O Ḍabba!) [NJF 48:59–66]. In his article on Arabic elegiac poetry, Goldziher discusses a similar phenomenon: the repetition of words and people's names in Arabic elegiac poetry. He refers such a phenomenon to the primitive wailing-calls (*niyāḥa*) made by old pre-Islamic lamenters when mourning their dead kinsmen. These primitive calls, which were prose rhymed (*masjūʿ*), were composed orally and without any preparation, and included the repetition of some words such as the call that is addressed to the deceased. Later, some elegiac poems preserved such repetitions, some of which were clearly noticeable; others were less conspicuous, being more sophisticated and composed in such a way that they were hidden within the poem. Although he does not mention this, one can assume in the light of what he says that the elegy poems with clear repetitions were also composed orally, or at least without much previous artistic preparation. Goldziher also discusses *hijāʾ* poetry in his article and assumes that the repetition of the phrases directed at the ridiculed person may be a phenomenon parallel to that of repetition in elegy poetry. Although Goldziher does not mention this, these primitive denunciations may have also been orally composed. Moreover, later poems that included clear repetitions of some words, phrases, or even exclamations directed against the ridiculed persons, were probably composed orally.[56] If we accept Monroe's theory on the oral composition of pre-Islamic poetry, and if we consider the recurrent and repeated words and phrases to be formulae — to use the same concept mentioned in this theory — this may indicate that the *hijāʾ* poems that include such repetition were really orally composed. Accordingly, Jarīr's *naqīḍa* may have been composed orally in its entirety.[57]

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poet did not recite his counter-poem immediately. In this case, one may assume that the second poet takes some time, perhaps a night or more, in order to compose his counter-poem and only after that presents it to the audience. Here, the verse may show that the two poems were composed and prepared some time before their recitation.

[56]Goldziher, "Bemerkungen," pp. 307–320, cf. p. 314. His theory about the development of the *hijāʾ* is detailed also in the first chapter, titled as "Über die Vorgeschichte der Hiǧāʾ-Poesie," in his book *Abhandlungen*, pp. 1–121. About this theory, see Pellat, "Hidjāʾ," *EI*[2], s.v. Van Gelder also discusses this theory, as well as a contradictory theory suggested by Edouard Fars. See *The bad*, pp. 4–7.

[57]See Monroe, "Oral," pp. 1–53. See also the Arabic translation of his article Monroe, *al-Naẓm*, cf. pp. 18–35. Monroe adapts the theories of Milman Parry and

The analysis presented in §§1.2 1.3 shows that each of the four ways presented in §1.2.4 were used by Jarīr and al-Farazdaq in composing, reciting, and presenting their *naqīḍa*s. However, this analysis supports ways nos. 1 and 2 more than ways 3 and 4. Both poets usually used to prepare their *naqīḍa*s in advance, and presented them more than once.

1.3 The *naqā'iḍ* during the *mawāsim*

During this prosperous stage, in addition to al-Mirbad in al-Baṣra, both poets seem to have presented their *naqā'iḍ* once a year in the Arabian Peninsula. Both poets mention several times the word *mawāsim* (pl. of *mawsim*) [51: 99; 52: 29; 76:3; 106: 18]:[58] the annual markets in Arabia. Some were held during the pilgrimage period. Ever since the pre-Islamic period, poets used to visit these *mawāsim* in order to present their poetry.[59] It seems that al-Farazdaq and Jarīr used to visit these *mawāsim* as well. Al-Farazdaq mentions in one of his poems that he is the well-known representative (*rāḥil*, lit. a traveler; other variations *wāfid*, i.e. a visitor and *shā'ir*, i.e. a poet) of the Tamīm tribe to these *mawāsim* [NJF 51:99]. Jarīr, in another poem, mentions that al-Farazdaq is shamed and disgraced in the *mawāsim* every year [NJF 106:18]. This indicates that, in addition to al-Mirbad, both poets used to visit the *mawāsim* once a year in order to recite their *naqīḍa*s. It seems that they used to visit the *mawāsim* together because, in a certain *lāmiyya*, al-Farazdaq asks Jarīr to meet him in 'Ukāẓ, the famous market which was held southeast of Mecca, shortly before the start of the pilgrimage,[60] in order to compete. Here, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq used either to present some of their *naqīḍa*s which they had previously recited in al-Mirbad, or they may also have recited new poems.

A.B. Lord on the oral composition in literatures other than Arabic. Other later studies, in addition to Monroe's study on Arabic poetry, especially the old poetry, do exist. See the translator's introduction p. 6.

[58]The two poets use this word in another sense — a branding iron, see [NJF 48:60; 53:76; 71:3; 95:60]. In addition, a certain account shows that al-Farazdaq used to attend the *mawāsim*, see n. L in Abū 'Ubayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 1, p. 342. Another account mentioned by Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī shows that Jarīr used to attend the *mawāsim* every year, and there he used to appear to his audience in new clothes. Sometimes he would wear, for the first time, the clothes that the caliph gave him as a gift, see *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 7, pp. 43–44.

