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A RE-CONSIDERATION OF THE LIFE OF THE ARAB POET - AL-HUTAY'AH (590 - 679 C.E.)

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INTRODUCTION:

Al-Hutay'ah has been presented by literary scholars¹ as carefree, irresponsible and anti-social element who lived and contributed to literary outputs during the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods of Arabic Literature². This paper is not intended to ward off from al-Hutay'ah's biography all or some unfavourable 'record's associated with his personality, rather the aim is to call attention to some unanswered questions and seemingly un-noticed historical inaccuracies, superfluous assertions and erroneous judgements which characterised many historical accounts on this highly defamed poet.

(A) FAMILY BACKGROUND AND YOUTH:

- (i) **Name:** The full name of al-Hutay'ah is Jarwal³ ibn 'Aws bn Ju'yyati Makhzum bn Malik b. Ghālib bn Qutay'ah bn 'Abs bn Baghid ibn Rayth bn Ghatafan ibn Sa'd ibn Qays' aylan⁴ ibn Mudarbn Mizār bn Ma' dd bn Adnān.⁵ In short, Jarwal is from 'Abs clan of the Banu Mudar. He has the appellation "Abu-Malaykah" (The father of Mulaykah)⁶ He is said to have derived this appellation from his paternal link with his daughter.

He is also nicknamed al-Hutay'ah. Various reasons have been given for ascribing this nickname to our poet, Jarwal. It is said to be as a result of his ugliness⁷; another view is that it was as a result of his breaking wind in a congregation⁸, while another source ascribed it to his outstanding shortness⁹; yet another version recorded that it is due to his lack of the hollow of the foot.¹⁰ Since there is no sufficient material to lead to an incontestable reason among these various conjectures, the probable way out of the controversy is to agree with the view that "it "al-Hutay'ah" - signifies 'the dwarf' and "the deformed".¹¹

(ii) HIS BIRTH AND YOUTH:

It is difficult to pin down his birth to a specific date; nevertheless, if any credence is to be given to the popular story that he took part in a war in 610

C.E.; while young, with ʿAntarah and Rabiʿ ibn Ziyād¹² then it could be assumed that he was born sometime between 575 C.E. and 590 C.E.¹³

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to lay our hand upon any record that contains an account of his early childhood, apart from information of his participation in 610 C.E. in a war. This scarcity of information is, however, not surprising for most of the occurrence of the pre-Islamic period were either un-recorded, or worse still, produced by later writers, some of whom have either exaggerated the facts or created them from imagination.¹⁴

The Paternity of this poet has been a subject of mockery and controversy among literary historians. The reason behind the controversy (as the story goes) was that the mother of al-Ḥuṭayʿah, was a slave girl to one ʿAws ibn Malik al-Absi - the man who turned out to be the poet's father. ʿAws was married to a daughter of Rīyah ibn Umar ibn ʿAwf. According to popular opinion of writers, prominent among whom was Abu'l-faraj al-Iṣbahānī, al-Ḍarrāʾ was impregnated by Aws.¹⁵

For one reason or the other, al-Ḍarrāʾ could not disclose the correct source of her pregnancy. Hence her false declaration to her mistress that the pregnancy belonged to her mistress's younger brother, al-Afqam.

The assertion, the story continues, was upheld by the mistress who did not only set her (al-Ḍarrāʾ) free but also took care of her 'nephew'.¹⁶ The 'nephew' being our poet, al-Ḥuṭayʿah. Thus the innocent child was brought up among his half brothers but the mistress was unaware of the real situation.

Much as this legend could not be satisfactorily disproved, it will however, be a mistake to overlook the possibility of it being invented, with abundant fancy and skill to suit whatever view the inventor(s) might hold about al-Ḥuṭayʿah. A question that nevertheless, keeps boiling in a critical observer's mind is whether or not al-Afqam denied his sexual association with al-Ḍarrāʾ. If he did not, it might be possible that he too, at one time or the other, had a love affair with her. This possibility is, however, not mentioned in any of the source-materials consulted on this issue. Be it what it may. If this legend is anything to go by, one could notice that al-Ḥuṭayʿah's mother had, by this act¹⁷ contributed in no small way, to the dishonour and indignity which her son al-Ḥuṭayʿah later suffered. In contrast to her attitude was that of Fāṭimah bint Khurahib who opted for death by throwing herself headlong from a camel rather than bringing dishonour to her children when she was a captive of one Ḥumal ba Badr¹⁸. This incident shows that at the period certain individual still

jealously guarded their dignity and honour. If fatimah, in the same period, could commit suicide to protect the integrity of her family, one wonders why al-Huṭay'ah's mother could not have comported herself well enough to safeguard the honour of her offspring.

