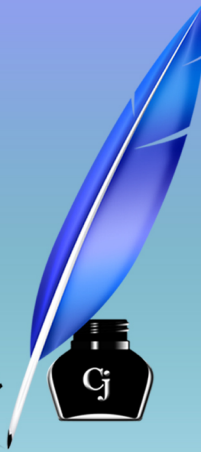


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Al-Bunood Al-Iraqia: The Iraqi Bands as a New Trend in Arabic Poetry

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Introduction

The researchers discuss in this Article a literary art that was first found in Iraq and some areas in the Arab Gulf states at the beginnings of 17th century till the 20th century. It was called " The Iraqi *Band*. However, it did not spread in the Arab countries as other literary arts such as Al- Mowshat, Al-Azjal, or the Rubaiyat the Quatrains. As a result it was only restricted to the state in which it found. This caused weakness and lack of popularity in this art. The reasons of this weak spread will be discussed in this research.

What is "Band" Linguistically?

Al- Band in language:

Ibn Mandhor said in his book " Al-lesan": Al- Band is the big flag, which is a Persian word introduced into Arabic. The poet says " As'yafona tah'ta al-bonodo as'sawa'eqo "Our swords are under the sparking flags". Prophet Mohammad said " an tagh'zo ar'room fa'taseer be thamaneen bandan . when you fight the Romans, you move with 80 flags". The plural form is " bonod". It is mentioned in the book " Al-mohkam" Every leader has a flag where 10 thousands men are led . Ah-Juhany says " Al- Band a'lamo al-forsan wa an'shad lelmofdhah/ Al- Band is the flag of knights "

(1)

Other meanings of Al- Band are the big flag, the lake, the section of a book, the tie or the trick. For example, a man with some bands means a tricky man (2)

Al- Band also means "the whole paragraph in law" as used by law men. (Ibrahim Anees & others, chapter, page71, 1986). It also means the verse in poetry which is constructed with other verses and repeated where it has a unique rhyme. (3)

Other meanings of Al-Band are connection, tightened construction and the ways to strengthen relations. However, the literary meaning went beyond the linguistic one as it is was used to mean the speech intended to praise someone where this speech is related to someone; this connection is called "Band". Therefore, it means the method or the way of connection. (4)

Historical Background of Al-Band

The first existence of Al- Band is unknown. Those who wrote about it didn't figure out its first start. Their writings do not show hints about who used it for the first time (5)

On the other hand, some researchers said that Al-Band was first existed in the Holy Qur'an as in the verse " wa Qur'anah far'raqnaho le taq'ra'aho ala an'nase ala makathin wa naz'zalnaho tanzeela ". The Holy Qur'an has a very glorious language in which many examples that match the rhymed verses " Buhur" as with the *Buhur* of Al-Khalil bin Ahmed. However, the presence of the Al- Band in recent times doesn't mean that this literary form was existent in the times of the Holy Qur'an or even before.(6)

What also refutes the assumption is that Al- Al- Band wasn't known at the time of the Holy Qur'an, is that the one verse of a poem is not considered poetry which requires that poetry should be at least of two verses.(7)

For some researchers, Al- Al- Band is a kind of idle talk and artificial prose mixed in specific feet with no rhyme or poetic verses in it. It can be described as a speech with musical tones that are produced smoothly and nicely.(8)

Others, say that the word Al- Band is of two means either brainteasers or a concept made by one of the lexicons authors.(9)

Some researchers said that Al- Band was quoted from the Persian literature because the word is originally Persian as there are some forms of Al-Band in Persian poetry; this is close in theme to the Muwashshah and it is part of Al- Band. (10)

Related to its Persian origin, The Persian literature included that Mohtashaman Al-kashani died in 1588 had seven Bands. The term " tarjee' band" was introduced into Arabic by Abed Alwahhab Azzam in the "Story of Literature in the World". In Turkish, Rohi Al-baghdadi was the first one who mentioned this term and its structure " tarkeeb band. In addition, the Othman Turkish constructed the form of Al- Band so it was found in Iraq and then moved into the Turkish countries.(11)

