Chapter 4

UMARITE CHAZAL
The advent of the Umayyad caliphate, with the transfer of the capital from Madīnah to Damascus, led to the decline of the Bedouin influence. It also widened the range of poetic themes. Two distinct types of love poetry, i.e. Ghazal developed in Ḥijāz — the chaste and the licentious types, named as 'Udhrite and 'Umarite Ghazal. The latter name was derived from the name of the famous love poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah who composed Ghazal about many women and towered above all licentious and amateurous poets. Among the kind of poetry that came to prominence in the last phase of the seventh century A.D., the pagan elegiac genre received particular attention and subsequently developed into a special kind of poetry, known as Ghazal in Arabic literature. The poets of this period, to a large extent freed itself from the grip of the poetic tradition set by their pagan predecessors.

The Ghazal was a widely practiced genre, perhaps the most popular of the urban love-poetry, began in the Umayyad period in the twin cities of al-Ḥijāz — Makkah and Madīnah. Al-Ḥijāz enjoyed great importance even long before the advent of Islam. It used to be a very important place for two reasons: trade routes to various countries issued forth from here and intellectuals often used to sit-together to discuss various literary matters. With the advent of the
'Umayyad era the style of life of the Arabs changed. They were greatly influenced by Greek and Persian culture. The Umayyad period is known as the period of expansion due to its many conquests. Many foreign intellectuals and singing girls and bards were brought as prisoners along with the wealth. Consequently the two cities of al-Hijaz rose high in status and became rich or affluent. Its people enjoyed such prosperity as their predecessors had never dreamt of. It brought about a great change in the outlook as well as in the life style of the people. The Umayyad caliphs themselves were pleasure-loving aristocrats. They restricted the charge of the administration and politics to a particular group of people and the remaining people were free to spend their time as they liked. According to Dr. Saeed Hasan:

"One section of the people of Makkah and Madīnah devoted themselves to religious studies in mosques, while another section gave itself up to a life of ease and pleasure". 203

The Umayyad Caliphs bestowed wealth upon these luxury loving people so that they might not involve themselves in politics. The twin cities of al-Ḥūjāz—Makkah and Madīnah—at that time were more peaceful than any other cities of the Umayyad empire. It also provided opportunities for leisure and enjoyment. All these circumstances put together helped the pleasure seeking Arabs to cultivate fine arts, especially music. Dr. Shawkī Dayf considers the music as the fundamental reason for the development of the Ghazal. The sentiments and emotions of the people refined by their subtle taste changed the whole complexion of the poetry of this era. The poets of this period were not in need of earning their livelihood through poetry. They were free to devote the whole of their energy to composing such love-poetry which could be sung on the musical instruments. As a result of this a new style of poetry, i.e., Ghazal came into being. It was wholly dedicated to the subject of love and romance. Thus during the Umayyad period the love theme played a prominent part in literature through the Poetry which was known as Ghazal.

The second important factor which contributed much to the development of the Ghazal was the absolute reluctance of the Umayyad government to do anything worthwhile.

to build up Muslim morality. Not only the Caliphs but their governors also proved to be autocratic administrators. They were not religious leaders. Moreover no voice of protest was raised by the religious scholars. These religious leaders of al-Ḥijāz being dissatisfied with the Umayyad rulers, kept themselves secluded in the mosques. They had no hold on public life. Consequently a carefree group of young people came into existence. They behaved, in their private life, according to their desires and their slaves provided them with all kinds of recreation and enjoyment like wine and music. The poetry that came up during this period was also to be predominantly romantic in character so that it should fit into their life style and this poetry i.e. Ghazal was sung on musical instruments.

Both the 'Umarite and 'Udhrite poets had love as their main concern. The 'Umarite poets sacrificed the true love for lighter feelings and for pleasure and the 'Udhrite poets rejected all types of pleasure for the sake of true love. The pleasure seeking poets were known as 'Umarite poets. In other words we can say that the 'Umarite Ghazal was the poetry composed by amateurs who were not satisfied with one woman. They were attracted by every beautiful woman of a respectable family. They tried to mix with and talk to them. They took love "to provide
fun or please friends and evoke admiration or relieve the boredom of their leisure.\textsuperscript{205} The most noted and renowned exponent of the 'Umarite Ghazal is 'Umar b. Abî Rabî'ah.

