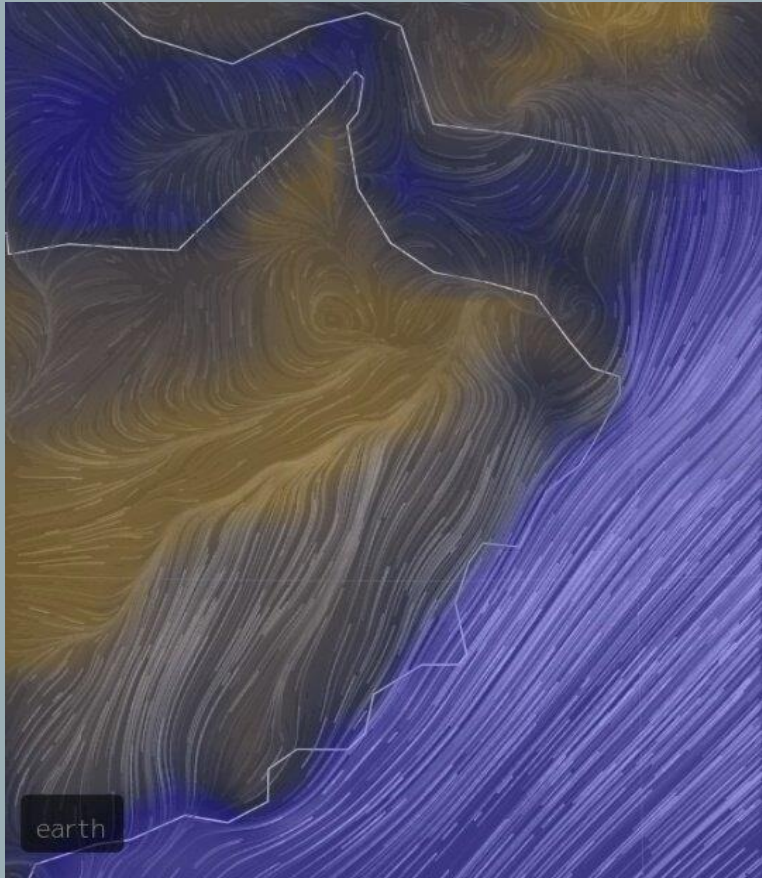


THE METAPHORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MONSOON WIND IN MAHRI POETRY



The Symbiotic Relationship of Language and the Environment
in Southern and Eastern Arabia

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Mdīt and Kaws

Kaws

“kws: kəwáys, S and poet. NM South wind (in prose, mādīt) Jahn, *kōs*” (Johnstone, 1987, 219)

Mdīt

“mdy: mādēt South wind...Jahn, *medīd*, Nordwind” (Johnstone, 1987, 261)



AP Photo/Sam McNeil

رياح الكوس

خلال فترة رياح «مونسون» والتي تجلب عادة موسم الكوس والروايح فإن «رياح الكوس» تهب على دولة الإمارات وعمان ولكن يزداد تأثيرها على السواحل الشرقية لدولة الإمارات مثل الفجيرة وخورفكان ودبا، إضافة إلى الساحل العماني، وهي رياح صيفية بين الشمالية الشرقية والجنوبية الشرقية وتصاحبها أمواج عالية أحياناً وطقس رطب على السواحل. ويوضح الجروان «تشهد منطقة الساحل الشرقي من دولة الإمارات وسواحل سلطنة عمان نشاط رياح الكوس الرطبة بدءاً من بداية أغسطس حتى نهاية سبتمبر، وهي رياح شرقية عالية الرطوبة تتجاوز معها الرطوبة النسبية السطحية 80%، وقد تصل إلى درجات التشبع فيتشكل الضباب الخفيف، كما تتشكل السحب المنخفضة مع تصادم الكتل الهوائية الرطبة بمرتفعات جبال الحجر، وقد تزداد هذه السحب كثافة فتؤدي إلى هطولات مطرية خفيفة إلى متوسطة ورذاذ، خصوصاً في فترات المساء والصباح».