According to Goldziher and Pellat "Venality constitutes principal elements motivating his literary career".¹⁹ while this possibility could hardly be disproved another possible motivation was that when he was young, he was a rhapsodist (*Rāwī*) to Zuhar bn Abī Sulmā, and like many other *Rāwīs*, he cultivated interest in the composition of poetry. It is an indisputable fact that his poetry belongs to the Zuhayr's school of Poetry²⁰. Al-Huṭay'ah's own rhapsodist was Hudbah ibn Khahram.

We note with surprise that despite the fact that historical accounts available to us on his origin are unanimous on their acceptance that his mother was Aḍ-Ḍarrā', and all writings at our disposal refer to him as son of 'Aws, yet these same accounts give a misleading impression that his Paternity is obscure. The reason for the over-stressed obscurity, according to them, lay in the fact that he claimed various clan and origins in his poems, at different times i.e. passing from tribe to tribe, and changing his genealogy according to whether he was satisfied or displeased with the treatment accorded him.

We are informed that the poet once asked his mother to inform him on whom his actual father was, when the mother could not satisfactorily answer the question, al-Huṭay'ah lamented the ridiculous answer given by the mother. He said

نقول لي الضراء لست لواحد « ولا اثنين لما نظر كيف شرك أولئك
وانت امرؤ تبغى أبا قد ضللتك « هبت لما تستفق من ضلالك

Aḍ-Ḍarrā' said to me - you belonged neither to one (person)
nor two - imagine how those people rival one another

You are a man in search of a father you've lost,
Oh! - what a wonder~ wouldn't you
refrain from your error?²¹

Al-Huṭay'ah was quoted as lambasting the mother for her shameless act.

The probability of our claim that the mother might have engaged in illicit Sexual dealings with many men is supported by her reported response "you belonged to neither one nor two persons". This, if it was the case, indicates that the woman had a very low standard of morality and she was shameless.

Thereafter, al-Huṭay'ah approached his two half brothers from 'Aws for his own share of their father's inheritance, they told him, apparently sympathetic with him, "No, but you may stay with us and we shall take care of you".²²

The poet was not satisfied and he composed the following satirical lines:

أمرتني أن أقيم عليكم « كلا لعمرك أيكما الحناني
عبدان خيرهما يظل بضمه « قل الأجر قلائس الروابي

You are requesting me to live on you,

May, I swear by the life of your wind-breaking father Two serfs (you are) the better of whom is being dragged by his arm as a labourer drags a rich man's load.

After hurling the invective on them, he made his way to Kūfah, where he was reported to have claimed to be a son of al-Afqam, 'Aw's brother-in-law, who had then died leaving some date-trees for his children. The two surviving sons of al-'Afqam readily accepted him. Upon request, he was given part of the palm trees bequeathed to them by al-'Afqam. Subsequently, he composed a line proclaiming his paternity by al-'Afqam and another line in praise of the family.

نومي بنو عمرو بن صو « ف إن أراد العلم فالعلم
إن اليمامة خير ساكنها « أهل القرية من بني ذهل

My people are Banu 'Amr Ibn 'Awf,

If anyone seeks to know (of my clan).

The best dwellers of Yamāmah are the
people of al-Qurayyah²⁵ of Banū Dhuhāl²⁶

Very soon, according to the fanciful report, he made a request for more palm-trees, probably, in order to have an equal share. Rather than being given, al-Huṭay'ah was scolded by his two 'new' brothers, he thus hastened to lambast 'his clan' by hurling invective at al-'Afqam's clan:

إن اليمامة شر ساكنها « أهل القرية من بني ذهل²⁷

Surely, the worst dweller of Yamāmah are
the people of Qurayyah of Banū Dhuhāl.

Thus he is always severely condemned by literary writers for satirising his brothers. The reported "unstable affiliations to different clans (as far as we know, two clans) also lend credence to his detractors' assertion that his origin was obscure and that he is an unscrupulous personality.

Al-Huṭay'ah is often condemned in literary books, for those claims and renunciation of clans, and this was based on his various which contain such claims of belonging to different clans on different occasions. We however, believe that the content of the verses (except the two cases) was not a sufficient ground to confirm the legend that he was actually caliming blood ties with those numerous clans. It is not impossible that Arab historians have woven various stories, about his ever changing claims, around the contents of his verses. For instance a famous Nigerian Yoruba musician, Sikiru Ayinde Barister referred to Ebenezer Obey (another Yoruba musician) as his brother, on another occasion he referred to Chief Abioro as his brother, he at the same time claimed that he is a native of Ibadan. While Chief Obey is a native of Abeokuta, Abioro is a native of ipokia.²⁸ These claims to his "brothers" point only to his social closeness to those families. The case of al-Huṭay'ah might be similar; but stories which have been built around the content of the verses may make this probability very difficult to accept.