Some say that Al- Band was quoted by Ibn Ma'tooq from Persian literature since it was mentioned in the dictionary of " Scales of Dictionary Poetry". The orientalist Edward Granveel Brown didn't mention the word Al-Band as it was mentioned in the Iraqi Arabic poetry when he registered the Persian Buhur/verses of poetry. He just mentioned the terms " tarjee' & tarkeeb Band".(12)

These are two types of Muwashshah poems in which each one has a number of units that are equal in the number of its verses; and each one has one rhyme. Every unit in the verse is separated by a whole verse that shows the end of the preceding verse. If the same verse is repeated at the end of each unit, this type is called " tarjee' band", but if different verses are repeated with the same rhyme then it is called

tarkeeb Band". This structure must follow one system of rhythm in all of its verses. (13)

According to Azzawi, there is a relation between the origin of this word and this literary form. He says that the original meaning of Al- Band is the connection or connector which means having sentences that are connected with the same system until the end of the speech. It is noticeable that this word had come out due to the effect of the Persian style which is presented in many other cases in language as everything affects each other in both language, style, and literature. Iranians were influenced by Arabs and Arabs are influenced by some of Persian styles. For instance, Al-Band is the best example as the prose's nicest form and most artificial type. It actually pleases the listener with its nice rhythm and it is not less than. (14)

The Al- Band continued in the 14th Hijri century some of its poets as Saheb Thahab .Other contemporary poets are Dr, Mahdi Al-Makhzomi- Dr. Hussien Mahfoodh, and Mrs Deyaa' Shakarah. (15)

In general, it seems that Al- Band is an Iraqi literary form and it was not made by Persians as some people thought according to its origin. Al- Band means connection and the strong structure. This definition was known in the beginning of 17th century then spread in the Arab Gulf states for 4 centuries.

The oldest known example of Al- Band are 8 bands by Shaikh Hamzah Al-Baghdadi in which he praises God in the first one and ends with praising Prophet Mohammad. (16)

Some think that the oldest Bands are for " Ibn Ma'tooq Al-Mosawy" which talk about the Divine signs.(17)

Definition of Al- Band in Arabic Literature

Al- Band is an Arabic literature form. It is not a rhymed verse to be considered poetry nor is it free from both rhyme and poetic system to be considered prose. It can be described as being somewhat in the middle between prose and poetry that was developed as a developing trend in literature where time helped developing it as time helped in finding Muwashshah, Rubaiyat/Quatrains, and finally, the Free Verse.(18)

Bands are more cultivated than prose as they are closer to the versification while their rhyming and poetic restriction are not as that of poetry; they are not governed by rhyme nor by the poetic constancy. However, they don't differ from poetry in terms of organization or constancy; they do not also differ in terms of presenting poetry; it is even more elaborative. They can best be described as the simplest type of versification that is not governed by rhymes or the number of feet. They spread in Iraq in different social classes and authors excelled in it so they came up with several bands of different levels. The, band of Ibn Al-Khalfah was very successful and wide-spread among common and intellectual people. (19)

Singing Al-Band

The Iraqis sang Al- Band in two ways. First, they read it and arabize the endings of words; this happened in the rapid recitation so Al- Band will completely match the rhyme of its position. Or they make some stops in the rhyme position, when it is possible, as to get a nice Band with music; this cannot be found except in the poetry that is free from the traditional system of Arabic poetry especially in the Muwashshah or so; this is the common way of singing it. (20)

Topics of Al-Band

It covered all Arabic poetry subjects as praise, satire, lamentation, flirtation, ruins citation, horse description. As for political purposes, Mr Deyaa Shakarah and Mr Mohammad Jamal Al-Hashemy are the only ones who wrote about such purposes. In addition, only one Band was found about flirtation purposes and the majority of bands are about praising Prophet Mohammad, blessings be upon him.(21)