[59]See al-Afghānī, *Aswāq*, pp. 193–229. About the *mawāsim*, see also Wensinck and Bosworth, "Mawāsim," vol. 6, p. 903. In the Umayyad era, poets such as 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a used to attend the pilgrimage *mawāsim* in Mecca annually; see an account in al-Shayzarī, *Rawḍat al-qulūb*, p. 24.

[60]Shahīd, "'Ukāẓ," vol. 10, p. 789. About this market see also al-Afghānī, *Aswāq*, pp. 277–343.

1.4 The *naqā'iḍ* in the patron's court

It is worth mentioning that both Jarīr and al-Farazdaq composed some poems in which a certain patron, a caliph or a governor, is praised. There were seven such poems. Poem no. 104 by Jarīr does not have a counter-poem, and therefore it is doubtful whether it can be considered a *naqīḍa*. The other six poems are as follows: a poem by al-Farazdaq including praise of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (re. 65–86/685–705) [NJF 61]; another one including praise of Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik (re. 96–99/715–717) [NJF 51]; and a third poem in which he praises Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (re. 105–125/724–743) [NJF 105]. In his *naqā'iḍ* poetry, Jarīr does not praise Caliphs, but he has a *naqīḍa* in which he praises al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (re. 75–95/694–714) [NJF 55]. All these four *naqīḍa*s have one common denominator: their counter-poems do not include any praise of a patron. If it had been recited in the presence of its subject, one would assume that the counter-*naqīḍa* would include some verses in praise of the same person. However, only two counter-*naqīḍa*s, nos. 102–103, mention the same patron, Khālid b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī, the governor of Iraq during Hishām's Caliphate.[61]

   In two of the six *naqīḍa*s, praise plays a very marginal role. Historically speaking, these two *naqīḍa*s are the oldest: poem no. 55 by Jarīr in which al-Ḥajjāj is praised and no. 61 by al-Farazdaq in which ʿAbd al-Malik is praised. According to Bevan, the poem by Jarīr was composed soon after the appointment of al-Ḥajjāj as governor of Iraq.[62] Praise does not take up many of the verses. Only 5 out of the 44 verses [NJF 55:39–43] in Jarīr's poem contain praise, as do only two ([NJF 61:32–33]) in al-Farazdaq's poem. The assumption that these poems were supposed to be recited in the presence of the subject does not make much sense.

   Two explanations may be given for the inclusion of praise verses in Jarīr's *naqīḍa*. The first is that the original version did not include praise, but that Jarīr added it at a later stage. Perhaps the governor asked him to recite the *naqīḍa* in his presence, and therefore he added a few praise verses in order to please him. The second is that the praise was included in the first version of the *naqīḍa*, but that it was not presented in the presence of al-Ḥajjāj. Since Bevan dates the composition of this poem to soon after al-Ḥajjāj's appointment as governor, the praise may be considered as an attempt to forge a relationship with the new governor. By inserting some praise verses into his *naqīḍa*, the governor, who might

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[61]See Hawting, "Khālid b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḳasrī," *EI*², s.v.
[62]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, English introduction, vol. 1, p. xviii.

have heard the poem, might have invited him to his court in al-Baṣra.[63]

According to Abū 'Ubayda's account, al-Faraqzdaq composed the above-mentioned poem about 'Abd al-Malik in Medina because of the incitement of one of the inhabitants (§1.3.1 [B]). This makes it clear that the poem was not first presented in Damascus, the city of the caliph's court. This makes it more difficult to understand why al-Farazdaq decided to praise the caliph if he did not present his poem in his court. Three explanations are suggested. The first is that, as in the case of Jarīr's poem, the praise verses in al-Farazdaq's poem were added later on, and were not part of the original version of the poem. It is possible that al-Farazdaq later re-presented the poem in the caliph's court, and therefore decided to add some verses praising him. This explanation is less likely, since the praise verses, unlike those in Jarīr's previous *naqīḍa*, are in the middle of the poem rather than at its end. According to the second explanation, it is quite possible that 'Abd al-Malik was visiting Medina at the time. It is possible that al-Farazdaq either travelled especially to Medina to meet the caliph, or was there for some other purpose, heard about the caliph's arrival and therefore composed this poem. As shown previously, it was not recited in the caliph's presence but in the mosque itself. Here too, it is possible that the praise verses were intended to secure an invitation to the caliph's court.