The Kaws

During the period of the monsoon wind which brings with it the season of the *kaws* and its [associated] winds, the *kaws* wind blows upon the Emirates and Oman, although its effects are felt most strongly along the eastern coast of the Emirates...in addition to the Omani coast. It is a summer wind that blows from points between the northeast and the southeast and is occasionally accompanied by tall waves and precipitation along the coasts. Al-Jarwān explains that “the eastern coastal region of the Emirates and the coasts of Oman witnesses the activity of the humid *kaws* wind from the beginning of August through the end of September. It is an easterly wind [carrying with it] high humidity...which when it reaches its saturation point it forms light fog and low clouds and when this air mass strikes the heights of the Hajar Mountains the precipitation becomes denser and falls as light to medium rainfall and drizzle, especially in the evening and morning.”

<https://www.alittihad.ae/article/33948/2016/مونسون---تجذب-رياح-الكوس-للدولة>

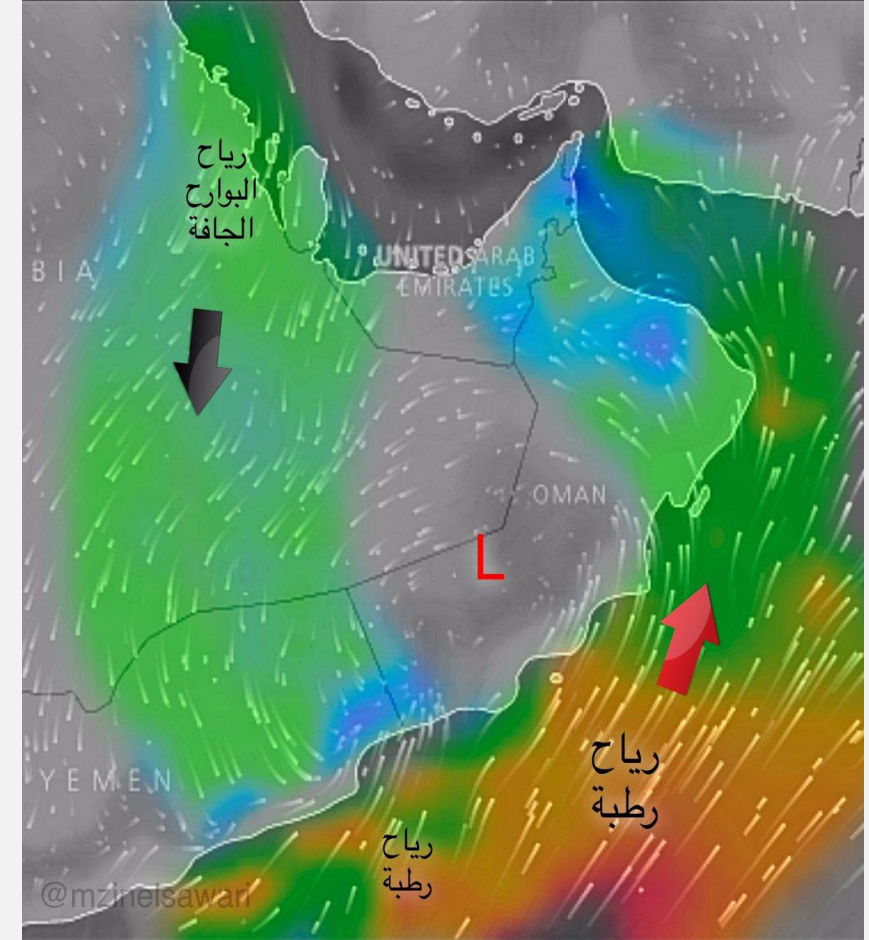


Image from the twitter feed of Mazin al-Sawārī, 6/16/2016

Conventional Invocation

- 1) *'ōdī wə-krēm krēm / teyr edōreb d-ānkīd / hēl eṣāber yeṣṭeyb*
- 2) *hēl tḏūleh emdīt / teyr ḥalles tekḥōb / hīs feyšel meḡreyb*
- 3) *tefrīren b-'āfōr / yetfīfen teyr ekā / yeḡyīben w-yekkeyb*