About these poets Dr. Taha Husayn, a renowned literary critic, has said:

It is the Ghazal of Ibâhiyyîn\textsuperscript{206} who can be called Muḥakkîkîn.\textsuperscript{207} They sang love songs and also wrote about the practical aspect of love as was understood by the public. The leader of this kind of love-song was 'Umar b. Abî Rabî'ah.\textsuperscript{208}

At another place the same learned scholar has described them more elaborately:

These poets dedicated themselves to the sole cause of Ghazal. But they did not search this kind of love in the clouds. Nor did they take absolute chastity as something of great dignity. They were flirts and pleasure seekers and they enjoyed life. They sang out flirtations,

\textsuperscript{205} Farîq, K.A.: A History of Arabic Literature, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{206} Free thinkers or unrestrained people.
\textsuperscript{207} Investigator or practical people.
expressed pleasure seeking emotions and composed poems on this subject. But they did not excel in other branches of poetry as they excelled in the Ghazal. 209

These pleasure seekers were brought up in a lavish aristocratic society who failed to resist the temptation of their dissolute surroundings. Certain aristocratic elements renounced an active role and sought solace for their unsatisfied ambitions in the pursuit of pleasure and the taste for sentimental intrigues. For example Al-Ahwāṣ and Al-'Arjī in the beginning devoted themselves to noble and serious causes but later on being distrusted and disappointed by the Umayyad rulers, sought comfort in diverting their lives to pleasure and perversion.

These pleasure seeking poets were town dwellers. They did not have enough opportunities or enjoyments like hunting and riding as their predecessor pagan poets had in their bedouin lives. So they had to be contented with the pleasures and enjoyments which a walled city could provide like music, wine, games, women and literary gatherings. The narrative literature collected by Abu'l - Faraj al-Iṣfahānī helps us to form an idea of what life in this circle of

209. Ibid. vol. I, pp. 174-175.
people was like. Women occupied an important place. Abu'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī has narrated thus about Ḥārith b. Khalid, governor of Makkah, who was a poet and in love with ʿĀʾishah bint Ṭalḥah.

Once Ḥārith b. Khalid, then governor of Makkah, went for pilgrimage with the people and in the same year, ʿĀʾishah bint Ṭalḥah also went for Ḥaj. He was in love with her. She asked him to delay the prayer till she completed her Ṭawāf. He ordered the muezzin accordingly. But the other pilgrims did not like this action on the part of the governor. He was deposed and was warned for his action by the Caliph. He said: By Allah! How worthless is his anger when she became pleased. By Allah, if she had not completed her Ṭawāf till night I would have delayed the prayer till then.210

The aristocracy produced many poets like al-ʿArjī, al-ʿAḥwaṣ and ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿah who devoted their talents to the celebration of their love-affairs. The Ḥijāzī poets were primarily the poets of the desert school. But their surroundings simply brought about a development which

set them aside from the mainstream of the bedouin tradition. Yet, often we find them weeping or invoking the deserted encampment, describing the departure of the migrating group including their beloveds. We find them wailing their sorrows at the beloveds' separation. These elements were also the main themes of the Ghazal or Nasīb put as a crown on the head of the pagan ode. For example one of his poems 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah has started in the style of Mu'allakah of Imru'al-Kays:

211. Dīwān, p. 103, "Stop, at the dwelling place! The signs of its people have been effaced. The wind and the rain have effaced its traces."

He continued to describe the departure of the dwellers of the deserted place and lamented the separation:

212. Dīwān, p. 103, "The composite of the tribe, which was earlier Inhabited, has become desolate and now gazelles and cattle roam about in it. The vissitudes of the time have changed it and the changing times bring about great alterations. So, they have shifted their abode from there". The other specimen is in Dīwān, p. 112.