A comparison between this *naqīḍa* and Ḥassān b. Thābit's poem supports a more plausible explanation; the latter is said to be the impetus for this composition by al-Farazdaq. As mentioned above, al-Farazdaq wanted to compose a poem which would surpass that of Ḥassān. It was shown that al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* included five main parts dealing with a love affair, praise of 'Abd al-Malik, praise of the tribe, denunciation of Jarīr and his tribe, and lastly praise of the Sa'd tribe. It is worth noting that Ḥassān's poem included only three parts that are to some degree analogous to the first three parts in al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa*. He starts his poem with verses about a sad love affair [vv. 1–16a], then praises himself and one of his drinking companions [16b–19], and lastly praises his tribe [20–36].[64]

In the second part of the poem, Ḥassān dedicates two verses to praising his drinking companion. Since al-Farazdaq's aim was to compose a better poem, it is likely that instead of praising the drinking companion, he decided to praise the more glorious caliph.

The third *naqīḍa* in praise of Sulaymān [NJF 51] includes more praise

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[63]Zakariyau Oseni analyzes the praise verses of this poem in his "Further light," pp. 58–61. The author mentions that these verses attempt unsuccessfully to justify the destruction of the Ka'ba by al-Ḥajjāj. The author does not analyze the relationship between the praise verses and the other parts in this poem.

[64]The poem is in Ḥassān b. Thābit, *Dīwān*, vol. 1, pp. 34–39.

verses. There are 34 which combine praise for the caliph with a descrip-
tion of the poet's camel and his journey to his patron [NJF 51:9–42,
including some in which al-Ḥajjāj is denounceed]. According to Bevan,
this poem was composed around 96/714–715.[65] However, there is one
problem here. On one hand, al-Farazdaq mentions that he undertook a
dangerous journey to reach the caliph, and on the other, he alludes to
the fact that he was not in Damascus but in Medina when composing or
presenting the poem [NJF 51:1, 43]. There are several ways to reconcile
these contradictory statements. First, it is possible that al-Farazdaq did
not travel to the caliph nor did he meet him. The journey mentioned
in the poem should not be understood as a real journey but may be the
preservation of a common structure of the traditional Arab panegyrical
poem in which the camel-section plays an important role. Another way
to interpret this contradiction is to assume that Sulaymān was in Medina
and that al-Farazdaq visited the city in order to meet him. Al-Faradaq
mentions that his trip was in the direction of *wādī l-qurā* [NJF 51:15]
which is about four or five days journey from Medina.[66] This may sup-
port the assumption that the caliph was visiting the city. Jarīr in his
counter-*naqīḍa* addresses the citizens of Medina [NJF 52:16], which may
indicate that he was also there at the time.[67] However, if al-Farazdaq
really met the caliph there and recited his poem in his presence, then
this may show that the counter-poem by Jarīr was not presented at the
same place, since it does not include any praise for Sulaymān.

A review of the two *naqīḍa*s reveals that al-Farazdaq's poem can be
divided into four main parts. The first is the love affair at the beginning
[NJF 51:1–8], then comes the praise of Sulaymān [NJF 51:9–42], and
boasting about the assassination of Qutayba b. Muslim, the governor of
Khurāsān who rebelled against the Umayyad caliph [NJF 51:43–83]. The
poem ends with a detailed denunciation of Jarīr and the clans that he
supports [NJF 51:84–155]. In this last part, al-Farazdaq refers to some
motifs mentioned in the counter-*naqīḍa* of Jarīr which was written after
the composition of al-Farazdaq's poem. This leads to the conclusion that
the al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* was composed in two stages. The first includes
the first three parts of the poem, while the second includes the verses
against Jarīr. This shows that the original version of the poem did not
mention Jarīr at all and was not intended to be a *naqīḍa*. Nevertheless,
after composing the short version of his poem, Jarīr decided to refute
many motifs that appeared in that of his rival, especially the denuncia-

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[65]Abū 'Ubayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, English introduction, vol. 1, p. xviii.
[66]Lecker, "Wādī 'l-Ḳurā," *EI²*, s.v.
[67]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī relates an account of a visit of Jarīr to Medina; it is
not known whether or not this visit is connected with the present *naqīḍa*; see Abū
al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 1, p. 113.

tion of the Qays tribe. This led al-Farazdaq to compose the last part of
his poem. The first three parts of al-Farazdaq's poem includes 84 verses,
the same number of verses in Jarīr's. This may support the idea that
the first version of al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* included these three parts only.