It is well known that Arabian traditionists used to demand from any Bedouin who related an historical event, the citation of some verses in its support, and in effect, all such stories that have come down to us are crystallised round the poems. Unfortunately these crystals are seldom pure, it appears only too often that the narratives have been invented. Even if it is admitted that he actually claimed blood ties with these clans; one can hardly blame him for this, because of the uncertainty that surrounds his origin.

(B) PHYSICAL FEATURES AND CHARACTER:

Historians present this poet as having physical deformity and to be out standingly short, beardless and having an ugly face. This is often supported by a satirical line which he was said to have composed against himself.

أرى لي وجهاً شوه الله خلقه «نفع من وجهه ونفع حامله»²⁹

I notice that I possess a face the creation of which Allah has uglified ugly is the face, also ugly is the owner of the face. Al-Huṭay'ah's character has been presented in a very unfortunate light by many past and contemporary scholars. He is said to be of bad behaviour, a persistent beggar, a lowly and devilish personality, a miser of the highest order³⁰, a man of obscure origin,

and a defiler of religion. The poet is classified as one of the four celebrated Arab-misers that history has ever known; others being "Humayd, Abū 'l-'Aswad - and Khālid bn Safwan".³¹

One of the possible reasons for these uncomplimentary remarks and hostility against al-Ḥuṭay'ah personality is adequately illustrated in the following words of Nu'mān 'Amin ibn Taha,³² thus:

The society started this hostility towards him (al-Ḥuṭay'ah) since his birth, it is not impossible that he had been made an object of mockery which was likely to have been saddening to his heart since he was young. I have no doubt as to the fact that all his misdeeds were grossly exaggerated. This is very close to the tradition of the Prophet Muhammed which reads:

Those who were before you (Muslims) were perished for their sparing the noble ones who stole amongst them, but whenever a poorman amongst them stole, he was always punished.....

.....He was negatively over-assessed and it is not unnatural that al-Ḥuṭay'ah should face this societal enmity with the same or a severer degree of enmity.

The pitiable position of this poet becomes more glaring on the realization that bastards are, except in few cases, looked down upon in many societies; no matter what they attain in life. It should also be noted that the Arabs were, and are still conscious and proud of their fore-bears and they do not often accord high regard to anyone whose ancestors were found to be mean or, worse still, whose integrity was questionable.

This, among other things, probably accounts for the orchestration of the poet's short-comings, such as the over-flogged issue of niggardliness. This probability is further heightened by the historical fact that one az-zibriqān³³, on account of whom al-Ḥuṭay'ah incurred the wrath of many writers, and against whom al-Ḥuṭay'ah directed his most piercing satirical lines, which boomeranged on the poet, was himself to have not only been miserly to visitors but

was also reported to have flagrantly quaried his boss, caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb thus, "shouldn't I deny him of water the source and pool of which were dug by my father and which I too, dug with my hands".³⁴ This was when the latter warned him against his denial of water to a visitor. Yet, az-Zibriqān appeared not to have suffered the least degree of condemnation on account of this, as our poet "The Eroder of honour" did. Furthermore, it is reasonable to hold that a persistent beggar, whom we are told, al-Ḥuṭay'ah was, could not have at the same time be generous, otherwise his potential benefactors could believe that he was living in affluence, and so not in need of their assistance.

His case was, most likely, worsened by the time he came into lime-light. This was a time when the zeal and spirit of the new faith (Islam) were burning in the minds of the Muslims.³⁵ One cannot rule out the contribution of religious zealotry on the part of the Muslims to the degree of uproar which the circumstances surrounding his birth generated. The blame ought not to have been on al-Ḥuṭay'ah after all. Ziyad ibn 'Abīhi whose paternity was obscure did not only become a governor of the eastern provinces during the reign of Caliph Mu'awiyah but also displayed his disputable paternity with impunity by bearing "the son of his father".