Al-'Arjī also has invoked the deserted encampment:

213. Dīwān, p. 10, "He (i.e. the reproacher) has brought to my memory the moments and the tent with which my life is connected and so I am unable to sleep (due to the memoirs of the lost love)."
This type of verses in the Ghazal lead us to accept that the 'Umarite poets liked the realism of description. For a love poet the self expression was not possible without sincerity in its reference to life. Their poems seem to be the narration of known circumstances or real events. It is not far from reality when any thing related to forgotten person or thing, comes before the eyes it is remembered again as 'Umar b. Abī Rabī 'ah has said:

214. Dīwān, p. 20, "O, the dwelling place from which its people are missing and it has become desolate without its inhabitants". Waddāh al-Yemen also has composed the verses like this, Kitab al-Aqhānī, Vol. VI, PP. 204, 220.

215. Dīwān, p. 224, "The houses (in ruins) between the hills of Khaysh and Yasoom reminded me of (my) old passion".

216. Dīwān, p. 12, "What has happened to your eyes from which water pours out as if it is flowing from a patch which has opened".

It is quite clear that the 'Umarite Poets of Hijāz loved to note those details which evoked reality. Therefore we can say that the 'Umarite Ghazal was marked by the expression of sentiments and emotions which were really felt. Dhu‘l-Rummah has said:

215. Dīwān, p. 224, "The houses (in ruins) between the hills of Khaysh and Yasoom reminded me of (my) old passion".

Al-'Arjī described how he has passed his night in separation of his beloved:

216. Dīwān, p. 12, "What has happened to your eyes from which water pours out as if it is flowing from a patch which has opened".

214. Dīwān, p. 20, "O, the dwelling place from which its people are missing and it has become desolate without its inhabitants". Waddāh al-Yemen also has composed the verses like this, Kitab al-Aqhānī, Vol. VI, PP. 204, 220.
Dhu'l-Rummah has described the anguish of the separation like this:

\[ \text{Dhu'l-Rummah has described the anguish of the separation like this:} \]

\[ \text{The 'Umarite love poets have painted the scenes in which the participants displayed their attitudes and reactions. Here we present such a scene out of many scenes depicted in 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah's love poetry.} \]

\[ \text{217. Diwan, p. 11, "I endure the hardship of sleepless nights as if I remain sitting in search of griefs in them".} \]

\[ \text{218. Al-Bustānī, Fuwād Afrām: Al-Majānī al-Hadīthah, Vol. II, p. 228; Diwan, p. 52, "(It seems) As if the Persian spears have penetrated into my heart. Nay, the burning of separation is even more painful".} \]

\[ \text{219. Diwan, p. 150, "The day in which I do not see you becomes lengthy and the day when you visit me becomes short".} \]
In many cases these poets indicated the beloved by a fictitious name as Al-'Arjī in his poem addressed his beloved as "Isha al-Murjāt". Abī Rabī'ah addressed 'Alīshāhah bint Ṭālīshah as "Mistress of the camel-litter".

We also find in the 'Umarite Ghazal the thematic sequences of the obstacles encountered by the poet in seeking his mistress. In his poetic production we often find reference to the difficulties which arise out of the peculiarity of human nature, and to the quarrels and misunderstandings between him and his mistress. 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah complaining her has said:

220. Dīwān, p. 314; Al-Bustānī, Fuwād Afrāmī; Al-Majānī al-Hadīthah, pp. 194-195, "I remember (the day) when it is said to her, and my tears are flowing uninterruptedly on my cheeks.

"Who are you"? She replied, "I am the one whom love has made lean and weak and whom trials have made heart-sick.

We are the people of Khayf from the people of Mina. We are the people of Khayf from the people of Mina.

We told you, verily she has charmed you and what a charm was it!

Whenever I asked, "When we will meet"? Hind laughed and said, "After tomorrow".

221. Dīwān, p. 17, "Mistress of the camel-litter".

Al-'Arji took weeping in separation from his beloved as the cries of a raven:

Omar b. Abi Rabi'ah refused for what his beloved has accused him:

This type of misunderstanding led to the rupture of relations between the poet and his mistress. 'Umar b. Abi Rabii'ah made complaint of it to his beloved:

Though the 'Umarite poets were licentious and pleasure seeking people, yet they did not compose poems about wine. They, with a few exceptions, were wine lovers but they did not talk about it. One of the reasons for it

"You have obeyed the backbiting slanderers and the one who obeys the sayings of the slanderers has to be ashamed and repentant".