The Band has proven its ability to deal with different life issues and it is also able to develop. It has the charm of music of Al- Band and the nice tone system which proceeds over the versification of Free Verse or poetry written in prose style. (22)

The Geographical Environment of Al-Band

Al- Band is only found in a specific place in Iraq and some places in the Arab Gulf .It does not move to other places so it is not known to people in the rest of the Arab world. Many authors did not hear about it although it is considered to be a big development in modern Arabic poetry which mainly represents the Bedouin environment.(23)

Al- Band & Free Verse poetry

Al- Band is a poetic art which is closer in its construction to the Arabic traditional" vertical" poetry than to the Arabic Free Verse or the rhymed prose. It is wrong, however, to consider the Free Verse a type of Al- Band because Al- Band was spread in Iraq and it spread in the literary environment only for short time.The poets then left it except in fun talks. The rest of it was kept in manuscripts and none of it was published few years. Therefore, it is so exaggerated to say that poets of Free Verse had developed Al-Band. (24)

Some points out that the Free Verse is much closer in its organization and meter to Al- Band more than to the two-part. Al-Band and the Free Verse rely on the foot system.They are also free in choosing the number of feet and so the poem can be long or short according to the desire of its poet and his choice of words. Nevertheless, Free Verse is easier in writing poetry than Al- Band as it is written in one Bahr/ rhymed verse of the ten rhymed verses/ Buhur. The poet chooses one of these Buhur and writes a poem using one rhymed verse throughout the whole poem. This also goes for the system in the Arabic 'vertical' poetry that follows the system of two verses. For example, Free Verse cannot have these two forms together: -

ma'fa'ee'lon ma'fa'ee'lon

ma'fa'ee'lon fa'ou'lon

But in Al- Band, these two forms can be joined together with no violations. Buhur in the same place is not only preferable in the Al- Band but also requested. This feature is the secret of the beauty and the musicality of Al- Band. Yet the similarities between Al- Band and the Free Verse are good enough that some beginning poets mix between them unintentionally as the poet Natheer Adh'mah.(25)

Reasons for Finding This Literary Form

Authors used various types of figures of speech to calcify the statement . They came up with different poetic styles and letters, books, and other forms of prose such as proverbs and sayings.

Iraq was known for the spread of Al- Band .It, Al-Band, is something over assonance and much close to something between poetry and prose. It is certificated as poetry that is not restricted in the number of feet in the rhyme. It is musically interesting for listeners as it is not controlled by rhyme nor it is prose governed by assonance or so. It just joined the two qualities and took importance of both. (26)

Others think that the reasons for finding this literary form is the desire to get free from the restrictions of rhyme and meter in poetry for some limit, and to deal with common people by using poetic styles as a kind of tolerance and friendship. (27)

Why Has This Literary Form Been Ignored?

It seems that the reasons for the none spreading of this literary form in the Arab world is that because it only started in Iraq and some Arab Gulf countries during the literary recession era. The Muwashshah was wide-spread in the Arab world. However, Al- Band is not known for many Arab authors except in Iraq and this is the main reason for its weak spread.(28)

Some researchers say that the reason for none spreading of this literary form is that the famous poets of that period did not understand the musical system of Al- Band and so they judged it as a "non-respectful" way. Or they considered it, as it was known, a form that is close to Al- *Zajal* or the inferior colloquial poetry. On the other hand, poets who wrote Al- Band are of the minor classes of poets who are not famous among poets. (29)

Constructing Al- Band

Al- Band is a kind of metered and assonance speech which differs from prose as it follows some meter and differs from poetry as it does not follow a rhyme scheme and also for not having a clear system of the parts of the poem or a determined number of feet in it. It is similar to both poetry and prose in terms of both meter and assonance. The common rhyme Verse/ Bahr for Al- Band is *Bahr Al-Hazaj* which consists of four parts :

ma'fa'ee'lon ma'fa'ee'lon ma'fa'ee'lon ma'fa'ee'l

As in this example:

ela hindn saba qa'bi wa hindon meth'loha yus'bee(30)

In addition, the parts of Al- Band are not limited to a specific number. It could be either long or short as in the prose. However, its metering gave it the style and musicality of poetry no matter how long it is. The least number of sentences was on the meter of " ma'fa'ee'lon" is one time. Some parts may exceed ten as in this example from Al- Band:

Fa la' ar'reeho to'baa'rehe etha ghaar

It used the meter of "ma'fa'ee'lon-ma'fa'eelon- ma'fa'eel"

However, this made the relation between the " sadr " and " a'jez" / first and second part of the verse unspecified. And when the first" sadr" and second" a'jez" of the verse were undetermined, the meter would also be undetermined.