That period of Islam when the Qur'ān was emphatic in its condemnation of abusive language by saying³⁶ **ويل لكل همزة لنزة** "Woe to ever (kind of) scandal

monger and back-bitter"; probably, made al-Ḥuṭay'ah's satire very untimely and consequently a source of unrestricted attack from the community by them. It could also be argued that al-'A'ashā who lived in the same era with al-Ḥuṭay'ah and who was a sort of professional eulogist did not face similar opposition, because he was creating a positive ground i.e. praise, while al-Ḥuṭay'ah was contributing to "a negative innovation" - satire.

In our candid opinion, al-Ḥuṭay'ah cannot be justifiably singled out as an irreligious person, if others despite the stipulation of the Holy Qur'ān that "li-seeming is a name connoting degradation, (to be used of one) after he has believed"³⁷ still called him Al-Ḥuṭay'ah - the dwarf or the deformed, on account of his ugliness, for which he could not be held responsible. It is unfair to overflog the fact that al-Ḥuṭay'ah satirised his so-called brother, for had the brothers really agreed that he was actually their brother, the question of his satire against them would not have arisen. If they were correct by denounc-

ing him, then those he satirised were not his brothers; and on the other hand, if they were wrong, wouldn't it be more painful than satire for brothers to wrongfully denounce their brother?

An objective critical probe reveals his good qualities.

If we are to go by the legends in historical materials at our disposal, al-Huṭay'ah was a jovial and courteous man.³⁸

It is noteworthy that despite the fact that many legends which came down to us about the pre Islamic era, had very little in common with reality yet one finds it irresistible to agree with the view that this poet, for whatever reason, possessed a stinging tongue, to the extent that "his malice was so much dreaded that men used to offer him gifts safeguard their honour from it. 3a

(C) HIS MARITAL LIFE:

We are informed that Jarwal was married to one 'Amūmah by whom he had some children, among whom was the famous Mulaykah; others were Iyasa, 'Aws and Sawadah.⁴⁰ We have no cause to disbelieve that al-Huṭay'ah was a loving father and husband to his family, and it is a surprise to learn that some people could carry their contempt for the poet to the extent of thinking that he had no affection even for members of his family. Ifram al-Bustāni had to refute this notion when he wrote: "The fact is that, like any other person, he loved his children and wife.⁴¹ A story was even related about a time when he was to travel and the wife said "Remember our affection for you. And remember your children who are young". On hearing that he changed his mind and did not travel.⁴²

When he was imprisoned by Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, he addressed an apologia to the Caliph. One of his grounds of appeal to the Caliph was the fate of his wife and children. The poem reveals deep affection which the poet had for members of his immediate family. Among other things, he said:

ماذا تقول لأفراخ هذى مرغ * حمر الحواصل لا ماء ولا شجر
غيت كاسهم في قعر مظلمة * فاعفر عليك سلام الله يا عمر
فأمنن على صبية بالرمل مسكنهم * بين الأباطح يغشاهم بها القرد
أشكوا إليك فاشكني ذريئة * لا يشبعون وأمه لا تشبع
كثيروا على فلا يموت كبيرهم * حتى الحساب ولا الصغير المرضع⁴³

What have you to say about the wingless little birds at Dhi-Marakhin, (with) bare red crow⁴⁴, without trees or water. You kept their broad-winner in a dark dungeon, For give-May God grant you peace-oh, Umar. Be lenient with some lads whose abode is on the sand Between swamps, being beaten by cold. I appealed to you, the wailing offspring made me appeal, (they) are not well fed and their mother too is under fed Numerous are my dependants, neither their eldest, nor the sucking baby of them, will ever die until the day of reckoning.⁴⁵

(D) HIS ATTITUDE TO ISLAM

No information on the original religion of al-Ḥuṭay'ah could be found in any material within our reach, but in view of the fact that his life, as presented to us by scholars, is far from-being ascetic and that no account of his earlier conversion to any other religion, is found; it thus follows that prior to his conversion to Islam he was either indifferent to religion or an idol worshipper.

Historians seem to agree that he embraced Islam but the accounts on the actual time of his conversion vary. many writers including Fu'ād Ifrām al-Bustānī and Ibn Qutayban⁴⁶ argued that since no account of his paying homage to the holy Prophet, Muḥammad could be found, he must have accepted islam after the holy Prophet's death (in 632 C.E.) while Ibn Hajar⁴⁷, amongst others was reported to have argued that he accepted Islam prior to the death of the holy Prophet, Muḥammad. The latter claim appears more porbable in view of a supporting internal evidence found in the following line of poetry which al-Ḥuṭay'ah composed during his apostasy.

أطعنا رسول الله إذ كان صادقاً * فلما عجبنا ما بال دين أبي بكر⁴⁸

We followed God's apostle since he was truthful, what's the religion of Abu-Bakr (Lit. Father of a Virgin girl), I wonder: The line conveys an impression that he accepted Islam when Muhammad was alive.