The *naqīḍa* which contains indisputable proof that it was presented in
the presence of the patron is poem no. 105 in which Hishām is praised.
It is clear that it was composed at a later stage of al-Farazdaq's life.
Al-Farazdaq mentions that he made his trip to al-Ruṣāfa, apparently
Ruṣāfat Hishām in Syria, to meet the caliph who was visiting the city
[NJF 105: 48, 72–75].[68] The praise, including a description of the camel
and the dangerous journey, takes up 43 out of the 84 verses of the *naqīḍa*
[NJF 105:38–80]. The denunciation of Jarīr makes up only four verses
and is at the end of the poem [NJF 105:81–84]. Jarīr, in his counter-
poem no. 106, does not mention any praise of the caliph; rather, he
dedicates most of it to denouncing al-Farazdaq and his kinsfolk. It seems
that the two *naqīḍa*s were not recited either in the same place or at the
same time. Rather, it seems that after al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa* was recited,
Jarīr composed his *naqīḍa* in refutation since the denunciation in al-
Farazdaq's poem is very short in comparison with the praise included
in it. It is likely, as in the case of *naqīḍa* no. 51, that al-Farazdaq also
had not intended to compose a *naqīḍa*. Jarīr, after hearing the poem,
decided to compose a counter-poem attacking al-Farazdaq. It is possible
that the four verses at the end of al-Farazdaq's poem, in which Jarīr is
denounced, may have been added after Jarīr had composed his *naqīḍa*
and that they may be understood as a refutation.[69]

As mentioned above, only two counter-*naqīḍa*s contain praise — in
this case, of Khālid al-Qasrī. The two poems, nos. 102–103, refer to the
same period as that about Hishām and were supposedly composed at a
late stage of the two poets' lives. These two *naqīḍa*s were not composed
at the same time or recited in the patron's court. Al-Farazdaq's *naqīḍa*
was composed in jail, where he was sent because of his hostility towards
Khālid,[70] and the praise is merely an attempt to convince the governor to
free him. The praise in Jarīr's counter-*naqīḍa* has the same aim — to free
al-Farazdaq. Both *naqīḍa*s end with invective verses. In al-Farazdaq's,
the invective is directed at a person who steals al-Farazdaq's verses [NJF
102:20–22], but the name of this person is not revealed. Since Jarīr's

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[68]Hishām used to spend at least the summer there; see Haase, "Al-Ruṣāfa," *EI*[2],
s.v.

[69]Nuʿmān Ṭāha and Shākir al-Faḥḥām allude very briefly to the possibility that al-
Farazdaq's poem was composed in two stages, but they do not explain their statement.
See Ṭāha, *Jarīr*, p. 290.

[70]About this hostility, see the account in Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 2,
pp. 984–985.

poem is the only one we know in Abū ʿUbayda's book to be connected
to that of al-Farazdaq's, it may be that the poet who stole al-Farazdaq's
verses is Jarīr himself. Al-Farazdaq may have alluded to Jarīr's counter-
poem. Stealing here does not refer to verses, but perhaps to plagiarizing
themes. It was mentioned above that Jarīr's poem includes praise of
the same person, and that it had the same aim, which was to free al-
Farazdaq. It seems that al-Farazdaq rejects Jarīr's help, and instead of
thanking he accuses him of stealing his poetry. This means that the
denunciation in al-Farazdaq's poem may have been added after Jarīr's
poem was composed. At the end of Jarīr's poem, there are some verses
denouncing al-Farazdaq and praising the Yarbūʿ clan [NJF 103:45–51].
Here too, it is hard to understand how Jarīr can denounce the same
person whom he attempts to free from jail. If we read the final verses
of this poem in the light of our interpretation of the final verses of al-
Farazdaq's poem, we conclude that the denunciation verses in Jarīr's
poem were added at a later stage, after he knew about the final verses
of his opponent's *naqīḍa*.

To sum up, the *naqīḍa*s in which a patron is praised seem to have
been composed in more than one stage. In the first version, the praise
might have been absent and was added only later, apparently, after the
poet visited his patron's court. It seems that the *naqāʾiḍ* poets used to
recite for the caliph or the governor previously composed poems; they
then used to add some praise to their poems. It is also possible that
the laudatory verses were included at the beginning of the poem, and
invective verses were added at a later stage, thus turning it into a *naqīḍa*
rather than a pure ode of praise. In both cases, it has been shown that
the two poets did not meet in the patron's court during the recitation
of the laudatory verses.[71] Depending on an analysis of an account in
Kitāb al-aghānī, van Gelder concludes that ʿAbd al-Malik prevented the
naqāʾiḍ poets from presenting their *naqīḍa*s — or more accurately, from
presenting the invective verses that each poet wrote against the other —
in his presence, but they were allowed to do so outside the court.[72] This
supports the conclusion put forward in this article.

Al-Kafrāwī discusses the praise in the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry of Jarīr and
al-Farazdaq and concludes that its main aim was the praise itself. How-

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[71]Some accounts in other books, rather than Abū ʿUbayda's, include accounts
about the meeting of the three, or at least two, of these poets: Jarīr, al-Farazdaq and
al-Akhṭal in the caliph's court, but they are not said to have recited their *naqīḍa*s
there. See for example Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol.19, p. 7; Ibn
Rashīq al-Qayrawānī, *al-ʿUmda*, vol. 1, p. 44; al-Suyūṭī, *Sharḥ*, p. 17.