Another example by Ibn Al-khalfah

"Are you making fun of love? Blame not lovers. Had you seen the crowded eyebrows above the large eyes'(31)

This example shows that the sentences are rhymed but they are not metered on a specific Bahr/verse as in the vertical poetry. The lines are also different in length which indicates that we are dealing with a new type of literature that is much closer to poetry (32)

Generally, the idea of Al- Band depends on a major basis in poetic musicality which is the foot-system not the two-part system with one Bahr/verse. It violates Buhur Al-Khalil and it uses different parts and verses. (33)

Some researchers detailed the construction of Al- Band saying that Al- Band had used two Buhur/verses which are *the Hazaj* and the *Ramil* as they made a nice joining together if the poet knows to control them well. The secret of this nice joining is the relation between the two Buhur as in :-

ma'fa' ee' lon ma'fa'ee' lon ma'fa'ee' lon ma'fe'ee' lon

lan ma'fa'ee lan ma'fa'ee lan ma'fa'ee lan ma'fa'ee

The foot" lan ma'fa'ee" is the turned version of "ma'fa'ee'lon" and they are equal in their diacritics and stops to the foot" fa'ee'laa"ton". The same goes for the foot "fa'ee'la'ton" since its turned version" ee'la"ton" is the same as " ma'fa'ee'lon"; and so, the part of the verse can turn from Al- Bahr Al-Ramil to the Bahr *Hazaj* by a simple deletion of its first form.(34)

Here is an example by Ibn Al-Khelfah : "do you know or not that love has deliciousness and happiness ? ...". In this example, the four parts are written in Bahr Al-Hazaj using "ma'fa'ee'lon" whereas the last one is "fa'oo'lon" as in "Fakam Qad Hathhaba Alhobbo Baleda " ma'fa'ee'lon , ma'fa'ee'lon faolon. This shows that this foot is equal to "fa'ee'la'ton" which is equal to "ee'la'ton", the last foot in Bahr Al-Ramil. Here, the poet joined between two Buhur/verses. He actually paves the way with a saying: " La Wala Tuthhero Tawga "and you don't show yearning " which ends with the foot "fa'ee'la'taan", a foot of Bahr Al-ramil, and he used this because a part of it "ee'laa'ton" is equal to the foot of Bahr Al-hazaj "ma'faa'eel". Obviously, he is joining between two Buhor/verses as to end with " Wa Qad Aarrasa Fi Safhi Ruba Alban " ma'fa'ee'lon , ma'fa'ee'l. (35)

However, some rejected this idea saying that the meter of Al- Band does not mix between Bahr Al-hazaj and Bahr Al-ramil, in addition to Bahr Al-rejiz. They also think that the meters of Al- Band are the collection of / ha'te'bon fe lay'l. (36)

Another opinion says that Bahr Al-Hazaj is the right one for constructing Al- Band because the restrictions and meters of this Bahr are presented in Al- Band. It is noticed that the poets who wrote Al- Band agree on some kind of rhyming except assonance and this is known as " Al-radf". Actually, the drew upon "Al-Rawi", a letter that determines the rhyming which is preceded by a silent "alif/ í"as in "kamal". This kind of rhyming is a sort of Al- Band and it is the last part of Al- Band's feet. However, the letter of "Rawi" may vary between words but the poets agreed that the letter of "Rawi" should be objective.