The poet was among those who apostatised from Islam at the time of Abu-Bakar on the ground of their refusal to pay Zakāh. he did not even hesitate to take part in a war against Abu-Bakar in about a year after the Prophet's death⁵⁰. His lines of poem on the war depict his stiff opposition to the ascension of Abu-Bakar as the first caliph and the leader of the faithful. This, we suspect, contributed to his poor image among Muslims.

فدا لهنى نهبان أمي وخالتي « عشية جدى بالرماح أبو بكر
 نفوسوا ولا تعطوا اللئام مقادة « وقوموا وإن كان القيام على الجمر
 أطمنا رسول الله إذ كان صادقاً « فإعجبوا ما بال من أبي بكر
 أبوشكراً بكراً إذا مات بعده « وتلك وبيت الله ما طعنة الظاهر

"I stake my mother and family to Banū Dhubyān on the night when Abū-Bakar advanced with spears, Rise and do not entrust leadership to lowly ones, rise even if you are to stand on embers. We followed God's apostle since he was faithful, What's the religion of Abū-Bakr (a girl's father)-? I wonder: Will he bequeath us to the virgin girl⁵² whe he dies, then that will, by God's house, be a spine-cracking calamity.

When Abū-Bakr attained victory over the apostates, the poet became a captive and was re-covered to Islam. He was reported to have, on the side of the Muslims, taken part in the Qadisiyyah⁵³ war of 636 C.E. Notwithstanding his reconversion to Islam, the fact that he had once satirised Abū-Bakr - a beloved head of the Islamic state, who was until Muḥammad's death the next in command, to the Holy Prophet might have contributed significantly to the defamatory statements heaped on him by many writers, majority of whom were Muslims. The most irritating aspect of the poem is the ridiculous and sarcastic analysis of the literal meaning of the nick-name - Abū-Bakr (the father of a virgin girl).

Despite his participation in the Qadisiyyah war, historians did maintain sealed lips about the seriousness or otherwise of his religious conviction in the later part of his life. However, if we were to place any credence on the story regarding his death-bed proclamation, which depicts him as an antagonist of some ideals and values which Islam holds in high esteem, we can conclude that he was, at least by the time of his death, an unconvicted Muslim, not-with-standing his participation in a war in defence of Islam. This conclusion, we must quickly add, is fraught with errors and unreliable assumptions.

(E) AL-HUTAY'AH'S POETRY:⁵⁵

An examination of the literary works of al-Ḥuṭay'ah is a subject of another paper, however, mention need be made of the fact that al-Ḥuṭay'ah was one of the leading poets of the pre-Islamic and the early Islamic periods. His works

were collected by philologists of the second and third centuries.⁵⁶ Apocryphals of early collections of his works have also been made by Amr'ish-Shayban, Ibn 'Arabi and Abū Hātim As-Sijistānī.⁵⁷ The latter was reported to have been very strict in the criticism of those poems which he suspected to be forged.⁵⁸

His *Diwān* was first published in Istanbul in 1890. Another publication of his *Diwān* was made by orientalist - Goldzibher. The third edition which was collected and edited by Ahmad Ash-Shinkitti, was published in Cairo in 1905, while the fourth and fifth editions were published in Lebanon (1908) and Cairo (1958) respectively.⁵⁹

Al-Ḥuṭay'ah bequeathed a very rich poetical heritage to Arabic literature. Contrary to popular opinion about him, al-Ḥuṭay'ah composed more poems on eulogy than satire. He also composed beautiful erotic prelude (*nasīb*), elegy (*rithā'*) and ascetic poems. He also composed a number of poetical lines on self praise (*al-Fakhr*). One important aspect of his personality was that the high quality of his poetry was acknowledged by even the fiercest of his enemies. "He distinguished himself in all genres..... and he is great in all of them".⁶⁰ Abu'l-Faraj al-Isbahānī asserted that "there is no poet that I cannot find a flaw in his poetry, if I were to look for it, except al-Ḥuṭay'ah".⁶¹

(G) HIS CONTACT WITH IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES OF HIS TIME:

Apart from the satirical lines of al-Ḥuṭay'ah against the purported members of his family, he also composed some lampoons against some other individuals whose interests were at different occasions, at conflict with his own. Unfortunately for al-Ḥuṭay'ah most of the people he had to clash with were important public figures who were in positions to mobilise public opinion against him. A critical study of the clashes between al-Ḥuṭay'ah and some of these personalities, reveals that, in most cases, the important people concerned demonstrated contempt and disregard for al-Ḥuṭay'ah. His clashes with 'Alqamah ibn 'Ulāth⁶², Az-Zibriqān and Umar⁶³ b. al-Khaṭṭāb⁶⁴ strengthen this belief.