[72]Van Gelder, *The Bad*, pp. 30–31. It is interesting that al-Faḥḥām depends on an
account in which the governor of al-Kūfa prevents Jarīr and al-Farazdaq from reciting
invective poetry against each other in order to conclude that the governor used to
allow them to recite their *naqīḍa*s in his presence. See *al-Farazdaq*, p. 304.

ever, in order to amuse the patron, the poet also included invective verses against his rival.[73] The discussion presented above would seem to invalidate this idea. A similar explanation for the same phenomenon is suggested by Iḥsān al-Nuṣṣ, according to which the poets desired to demonstrate their skill in composing invective verses, and therefore added them to their panegyrics when performing before their patron. This assumes that the main aim of this kind of *naqīḍa*s was the praise itself, but in most of them this was not the case. Even in the poems for which it was suggested that they first included the praise, the invective verses do not seem to have been added or recited in the presence of the patron but only later. Al-Nuṣṣ mentions another explanation for the same phenomenon — the praise was added to the *naqīḍa* to induce the patron to bestow a gift upon the poet. This explanation sounds more reasonable than the first.[74]

1.5 An attempt at reconciliation

In one of his *naqīḍa*s, Jarīr relates that al-Farazdaq made an attempt to be reconciled with him. Jarīr tells him that such a request is not worthwhile since he has already ruined him. Such a declaration constitutes a rejection [NJF 50:9]:

> [*kāmil*]
>
> *tarjū l-hawādata yā farazdaqu baʿda mā*
>> *aṭfaʾta nāraka wa-ṣ-ṭalayta bi-nārī*
>
> You wish the reconciliation (the indulgence, the forbearance),
>> O Farazdaq, after
>
>> you have extinguished your fire and after you are burnt
>> with my fire

In another poem by al-Farazdaq, he mentions that Jarīr asked him for a reconciliation [NJF 63:29]:

> [*ṭawīl*]
>
> *wa-arsala yarjū bnu l-marāghati ṣulḥanā*
>> *fa-rudda wa-lam tarjiʿ bi-nujḥin rasāʾiluh*
>
> The son of the prostitute sent (a message) that he wishes to
>> reconcile with us,

---

[73]Al-Kafrāwī, *Jarīr*, p. 105.
[74]Al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, p. 424.

But he was sent back (or: he was rejected). His messages
were not successful

It is not known whether these declarations by the poets should be
considered as true or whether they were only a fabrication designed to
expose the weakness of the poet's rival. The poem of al-Farazdaq has
been discussed above (§1.3.2,A–B), and it has been shown that it was
composed around 67/687. If the declaration made in this poem is true,
we may conclude that Jarīr desired to reconcile with al-Farazdaq very
shortly after he engaged with him in the *naqāʾiḍ* contest.

1.6 Other poets in the *naqāʾiḍ* contest

Several statements in Abū ʿUbayda's book, both prose accounts and
poetic verses, show that while he was in al-Baṣra, Jarīr engaged in a
naqāʾiḍ contest with other poets. Unfortunately, Abū ʿUbayda did not
collect any of the *naqīḍa*s composed by these poets. Thanks to the efforts
of Abū Tammām al-Ṭāʾī (d. 231/845), born about 19 years before the
death of Abū ʿUbayda, the *naqāʾiḍ* of Jarīr and one of these poets, al-
Akhṭal (d. before 92/710), were collected in a book.[75]

Abū ʿUbayda briefly recounts the circumstances which brought about
al-Akhṭal's participation in this contest. Al-Akhṭal makes a visit to
the governor of al-Kūfa, Bishr b. Marwān, son of the Umayyad caliph
Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, who ruled al-Kūfa between the years 72/691–692
and 74/693–694.[76] There he meets a Mujāshiʿī named Muḥammad b.
ʿUmayr b. ʿUṭārid b. Zurāra (d. 85/705), who was one of the nobles
of al-Kūfa. The latter demands that al-Akhṭal show preference for al-
Farazdaq whenever asked about him and Jarīr by the governor. He does
so, declaring that al-Farazdaq is the best of the Arab poets (*ammā l-
Farazdaqu fa-ashʿaru l-ʿarab*).[77] Abū ʿUbayda mentions a poem in which
al-Farazdaq praises this statement [NJF 94]. Jarīr in his turn com-
poses a counter-poem in which he denounces al-Farazdaq, Muḥammad

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[75]See Abū Tammām, *Naqāʾiḍ*. Abū Tammām was born, according to Ritter, in
188/804 or 190/806; see Ritter, "Abū Tammām," *EI*[2], s.v. Anṭūn Ṣāliḥānī al-Yasūʿī
argues that the *naqīḍa*s found in this compilation were poems found in the *dīwān*s of
the two poets; Abū Tammām collected these poems in one compilation; see al-Yasūʿī,
"Naqāʾiḍ," pp. 97–98, 105–107. Some modern scholars even doubt the fact that this
compilation was made by Abū Tammām; see al-Muḥtasib, *Naqāʾiḍ*, pp. 17–19. Nadīm
(d. 385/995) mentions other *naqāʾiḍ* books such as those by Jarīr and al-Akhṭal, and
Jarīr and ʿUmar b. Lajaʾ which have not survived. See his *Kitāb al-fihrist*, pp. 114,
119, 166, 167.
[76]Vaglieri, "Bishr b. Marwān," *EI*[2], s.v.
[77]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 2, pp. 879–880.