- 1) I begin with the Generous and Munificent / atop the path of
'Ānkīd/ where the lofty peaks loom
- 2) Where the southerly breeze arises / and arrives at its usual spot /
as though the evening were its season.
- 3) It scatters the clouds / which float over the land / they disappear
into the ravines and vanish.



<https://www.almrsal.com/post/368043/dhofar>

A Three-way Conflict

- 1) *'ōdī we-krēm krēm // šōbī ʔeyr eḡiẓwəlūt*
- 2) *ke-mḡawnī de-ḥyōm // ḡsīreyyen ettəhūt*
- 3) *we-hlats ʔamḥeyt // sebḥayt ekkerdāfūt*
- 4) *we-mdīt men emṭalā // emhawḡes enkəsūt*
- 5) *heḡs lād yḡōwī šīs // wel 'aynī haḡfūt*

- 1) I begin with the Noble and Generous //climbing to the top of a hill
- 2) When the sun sets in the evening // and the afternoon fades,
- 3) The shadows spread // swimming over the *wādī*'s edge,
- 4) Then the sea breeze from the South // stirred up strong feelings
- 5) That do not subside when the wind dies // my eye cannot sleep



Muḥammad al-Shanfari, 6/11/2010, shanfari.net

Atop the Peak of Tarbūt

1) *tār kāten w-ṭarbūt // hel mğawrī d-rīheyn //*
wet ġmūzem w-klūb

2) *we-ṭwōren emdīt // beyn edōter we-rbē // feyşel ḥawlī klūb*

3) *şrōme mehhābīb // tār elēhen mātlim // ān ewakb ertākūb*

1) Atop the peak of Ṭarbūt // at the place of the paths of the winds // when they blow furiously and are joined together

2) Sometimes (there comes) the sea breeze // between the stars of Dōter and Rbē // (when) the first season has come [or finished, lit. “happened”].

3) Now I’ll compose a *habbōt* // atop a well-crafted melody // if the rhymes fit together.



Muḥammad al-Shanfari, 5/6/2011, shanfari.net

dōter: a star that arrives with the rainy season and immediately precedes the period of the star *miġtād*/*miġtād*, when the sea is at its greatest period of tumult and the south wind (Mhr. *mdīt*/Ar. *kaws*) is blowing most strongly. The appearance of these two stars (one after the other) heralds the arrival of the spring star, *rbē*, when the male camels are in their rut. “*Dōtə*: spring rain, spring” (Johnstone, 1987: 75). *Dōter* was understood by my consultants from Qishn to be more eloquent (*faṣīḥ*) than *dōtā* or *dōte*.

The Times We Live In

- 1) *hayye bīš emdīt // rēhī men eḡawṭ*
- 2) *hāwēl de-rbē // šīs ḥell maw'ūd*
- 3) *nekšōt ḥḡīs // d-hēm šbawṭ*
- 4) *hēm fōn yūkayf // rīhōf de-ḡmōd*
- 5) *ḥōm lāmēr beh // lenṭeyren wrawd*
- 6) *men dōbel nwōž // we-trēf yehdawd*
- 7) *w-ḥōm slōm // be-klēm we-šhōd*
- 8) *w-rēkem šheyḥ // del heh yhengawṭ*