Contrary to popular opinion⁶⁵ about him, al-Ḥuṭay'ah composed more panegyric poems than satire. Only one hundred and sixty three of the hundred and eighty six lines which his *Diwān* contains, are satire. Most of his satirical compositions are very piercing, yet some of his non-satirical poems have been misconstrued for satire. Az-Zibriqān, a governor under Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was at pains to convince the Caliph that a particular poem of

al-Ḥuṭay'ah was directed against him (Az-Zibriqān) which he complained particular about was:

« لا ترحل لبعثها » واعد لأنك أنت الطامع الكاسر⁶⁶

Leave mobility and do not work towards its attainment; Remain seated for you feed and clothe.⁶⁷ Umar had to invite ḥassān b. Thābit to interpret the line, The latter confirmed Az-Zibriqān's hypothesis. hence the imprisonment of al-Ḥuṭay'ah by the Caliph.⁶⁸ only a few people will agree that a real satire needs an interpreter before it could be recognised as satire.

It is also wrong to assume that al-Ḥuṭay'ah was indiscriminate in his satire and that he satirised anyone provided there was "material benefit accruing to him from doing so".⁶⁹ Despite monetary and material promise, al-Ḥuṭay'ah resisted the pressure that he should lambast Zayd al-Khalil⁷⁰. The case of Az-Zibriqān, who was the principal enemy against whom al-Ḥuṭay'ah directed the highest number of satirical lines needs to be studied, with a view to bringing out some salient aspects of the clash between him and al-Ḥuṭay'ah.

(H) HIS DEATH:

Al-Ḥuṭay'ah died in the 59th year of Hijrah (679-680) C.E.)⁷³ the last year of Ḥu awiyah's reign. Narrators related to us that al-Ḥuṭay'ah made a valuable testamentary speech when he was to depart this world. This speech, was, however, expanded, interpolated and exaggerated by narrators and later writers. Each of them seemed to have expanded whatever part of it that appealed to him. This speech was recorded by the author of *al-Aghānī*.⁷⁵ The elaboration of this speech is so tremendous that it almost became literary rule for later generations.

We, in the course of this paper, could lay our hands on six different materials on this testamentary speech but not even one of the reports is in any way, identical with another. The disparities in the reports were so glaring that one is tempted to regard each of the versions as a figment of the imagination of its respective writer. As an illustration, there are three different reports about his answer to a question "what do you have to say about your (al-Ḥuṭay'ah's) wealth? he said, according to F.I. Al-Bustānī.⁷⁶ "For every daughter of mine, a double of a son's (share)". While Ibn Qutaybah quoted al-Ḥuṭay'ah as saying "all what I have is for males rather than females."⁷⁷ As if these two versions are not contradictory enough. Nu'man quoted another narrator as saying "he said" for the female amongst my children equal share with men⁷⁸

and when he was reminded that "that was not the injunction of God" he said "but this my own judgement."⁷⁹

If these version are to have anything in common, it is that al-Huṭay'ah directed that his legacy should be apportioned in a manner contrary to the one laid down by God.⁸⁰ The most important deduction from the irreconcilable versions and other contradictions with which the speech is fraught is that the text of the purported testamentary speech is unreliable and unworthy of being used to arrive at any academic assessment of al-Huṭay'ah's personality vis-a-vis religious conviction. Had the reports on the testamentary speech not being sharply contradictory, one would have, with little or no doubt, easily concluded that al-Huṭay'ah was no a convinced Muslim.

The legends, though with minor variations, have it that when he was asked about his slaves and maids he said "Let them remain as slaves for as long as the night succeeds the day"⁸¹ or according to Ifram al-Bustanis source, "for as long as they exist". He was also asked to comment on the poor ones he said "Let them persist on begging for it is an imperishable trade."⁸² To a question that "what do you have to advise concerning orphans"? He said "Amass their wealth," Goldziher went further to say he added "and marry their mother"⁸³, while other legends added that he even composed some verses of poetry to support his view. The lines themselves differ from one report to another.