b. ʿUmayr and al-Akhṭal [NJF 95]. Apparently, the two poems are the first to be composed after this incident. Abū Tammām mentions the same account, and quotes the two poems mentioned by Abū ʿUbayda. But unlike Abū ʿUbayda, he states that Jarīr's poem was composed first, followed by that of al-Farazdaq who attempted to refute the poem of Jarīr. Abū Tammām adds a third *naqīḍa* by al-Akhṭal in which he denounces the Kulayb clan, praises the Dārim one, and mentions that the Kulayb clan incited him to engage in a poetic war against them. It is clear that this is a counter-poem to Jarīr's and the cause of al-Akhṭal's involvement in the contest.[78] However, other accounts about the reasons that led al-Akhṭal and Jarīr to engage in this *naqā'iḍ* contest appear in other classical sources, and have been studied in detail by some modern scholars.[79] The important issue for the present study is the time during which this poetic contest occurred. It has been shown that it was held between 72/691–692 and 74/693-694. Al-Nuṣṣ assumes that it may have occurred before 73/692–693 when the Bishr war between Qays and Taghlib took place, since Jarīr does not mention it in his first poem.[80] This shows that al-Akhṭal engaged in such a war, since it took place about six years after the engagement of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq and continued until the death of al-Akhṭal.

In Abū ʿUbayda's book there is no material concerning the composition, the transmission, and the recitation of the *naqā'iḍ* of both poets. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Muḥtasib drew conclusions based on other classical books and states that the two poets did not meet each other, but each composed his *naqīḍa* separately; the poems were then relayed to the poets by transmitters.[81] However, it is clear that the *naqā'iḍ* of al-Akhṭal did not include the immoral expressions that Jarīr and al-Farazdaq put into their *naqīḍa*s.[82]

In addition to al-Akhṭal, Abū ʿUbayda mentions a certain poetic contest between Jarīr and ʿUmar b. Laja'. This was caused by verses

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[78]See poems nos. LII–LIV in Abū Tammām, *Naqā'iḍ*, pp. 197–225. Iḥsān al-Nuṣṣ discusses the three *naqīḍa*s and states that Jarīr's poem was composed first, then he mentions that it is difficult to tell exactly which of the two other *naqīḍa*s was composed first. See his article "Namūdhaj," pp. 36–37.

[79]See for example Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 452–453; Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 7, p. 41; Ḍayf, *al-Taṭawwur*, pp. 166–167. Ḍayf also mentions a political reason for the *naqā'iḍ* contest between the two poets. See also al-Muḥtasib, *Naqā'iḍ*, pp. 92–123; al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, pp. 456–458; *idem*, "Namūdhaj," pp. 28–31; Smoor, "Al-Farazdaq's reception", pp. 115–116; Muḥammad, *Shiʿr*, p. 164.

[80]Al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, pp. 454–455; *idem*, "Namūdhaj," p. 32. Qabāwa mentions the year 71/690–691 to be a possible year of the beginning of the *naqā'iḍ* contest between the two poets. See *al-Akhṭal*, p. 95. Al-Nuṣṣ's is more well-founded.

[81]See his book *Naqā'iḍ*, p. 84.

[82]Fariq, "Umayyad poetry," p. 260.

which each poet claimed to be his own. This rivalry led each of them to
seek shortcomings in his adversary's poetry in order to show that he was
a less skillful poet. This in turn leads them to compose some *naqīḍa*s
against each other. Abū ʿUbayda quotes only some excerpts in which
ʿUmar denounces Jarīr and prefers al-Farazdaq, but he does not mention
the *naqīḍa*s of Jarīr against him. Abū ʿUbayda alludes to the fact that
the two poets once met in order to appoint a certain person to judge
whose poetry was better. Unfortunately, no material in Abū ʿUbayda's
book can shed any further light on the *naqāʾiḍ* between both poets.[83]

Jarīr in one of his *naqīḍa*s mentions that he killed nine poets and
overcame another forty [NJF 101:29–32]. Abū ʿUbayda does not mention
any *naqīḍa*s composed by these poets, nor does he provide material about
the reasons for their engagement in the *naqāʾiḍ* against Jarīr.[84]

The reason that Abū ʿUbayda does not shed sufficient light on the
naqāʾiḍ of Jarīr and the other poets, including al-Akhṭal and ʿUmar,
may be the limited goal he wanted to achieve in his book: to assemble
only the *naqāʾiḍ* and the related prose accounts. Any other material
would not be relevant to this purpose.

