



DŪ-BAḤRAYN

DŪ-BAḤRAYN, a term in Persian and Arabic prosody designating a poem that can be scanned according to two or more different meters (*baḥr*). Traditionally it has been considered a rhetorical embellishment (*badī'*; q.v.) and known as *še'r-e molawwan* or *motatawwan* (lit., "variegated poem"). In Persian poetry the two meters *ramal* (– ʊ – – / – ʊ – – / – ʊ –) and *sarī'* (– ʊ ʊ – / – ʊ ʊ – / – ʊ –) are considered the most compatible and have often been used in this genre. *Majma' al-baḥrayn* by Kātebī Nīšāpūrī (d. 838 or 839/1435) and *Seḥr-e ḥalāl* by Ahlī Šīrāzī (d. 942/1535-36) were composed entirely in these two meters (e.g., *Sāqī az ān šīša-ye Maṣṣūr-dam / Bar rag o bar rīša-ye man šūr dam*; Ahlī, p. 626).

A verse may be scanned as a *dū-baḥrayn* if the final short vowels can be scanned as long vowels, if final long vowels followed by initial vowels can be changed to short vowels, and if initial *hamzas* can be eliminated.

Some verses may be scanned in more than two meters, for example, *Lab-e to marham-e 'āšeḡ, kaṭṭ-e to kāma-ye Mānī / Ġam-e to mūnes-e kāṭer, qadd-e to sāya-ye ṭūbā*. It can be scanned in three, the third being *baḥr-e mojtāṭ* :

ʊ – – – / ʊ – – – / ʊ – – – / ʊ – – –
 ʊ ʊ – – / ʊ ʊ – – / ʊ ʊ – – / ʊ ʊ – –
 ʊ – ʊ – / ʊ ʊ – – / ʊ – ʊ – / ʊ ʊ – –

Verses of this kind have been called *jāme' al-boḥūr* (Wā'eḡ Kāšefī, p. 122). Mīrzā Na'īm Sedehī (b. 1272/1855-56) wrote a poem that can be scanned in seven



different ways (*To serr-e ḥaqq-ī o to kaštī-e Nūḥ / To ḥaqq-e serr-ī o to yaḥyī* [sic; probably to be read *moḥyī*]-e *jān*), in *baḥr-e ramal-e maḵbūn*, *baḥr-e ramal*, *hazaj*, *sarī*, *motaqāreb*, *ḵafīf*, and *qarīb-e aḵrab*. Rašīd-al-Dīn Vaṭvāṭ (p. 54) mentioned a book of poetry, *Kanz al-gārā'eb* by the 11th-century poet Aḥmad Manšūrī, that reportedly contained a verse that could be scanned in more than thirty different ways.

See also 'ARŪZ.

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