On request as to whether he had any other advice to give; he answered: "Yes, seat me on a she-camel and let me ride it till my death comes; for noble ones never die on their beds and the she camel is a mount on which no noble person ever died."⁸⁴ According to the fanciful story, he was placed on the camel and he rode till he died saying:

لا أحد الأم من حطينة
هجا بنته وهجا المرأة
من لومه مات على قربة

Nobody is more of a bastard than Huṭay'ah
He satirised his child and satirized the wife.
Part of his blame is that he died on a she-camel.

It is difficult to believe that a sane person can indict himself as much he is depicted here as having done.

(H) CONCLUSION

On the whole, we find it difficult, if not impossible, to disbelieve that the testamentary speech was a fabrication and a calculated attempt to present al-Huṭay'ah as a sacreligious satirist. There are abundant evidences, here and there, to suggest to us that a lot of fabrication has been done to his biography. Hardly could any story be relayed about him without tens of irreconcilable variations. The presence of these variations leads to a sad conclusion that all the variants, probably with the exception of one, are inventions of later historians.

It is noteworthy that the same sources which condemned al-Huṭay'ah totally, contained some salient points which negated wholesome condemnation of the poet. Many of the negative impressions created about al-Huṭay'ah were based on comments of earlier writers, who were mostly plagiarists of one another's works, without due independent assessment of historical facts on the poet.

The present writer hopes, in-shāh-Allāh, to publish another paper which shall contain a critical survey of the poetical compositions of al-huṭay'ah. The research⁸⁷ into his poetical works also reveals many other positive aspects of the character of al-Huṭay'ah many literaryscholars seem to have glossed over.

NOTES AND REFERENCE

1. Few of these scholars are N.A. Ṭāhā (ed.): Diwānu 'l-Huṭay'ah. Mustafā 'l-Babī 'l-Halabī Press, Cairo, 1958, pp. 42 and 201 Abu': - Farajī al-Isbahani: Kitābu 'l-'Aghānī. Beirut, 1960, Vol. xvii and Fu^c ad Ifram al-Bustani: Ar-rewa'ii Al-Huṭay'ah, al-maṭba^c tu 'l Kāthūlayiyah, Beirut, 1950, p. 518.
2. He was a Mukhadram - a bard of two periods.
3. The literal meaning of Jarwal is al-Hujiru-Interdiction.
4. Abu 'l-Farj al-Isbahani in his al-Aghani (op.cit.,) divided the name into two thus Qays Ibn^c Iylān and against Qays^c Ilān in other sources.
5. Numan 'Amin Ṭaha: op.cit., p. 42.
6. it could either be a diminutive form of Malikah (a queen) or could connote a literal meaning of: a page.

7. Nu'mān 'Amin Ṭāhā: op.cit., p. 42.
8. Ibid. p.42
9. Fu'ad 'Ifrām al-Bustānī: op.cit., p. 518
10. Nu'mān 'Amin Ṭāhā: op.cit., p. 42
11. Goldziher and C. Pellat "al-Ḥutay'ah in The Encyclopaedia of Islam vol. III (Luzac and Co., London; 1971) p. 641. All other interpretations have been taken care of by the two words "dwarf" and "deformed".
12. Ibn Sallam: Ṭabaqātu 'sh-shu'arā' (undated) Beirut P. 23.
13. Since he is said to be young during a war in 610 C.E., one can suggest then that he was between the age of 15 and 30.
14. I agree to a very large extent with the school that opiones that a large percentage, if not all, of the accounts we now have on pre-Islamic Arabic Literature are fabrication of later writers. See Taha Hussain: Fi 'l Adabi 'l-Jahili Cairo, 1927, pp. Goff; D. S. Margoliouth: "The Origins of Arabic Poetry": Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society" 1925 pp. 417-419.
15. N. A. Ṭāhā: op.cit. pp. 42-43
16. Nu'mān A.T.: op.cit. p. 43
17. For a slave girl to have sexual cohabitation with her master was not regarded illicit during the pre-Islamic, period, but the main moral issue was that the woman was either not certain or did not want to disclose who was the actual father of her son, hence his disputed paternity. An other possibility is that the woman was either a polyandrist or a prostitute (if she had sexual cohabination with 'Afqam).
18. Nicholson: Literary history of the Arabs: (London) 1969, p. 88.
19. Goldziher and pellat: op.cit. Article: Al-Ḥutay'ah.
20. Poeta of this school are known to be very painstaking and thorough in the scrutiny of their compositions. Their poems are known as bawliyat

because, it is believed that none of their poems was released to the public, less than a year after the composition, and after it might have been thoroughly edited, scrutinised and reviewed to ensure its being flawless.