In conclusion, the agreement for using "Al-Rawi" letter, that must be objective, and restricting it with some meters regarding Bahr Al-Hazaj, show that this is an intended effort and it is not a matter of imitating or unorganized work. This made Al- Band a literary concept that follows the construction rules.(37)

The Band's Zuhaa'faat

The Zuhaa'faat of Al- Band, the rapidity in some verses and the slow movement in other parts, are the same as that in Bahr Al-Hazaj which are Zuhaf Al-kaf and Zuhaf Al-qabdh. The first is the deletion of the seventh silent sound in "ma'faa'ee'lon" so it becomes" ma'fa'eel". The second is the deleting of the fifth silent sound to become" ma'fa'ee'lon". Zuhf Al- Band is used more frequently in most of Al- Band's parts whereas the presence of Zuhf Al-qabdh is less frequent.(38)

The authors excluded the part of the Al- Band which belongs to Ibn Doreed AL-Azdi Al-Basri because it has frequent uses of Zuhuf. Here is the text: "I had many comrades with whom I was delighted ...". Clearly, the repetition of Zuhuf in the text made it very weak and it is difficult to believe that is a Band. Such texts emerged a lot with poets who did not know Al-Band well. (39)

Rhyme Scheme of Al- Band

It is noticed that old poets of Al- Band often stick to only one rhyme at the end of their bonds. For example, Maa'tooq Al-mosawy stuck to the "r" with a "fat'haa/ short vowel of (a)", Othman Al-Biktashi used the "haa " followed by "alif/ ' ". Whereas Abed Al-ra'ouf Al-jad Hafsi used the "m " followed by "alif / ' ". In general, the six ending rhymes are " Marama , lezama , tatarama , hu'sama , Al'khuzama , Dharama ". Yet it seems that late poets of Al- Band did not follow this system of rhyme although we take the generalizations from the famous poets not from their followers. (40)

Conclusion

Al- Band is a type of Arabic Literature that was found in Iraq. Many authors wrote in this type and it seems that this form emerged to help Arab authors to get free from the restrictions of rhyme and meter that came from the old Arabic poetry. This form does not follow the two-part style that was used by the Arab poets for many years and was written in a prosodic form. This form is of unequal parts in terms of length and it follows the meter of two Buhur/verses, of Al-Khalil Al-farahidi. It either follows the meter of Bahr Al-hazaj or it may mix between Bahr A-hazaj and Bahr Al-ramil.

Notes

1- The rhyme consists of a basic letter that is called "Al-rawi". It is the last original consonant in the verse and the whole poem is set according to it .The poem is referred to as " meemeyah, nooneyeh/ as aynyah or depending on this letter. (Abd-Al'azez A'teeq, page 136)

2- What is known as " Malaa'hin", is a word derived from "lahen"/ tune" It means something that the speaker knows whereas others do not. It was so popular in the late Abbasid era and was called" Al'mu'ma", (Bakri Shaikh Ameen, page 177-178, 1980).

3- Shehab Al'deen bin Ma'tooq Al-mosari, an Iraqi poet who was the most famous in his time. He was born in 1616 in Basra. He was one of the big Shiites poets. His poetry is known for its nicety and the wide use of figures of speech. (Ahmad Al-hashemy, section 2, page 185, 2006).

4- Saheb Thahab bin Al-marhoum Al-shaikh Mohammad Reda bin Al-Shaikh Mahmoud, known as Thahab. He was born in 1928 in Najaf and graduated from the faculty of law. (Abed Al-kareem Al-dejaily, page 1959, 160)

5 – The rhymed circle/ Al-daa'erah Al-a'rode'yah, is a concept made by Al-Khalil bin Ahmad Alfarahidi, the founder of prosody, which refers to a number of Buhur/verses that share some pitches or sounds. The rhymed circle is a geometric circle in which there is a starting point that we start from and then get back to it. As for sounds, when we start from a specific point we have specific Buhur and this circle is called" Al-

mojtaleb". It is called so because it gathers or attracts its parts from three different Buhur/verses, the Hazaj, the Ramil, and the Rejiz.