- 1) Welcome to you, Mdīt // refreshing breeze from the middle of the sea!
- 2) The first appearance of Rbē // has happened at its appointed time
- 3) It aroused feelings // that were still under wraps
- 4) They had stayed still // slender and unmoving
- 5) I want to speak about it // to make the flowers [feelings] blossom
- 6) From the direction of the lightning // and the direction [where] it thunders
- 7) I want peace // [as testified] by the pen and witnesses
- 8) A correct accounting // which will not cause [any one] anger



1) Tea with milk, tea with milk

- 2) From the hand of the beauty whose build is slender
- 3) If you sipped it, it's better than the doctor
- 4) It enters the body and extinguishes the burning.
- 5) I spoke the truth, my nature is not that of one who lies
- 6) I want to pay out her price, [she of] precious pedigree.
- 7) And Wādī Falgam that stretches up to where it disappears
- 8) The riverbed in its breadth is the channel for the flood
- 9) Where beauty lives, I might cultivate grapes
- 10) And build up a tower with many storeys all furnished for her**
- 11) That faces the sea breeze and has a wall around it**
- 12) With servants to serve her so she might rest at ease.**
- 13) Give up, my heart, let it go! Be more reasonable
- 14) It's not appropriate for your age and they don't desire you**
- 15) For one, you're old and further, you are not from around here.
- 16) I'm just talking nonsense like a bona fide prattler
- 17) There's still passion in me and it is deeply woven
- 18) I love the beauties even though I'm grey.

- 1) *šēhī ḥlīb // šēhī ḥlīb*
- 2) *men heyd de-rḥōm // w-mōṭī lbīb*
- 3) *'ān nešfek tēh // eḥeyr men eṭbīb*
- 4) *ywūkeb ḡsēd // we-yṭeyf lhīb*
- 5) *kleṭk ešidk // ṭawb men l-yekḏīb*
- 6) *ḥōm ledfa beh // egōlī nsīb*
- 7) *w-felḡem med // 'atē teḡyīb*
- 8) *mezmers b-ḡešf // meḡrē de-dhīb*
- 9) *hēl ḡīd yeḥlūl // leḥrēt zbīb*
- 10) *w-lebnē kūt // bēl bēnī zhīb***
- 11) *meḡbōl de-mdīt // w-heh mehdarīb***
- 12) *teḡdemmes kell // w-seh teṣyīb***
- 13) *ḥīh ḡalbī ḥīh // ḡtīleb 'ādīb*
- 14) *šī bebtēk lā // wel šūk yeṭrīb***
- 15) *b-ṭeyṭ het šōḡ // we-mḡōren ḡrīb*
- 16) *ḡ-ār hoh mhanṭeyb // yḡā messabīb*
- 17) *bēr bī šewḡāb // w-heh mekkalīb*
- 18) *'āḡōb be-rḥōm // 'atē tsīb*

bebtēk (< *bōbet*) : (your) age, (your) caliber, Ar. *bi-‘umrika*, *bi-mustawāka*, *‘alā qiyāsika*.

The Battle of ‘Akkebōt

36) *we-ṣrōma we-krēm // hīs alēḥen ʔrtabūb // w-mehṣāt l-ḡārəffūt*

37) *men ta`mērem ʔnśəkōt // d–`ār ḥmō brēk sōs // w-mehṣāt mhaḥsūt*

38) *wet nkūśes tentākūs // ke-mḥawreḡde-rbā // we-mdīt dōtəyūt*

39) *kem men tīt w-seh tmīt // mnōhel ṣedrūt*

36) And now *ōdī we-krēm krēm* // when the melodies gather // a reservoir that can't be emptied by scooping

37) [Beware] of saying that it has dried up // indeed there is water in its deepest bedrock // and the reservoir has been re-dug

38) If it is searched for, it is found // [as though it were a well] at the time of the departure of Rbā // and the *mdīt* of Dōṭa

39) How many she-camels when she [sic] is thirsty // goes forth from the streams [quenched of thirst]

Translator's note: when the season/star of Rbē leaves at the end of the rainy season, the wells and springs of al-Mahra are usually full of water.