224. Diwan, p. 23, "He shed tears. So his companions reproached him when his crow cried with the disturbing separation".

Diwan, p. 306, "Layla sent secretly (a message to me in which) she reproached me and she considers me to be an irritated and extremely inconsistent lover. She says; you fail to keep the promise you made with us. And by Allah I am not a defaulter to her. I am always true to my promise".

226. Al-Bustani, Fuwad Afram: Al-Majani al-Hadithah, Vol.II, P. 193, "You have left your lover today without any crime on his part and you have broken the bound of my love for you, so it has come to an end".
was that drinking wine had been made unlawful by Islām as influence of religion was not diminished completely. These people tried their best to drink wine in concealment as some of them who drank it publically were flogged. Another cause might have been that they were devotees and lovers of beauty. They were so absorbed in beauty that they did not pay attention to any other thing. We find in their Ghazal the allusion to wine in giving simile to beloved’s saliva or face. 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah has said:

228. Diwān, p. 42, "Her smile suspends the topic of the talk, i.e. what to say of her conversation, even her smile makes people spell bound as the water of clouds, i.e. the pure water of rain, switches off the intensity of wine's toxification when mixed with it".
Only this type of usage of word al-Khamar (الخمر) or al-sukr (السكر) we find here and there in the 'Umarite Ghazal.

The 'Umarite poets were the town dwellers. Most of them were the sons of migrants and helpers of the Prophet or they were in strong friendly relations with them. For example, Al-'ArjI, who is called the successor of 'Umar b. Abî Rabî'ah in Ghazal, was the great-grandson of the 3rd pious caliph 'Uthmân. 'Umar b. Abî Rabî'ah's father was named 'Abdullâh by the Prophet himself (peace be upon him) and was appointed governor of Janad, a famous city of Yemen by the Prophet and continued in the same position in the caliphate of the pious caliphs 'Umar and 'Uthmân. As has already been stated, in the towns of al-Hijâz — Makkah, Madînah and Ta'if — the art of singing was also developing.

229. Dîwân, p. 44, "You walk like a weak person who is dragging his apron (and) wine has diminished his wisdom to a great extent".

230. al-Hajîj, p. 131.


side by side of the 'Umarite Ghazal. The main factor in developing these two arts — singing and 'Umarite Ghazal — was the desperation which had developed among the people of these towns as has been accepted by Taha Husayn also:

--These cities of Arab— after the completion of the Muslims' victory, after it took active part in the political settlement of the caliphate, after it was shaken badly by jihāds, after the transfer of the capital to Damascus from Madīnah and the transfer of the seat for the political opposition to 'Irāk from Madīnah — almost were kept away from interfering in the public life. It became exclusively devoted to private life. Thus being distressed its inhabitants felt desperation and grief because earlier it was the cradle of Islām as well as the source of its power. It was the place from where the victorious armies were dispatched, which conquered a large part of the world and eliminated the kingdoms. The caliphate emerged in it. From it the Sūlṭān expanded the Caliphate on the earth. But now its people faced deprivation from everything. For
example the capital was transferred to Damascus and the struggle between political parties to 'Irak. The Syrian caliphs developed a bad opinion about the Arab cities. So they dealt with them with prejudice and harshness. Along with this desparation these Arab towns became the seats of excessive wealth and affluences. The sons of the migrants and helpers, in Makkah and Madīnah were the owners of rich fortunes and their hands were full of what they had inherited from their forefathers in the form of property which they had acquired as booty in religious wars. They made themselves safe by secluding themselves in their houses. They formed a group of aristocracy. The Caliphs treated them generously in financial matter but otherwise harshly and cruelly. So these people refrained themselves from taking part in politics. When despiration combines with wealth it results in amusement, pleasure-seeking and extravagance. The same was the case in Makkah and Madīnah. The youths of noble families became melancholious singers.
and extravagant in amusements. They tried to overcome the frustration by way of singing out their desperations with which they were confronted in public life. Among these youths the famous poets like 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah in Makkah and Al-Aḥwās b. Muḥammad in Madīnah emerged and around them the group of singers and jesters developed. 234