21. F. I. al-Bustānī: op.cit. p. 276
22. N. A. Ṭāhā: op.cit. p. 281
23. Ibid.
24. F. I. Al-Bustani: op.cit. p. 519
25. Al-'Afqam's sub-clan of the Dhuhāl clan.
26. F. I. Al-Bustānī: op.cit. p. 519
27. Ibid. p. 519
28. E. Obey is a famous Yoruba Musician in Nigeria. It should also be noted that the Qur'ān states that "Believers are brothers", therefore, al-Ḥuṭay'an was correct to refer other Muslims as his brothers . . .
29. N. A. Ṭāhā: op.cit. (Diwan) p. 282
30. Ibid. p. 281
31. Goldzihar and Charles Pellat: op.cit. p. 641
32. N. A. Ṭāhā: op.cit. p. 51
33. The grandson of Imru'u-'l-Qays; a leading pre-Islamic poet.
34. H. A. Taha: op.cit. p. 52.
35. The Muslimic of the early Islamic period might have a high egree of disrespect for al-Ḥuṭay'ah, and later writers might have recorded such negative impression about him without giving due consideration to the standard of normity which the early Muslims upheld as against the moral

standard of poets during the Umayyad period.

36. The Glorious Qur'ān, chapter 104 verse 1.
37. The Glorious Qur'ān 49 : 11
38. H. A. Ṭahā op.cit. p. 51.
39. Goldziher and Charles Pellat: op.cit. p. 641.
40. H. A. Ṭahā op.cit. p.44
41. F. I. Al-Bustānī: op.cit. p. 329
42. Ibid. His affection for his wife is also implied in many of his erotic preludes.
43. H. A. Ṭahā: op.cit., pp. 208 - 210.
44. It is a description of the state of the throat and first - stomach of a newly hatched fowl or bird. it is bare of any feather and deeply reddish.
45. That they will continue to depend on him until he dies.
46. As quoted by N. A. Ṭaha: op.cit. p. 521.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid. p. 229
49. Poor rate - the third pillar of Islam:
50. H. A. Ṭahā: op.cit. p. 329
51. Ibid. pp. 329 - 330
52. Niky, literally means a virgin girl. ^cAbdullahi bn' Abi Quhafah was nick named "The father of a virgin - girl" i.e. Abu-Bakr.

53. N. A. Ṭaha: op.cit. p. 329.
54. This is so because the basis of the hypothesis is the contradictory testamentary speech which might be more fragments of the imagination of later writers.
55. A critical appraisal of his poetical works is the subject of another paper of the present writer. For a detailed discussion see I. O. Oloyede: "Al-Ḥuṭay'ah: A Defamed Ancient Arab Satirist" B. A. long essay; Dept. of Religious, Univeristy of Ilorin, 1981.
56. Goldziher and C. Pellat: op.cit. p. 241.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. N. A. Ṭaha: op.cit. pp. ii - xii
60. Goldziher and C. Pellat: op.cit. p. 64
61. Abul-Faraj al-Isbahānī; op.cit. vol. II p. 169
62. Hitti P. K. History of the Arabs. London, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974, p. 142.
63. N. A. Ṭahā: op.cit. p. 329
64. See F. I. Al-Bustani: op.cit. p. 523
65. Many writers, some of whom have been cited earlier did not mention, even in passing, the fact that al-Ḥuṭay'ah composed praise-poems.
66. N. A. Ṭahā: op.cit. p. 233
67. You feed and clothe yourself or/and others. Once you have enough to eat and clothe you should be contented.

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68. F. I. Al-Bustānī: op.cit. pp. 525
 69. See Goldziher and Charles Pellat: op.cit. p. 641.
 70. N. A. Ṭahā op.cit. p. 85
 71. Ibid. p. 86
 72. He turned down the different offers which were made to him by adversaries of the two personalities on the moral ground that each of them had been nice to him earlier on. This is in spite of the fact that he was a professional artist who ought not to have considered any moral factor whenever it came to pure business.
 73. F. I. Al-Bustānī op.cit. p. 582
 74. He was the founder of the Umayyad dnasty.
 75. Abul-Faraj al-Isbahānī.
 76. Ibid. p. 529
 77. Ibid.
 78. N.A. Ṭahā: op.cit. p. 353
 79. Ibid
 80. The Glorious Qur'ān. Chapter 4 verse 11 stipulates "To the male, a portion equal to that of two females".
 81. N. A. Ṭahā: op.cit. p. 359
 82. Ibid. And this is in contract to the stipulation f the Glorious Qur'ān, chapter 2:273 and a mocking plagiarism of the Glorious Qur'ān 35:29.