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[83]Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 1, pp. 487–491. Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī
mentions another reason for the composition of the *naqāʾiḍ* between the two poets;
it was a certain verse composed by Jarīr and changed by ʿUmar once he transmitted
it. The change badly affected the meaning of the verse. However, the author adds
that both poets used to meet in al-Mirbad in order to recite their *naqīḍa*s; see *Kitāb
al-aghānī*, vol. 7, pp. 41–42; vol. 19, p. 22. Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī, who gives the
same reason as Abū ʿUbayda, mentions an account which indicated that none of the
poets were in al-Mirbad while reciting their poems but received each other's *naqīḍa*
via transmitters; see al-Jumaḥī, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 423–435, the account is on p.
434. About the contest between the two poets see Ḥāwī, *Fann*, pp. 304–318; al-Nuṣṣ,
al-ʿAṣabiyya, pp. 489–493. Ḥāwī mentions three different years in which the contest
between Jarīr and ʿUmar could have occurred, and suggests the second one; those
years are: 75/694–695; 93/711–712; and 105/723–724.

[84]Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī mentions that they are 43 poets, see *Kitāb al-aghānī*,
vol. 7, p. 37. In addition to those mentioned by Abū ʿUbayda, he mentions other
poets, among them Surāqa b. Mirdās al-Bāriqī (d. 79/698), al-Marrār b. Munqidh (no
date of death is given), and al-Ashhab b. Rumayla al-Nahshalī (d. 86/705); see vol.
7, pp. 42–44. Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī mentions Surāqa and ʿAdī b. al-Riqāʿ al-ʿĀmilī
(d. 95/714); see *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 383–385, 440–444; regarding Jarīr's contest with
Surāqa, Ibn Sallām mentions that it occurred without the two poets meeting, vol.
2, pp. 383–385; 443–444. On these contests, see al-Nuṣṣ, *al-ʿAṣabiyya*, pp. 446–448.
Regarding ʿAdī, Sezgin mentions that the contest between him and Jarīr occurred
during the reign of al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (86–96/705–715); see *GAS*, vol. 2, p.
356. As for the number of the poets, al-ʿAbbāsī (d. 963/1556), mentions an account
in which Jarīr confesses that he competed against 80 poets. See *Maʿāhid*, vol. 1, pp.
266–267.

II
The decline of *naqā'iḍ*

At the end of the *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, Abū ʿUbayda mentions two accounts in which al-Farazdaq is presented as an inhabitant of al-Baṣra; according to one of these accounts, Jarīr lived in the city of Ḥajr in al-Yamāma. The two accounts refer to a very late stage of the lives of both poets.

In the first account, Jarīr meets a certain old man (*shaykh*) who is traveling to al-Baṣra. The poet, who knows that his rival al-Farazdaq had recently married a woman called Ẓabya, composes three verses and asks the *shaykh* to deliver them to al-Farazdaq. The verses describe al-Farazdaq as a *shaykh* who is unable to have intercourse with his new wife. Al-Farazdaq, after receiving these verses, composes two counter-verses which have the same meter and rhyme, and asks the old traveller to bring them to Jarīr. In these verses, al-Farazdaq denies Jarīr's claims and he begs him to ask his mother, with whom he slept, about how well he managed during intercourse.[85]

Although the first account does not explicitly say that Jarīr was in al-Yamāma, one should assume that he was there since Jarīr's verses present al-Farazdaq as a very old man; this means that Jarīr was also very old. The following account shows that at the end of his life, Jarīr lived in his homeland in al-Yamāma.

This first account shows that in the last stage of the *naqā'iḍ*, the two poets were separated. As with the *naqā'iḍ* of Jarīr and al-Baʿīth,[86] each poet was in a different place: one was in al-Yamāma, the other in Iraq. It seems that in this case, the *naqīḍa*s were composed orally during a short process and without previous preparation The transmission of the *naqīḍa*s was made very simply. Any traveller — not necessarily a professional *rāwī* — could be asked by the two poets to deliver their *naqīḍa*s.

The second account presents Jarīr sitting in the yard of his house in the city of Ḥajr. He meets a traveller from Iraq who informs him about al-Farazdaq's death. At first, Jarīr composes a verse in which he expressed his wish that al-Farazdaq were still living so that he could continue to be humiliated by his destructive *naqīḍa*s. Then he starts crying and composes several verses in which he laments al-Farazdaq. Abū ʿUbayda mentions three fragments, the longest being a poem consisting of 14 verses. It is not known whether all of these fragments were composed immediately after he heard of al-Farazdaq's death.[87]

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[85] Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 2, p. 1045.

[86] See Hussein, "The *naqā'iḍ*," §2.

[87] Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqā'iḍ*, vol. 2, pp. 1045–1047. In *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol.