The people of Makkah and Madīnah were in fact, a group of disappointed or sceptical persons who did not show any interest in the serious activity of the society in which they lived. They sought solution of their problems in merry-making and idleness. They secluded themselves from public life either by leading a hermit's life or by satisfying their sensual appetites. Pleasure-seeking had become a sort of philosophy and a way of life adopted by the 'Umarite poets. This philosophy was not distinctly expressed by these poets but it may be clearly traced out in their poetic production and we can divide it in three parts:

(1) Ideology related to love or pleasure-seeking,
(2) Ideology related to religion,
(3) The concept of decency in the matter of pleasure-seeking.

As far as the 'Umarite ideology about pleasure and love is concerned, they laid much stress on both. The main source of their pleasure was singing and poetry. Many singers had become famous, along with the poets. Al-Ghariḍ, and Ibn-Surayj were two renowned singing bards. Once al-Ḥarīth b. Khālid, governor of Makkah, said to al-Ghariḍ:

O, Ghariḍ! if there had not been any source of pleasure in my sovereignty at Makkah except you it would have been quite sufficient. O, Ghariḍ! verily, this world is a place of embellishment, the best of the embellishments is what delights the soul; and only he understands the real value of the world who understands the value of singing. 235

The 'Umarite poets believed that life was short. One should enjoy it to the full before it comes to an end. Waḍḍāḥ has said:

لا أُمْهِلُ النَّفْسَ عَنْ هُواهَا وَلَنْ شَيْعُ إِلَّا أنْقَطَعُ 236

'Umar b. Abī Rabī‘ah incited his beloved Hind to disobey her elders at least for once because only the incapable person never breaks the rules.

236. Ibid. Vol. VI, p. 224, "I do not forbid the soul from having its desires because everything will soon be over". 
The other source of pleasure for the 'Umarite poets was love adventures. They put equal weightage to love and singing because the poems composed about love were put to singing on musical instruments. In the society of town dwellers, who were the pleasure seekers, love was glorified. A group of people, including caliphs, leaders and senior ranking persons, all were of the opinion that it was love which purified and polished heart and mind, even the character of a person. Al-Sha'bi has said:

\[\text{إِلاَّ انْتَ لَمْ تَعْصِقْ وَلَمْ تَنْهَيْهَا الْحُبُّ فَأَنْتُ وَعْدًا في الْقَلْبَةِ سَوَاءٌ}\]

'Umar b. Abi Rabī'ah and al-Ahwāṣ were also of the opinion that one who does not understand love is just like a hard rock.

237. Dīwān, p. 313, "She should obstinate (to the orders of her elders) at least for once because only the incapable do not obstinate".


240. Al-Nuwayrī: Nihāyat al-Arab, Vol. II, p. 139, "If you are not in love and do not understand what is passion, you and the wild-ass are equal.


This trend was so prevalent among the 'Umarite poets that some of their poems seem mere inducement to love adventures. It helped them to instigate the Arab aristocrat ladies and female slaves to join in their flirtation and perverted life. Their most engaging pastimes were the company of beautiful and refined women and the celebration of their beauty as well as their amours in love poems. They used to defend their love by referring to some moral aspect.

'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah defended his beloved Hind when her friends made fun of her for her desire that they should also admit her beauty as it was described by her lover. But they made fun of her as they were jealous of her beauty:

\[
\text{حَسَدَةَ مَعْلُونَةً مِّنْ شَأْبَانَ}
\]

Al-'Arjī was called by his beloved at night when the people were asleep. But she also warned him of the dangers in this visit. So he said:

\[
\text{يَفْجَرُ أَمْسِيٌّ عَلَى هُوَلُ أَجْشَمُهُ}
\]

The second aspect of the 'Umarite philosophy was religion. Though 'Umarite poets were amateurish and

243. Dīwān, p. 313, "They were jealous of her due to her importance and from very old times jealousy is found in the people".