6- The kamil, the hazaj, the ramil, the motadarak, the motaqaraib, the wafir, the saree', the khafeef, the ba'seet are names of Buhur/verses of Arabic poetry. (Nazik Alma'laa'ekah, pages 18-21, 1989)

7- The poetic verse consists of two parts, the first is "the sadir" and the second is "the a'jez". (Rajy Al-asmar, page 49)

8- The foot at the end of the first part is called "a'roodh" and the foot at the end of the second part is called "Al-dharb". The rest of feet in the poem are called "Al-hashoo". (Abb Al-azeez A'teeq, page 27)

9- It consists of two letters the first one is pronounced with a vowel where as the second is silent. (Abb Al-azeez A'teeq, page 18)

10- It consists of a long vowel letter "Al-mad" before the letter "Al-Rawi" or a light letter. (Abb Al-azeez A'teeq, page 13)

11- It is the final consonant at the end of the verse which is either silent, with no vowel, or pronounced with a vowel. (Abb Al-azeez A'teeq, page 137)

12- Zuhuf, as defined by prosodies, is a changing in the "ha'shoo" of the verse often, and its use in a verse of a poem is enough for the rest of the verses. (Abb Al-azeez A'teeq, page 180)

Margins:-

- 1- (Ibn Mandhor section 1, page 254, 1997).
- 2- (Al-Monjid fe Al'loghah wa Al-a'lam, page 49, 1984).
- 3- (Al-helali, section 3, page 7, A;- aqlam, 1964).
- 4- (Abbas Azawy, page 4).
- 5- (Abd Alkareem Al-dejaily, Al-Muqademah, 1959).
- 6- (Abd Alkareem Al-dejaily, Al-Muqademah, 1959).
- 7- (Albaqlany, page 107, 1991).
- 8- (Al-Shaikh Jala Al-deen Alhanafi, page 149, 1985).
- 9- (Mostafa Sadeq Al-Rafe'e, section 3, page 413, 1974).
- 10- (Abd Alkareem Al-dejaily, the Introduction, 1959).
- 11- (Abbas Azzamy, p 6-7).
- 12- (Abd-Al-razaq Al-helali, section 3, page 37, Al-aqlam, 1964).
- 13- (Abd-Al-razaq Al-helali, section 3, page 75, Al-aqlam, 1964) (Abd Al-mon'em Mohammad Hussien, page 240, 1982).
- 14- (Abbas Azzam p. 1-2).
- 15- (Abd Al-kareem Al-dejaily, pages 149+16+166, 1959).
- 16- (Abbas Azawi, page 1-2).
- 17- (Abd Al-razaq Al-helali, section 3, page 75, 1964).
- 18- (Abd Alkareem Al-dejaily, Al-Muqademah, 1959).

- 19- (Abbas Azawi, page 5).
- 20- (Nadhem Rasheed, pages 68-69, 1975).
- 21- (Abd Al-kareem Al-dejaily- Introduction, 1959).
- 22- (Abd Al-razaq Al-helali,section3,page79,1964).
- 23- (Abd Alkareem Al-dejaily, Al- Muqademah, 1959).
- 24- (Safaa Kho'losy, pages 399-400, 5th edition).
- 25- (Nazik Al-mala'ekah, pages206-207, 1989).
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- 29- (Ali Abbas Al'wan, page77).
- 30- (Abbas Azawy page 6).
- 31- (Abbas Azawy page 6).
- 32- (Safaa Kho'losi-page293-5th edition).
- 33- (Ali Abbas Al'wan, page75-76).
- 34- (Nazik Al-mala'ekah, page 199, 1989).
- 35- (Nazik Al-mala'ekah, pages 200-201, 1989).
- 36- (Qurashy Abbas Dan'darawy, page21,1st edition).
- 37- (Abbas Azawy page 7).
- 38- (Abbas Azawy page 7).
- 39- (Jameel Al'ma'la'ekah, page3, 1st edition).
- 40- (Safaa Kho'losy, pages 396-397).

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