This account supports the view that Jarīr decided at a late stage of his life to return to his original home, al-Yamāma. Although it does not present any *naqīḍa*s, it may shed light on the composition process during this late period, showing that some of the poems were composed orally, on the spot and without any preparation.[88]

It is not known whether after this stage the poets composed longer *naqīḍa*s than the two excerpts mentioned above, nor whether some of the long *naqīḍa*s mentioned in Abū ʿUbayda's book refer to this ecliptic stage of the composition of the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry. It is possible that the two *naqīḍa*s nos. 105–106, which were discussed in §1.4, the *naqīḍa* in which al-Farazdaq praises Hishām and its counter-*naqīḍa* by Jarīr, may have been composed during this stage. The reason for this conclusion is that the two poems were composed when both poets were very old.[89] If this is true, then one may date the final stage of *naqāʾiḍ* composition to around 105/724, the year in which Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik was appointed as caliph.

III
Conclusion

Many aspects concerning the *naqāʾiḍ* poetry still need greater clarification. An analysis of the material found in Abū ʿUbayda's book has made it possible to reach certain conclusions regarding the synchronic history

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7, p. 72, Jarīr is said to be in the court of al-Muhājir b. ʿAbd Allāh, the governor of al-Yamāma. The same author mentions another account in which Jarīr was found in the yard of his house; see *ibid.*, vol. 19, pp. 45–46. Al-ʿAbbāsī also mentions that Jarīr was in al-Muhājir's court; see *Maʿāhid*, vol. 1, p. 268.

[88]There is a third account according to which a certain transmitter brings a *naqīḍa* to al-Farazdaq from Jarīr. It seems that this incident also occurred in this stage of the *naqāʾiḍ* contest between both poets. See Abū ʿUbayda, *Kitāb al-naqāʾiḍ*, vol. 2, p. 1047. A fourth account is mentioned by Ibn Qutayba al-Dīnawarī (d. 276/889) and Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī: they present Jarīr as being in al-Yamāma and al-Farazdaq in al-Mirbad. Al-Farazdaq, in the account of Abū al-Faraj, says that Jarīr returned to al-Yamāma after they had almost finished composing *naqāʾiḍ* poetry against each other. This may show that the *naqāʾiḍ* at this stage were few and they may have been composed very rarely. A certain person delivers to al-Farazdaq the last poem which Jarīr composed in al-Yamāma, but it seems that this was not a *naqīḍa*; see Ibn Qutayba al-Dīnawarī, *al-Shiʿr*, pp. 312–313; Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 7, pp. 47–48.

[89]Al-Qālī (356/967) and Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) mention that the two poets went together to al-Ruṣāfa in order to meet Hishām; see al-Qālī, *Kitāb al-amālī*, vol. 2, p. 233; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, vol. 3, pp. 151, 160–161. This account is very doubtful; for Jarīr's *naqīḍa* does not include any praise of that patron.

of this poetic output during its rise and decline, and regarding the ways the *naqā'iḍ* used to be composed, presented and transmitted.

However, such a study alone is cannot support definite conclusions regarding these aspects. There is, therefore, a serious need for three further studies. The first is an analysis of the material found in other classical works, including the accounts found in the *dīwān* of Jarīr; there are many similar works.[90] Another is a study based on the second compilation of the *naqā'iḍ* poetry made by Abū Tammām al-Ṭā'ī, namely his book *Naqā'iḍ Jarīr wa-'l-Akhṭal*. In his study, ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Muḥtasib discusses in detail the contents and stylistics of the *naqā'iḍ* poetry in Abū Tammām's compilation, in addition to the historical, social, cultural and economic reasons that led Jarīr and al-Akhṭal to compose *naqīḍa*s against each other. The author also discusses some facts about the transmission, presentation and composition of the *naqā'iḍ* composed by the two poets. However, despite this important study, the fact remains that the composition, presentation and transmission of the *naqā'iḍ*, are discussed merely with reference to the prose accounts. The study lacks an examination of these aspects through a textual, and mainly a structural, analysis of the *naqīḍa*s mentioned in this compilation. Such an analysis would complete al-Muḥtasib's study and may shed more light on these issues.

As for the third study, it concerns the additional *naqīḍa*s that were found in the *dīwān*s of Jarīr, al-Farazdaq and al-Akhṭal, but that do not exist in the two aforementioned *naqā'iḍ* compilations.[91] These three proposed studies, in addition to the two articles written by the present author, will reveal many facts about *naqā'iḍ* poetry that still remain ambiguous.

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[90]Yaḥyā Shāmī collected some of these accounts from 11 classical sources; see *al-Muthallath*.

[91]There are such *naqīḍa*s; see al-Muḥtasib, *Naqā'iḍ*, pp. 15–16; al-Faḥḥām, *al-Farazdaq*, p. 284.

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