244. Abu'l-Paraj al-Isfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. I, P. 363, "I came walking in fright (of danger) which I faced (boldly). To face something with frights in love is noble."
pleasure-seekers yet they were Muslims. They may not have been the staunch followers of Islam but they believed in God, His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Last Judgement. Along with this they were conscious of a great quality of God, i.e. His tolerant attitude towards sinners. Perhaps the kind of licence they enjoyed in life was largely because they believed that God is tolerant. They used to say that they were not devoid of hope as God is merciful and forgiving. They did not consider it to be harmful to love a beautiful creature of God. It was for them a very small sin with which they should mingle the good deeds which could please God and ultimately He would forgive their trifling sins. 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah once happened to see 'Ā'ishah bint Ṭalḥah, the most beautiful lady of her time, when she was going round the Ka'bah. When she looked at him she felt that 'Umar had fallen in love with her. So she sent her maid to him to tell:

Be afraid of Allāh and do not say objectionable things. It is the place where shameful things should not be done.

He said to the maid servant: Tell her my salām and assure her that the son of your uncle never says but good things. 245

Waddāh has said:

In Islam great significance is attached to repentance from which the 'Umarites tried their best to reap the benefit. Whenever they quelled their thirst for joy and sensual pleasure, they repented sometimes in the old age and sometimes before it. In one of his poems Waddāh has expressed this intention very clearly:

\[\text{MAL AKHŠAIYR AYAM AL-ṬURJIL TANJsIHLIK YUM MULKUS U AL-SILIL} 247\]

'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah also repented though very late in his life. In one of his poems written as a letter to 'Uthayma, his beloved, with the Kunnıyat of Umma-al-Haytham he displayed his desire to repent as he became aware of his sin and the fright of the Last Judgement. He has said:

246. Ibid. Vol. VI, P. 220, "Every evening I follow the preachers with the hope of getting as much divine reward as the steps (I take to join them)".

247. Ibid. Vol. VI, pp. 215-216, "O, Waddāh! What has made you involved in flirtation all the time? Are you not afraid of the nearness of death? Pray to the Owner of the Divine Throne and take the steps which will save you on the day of stumbling and slipping i.e. the Day of Last Judgement".
Decency was the third aspect of the philosophical ideology of the 'Umarite poets. They were aware of the fact that the religious group of their countrymen did not approve of their frivolous and licentious life. So often through their poetry they tried to assure themselves that they did not cross the limits of decency while they paid visit to their beloveds either in company or in seclusion. Once 'Umar b. Abī Rabī‘ah went to a mosque and Zaynab went there to meet him. In the way both were overtaken by rainshower. The poet's mistress expressed her unwillingness to be exposed in the clothes drenched in the rainshower. 'Umar asked her to take shelter in the gallery of the mosque and ordered his slave to cover them with a silken sheet. He explained his intention at length lest the step should not be misunderstood by any one.

248. Diwan, pp. 221, 223; Al-Bustani, Fuwād Afrām: Majān al-Hadīthah, Vol. II, pp. 183, 184, "It (i.e. this letter) is from a lover who is steadfast in his love, who accepts his sin with a heart full of passion and who is punished (for the sin), not oppressed. I make penitence to you like the repentance of a sinner who is afraid of the punishment from a kind King, i.e. God."

Repentence was also taken by these 'Umarite poets as an important part of decency. Poet al-'Arji asked his mistress's maid servant not to disclose his identity and said that at that time he was madly in love with her. He gave the assurance that the day would come when he would repent his sin.

Like their contemporary 'Udhrites the 'Umarites also believed in fatalism. It was their feeling that their love being intensive was beyond their control. Waddâh has said:

250. Diwan, pp. 387-388, "Who will help a groaning lover who hides from the people the secret conversation of his heart which he has with Zaynab. I did not get from her (any) forbidden (thing) except that we both were in one silken cloth. We both indulge in secret conversations. We love without any sin. And the secret enemies and backbiters have been proved liars."

251. Diwan, pp. 5-6, "Do not mention myself to the enemies who will offer my flesh as meals due to their hatred for me. Do me a favour, you would be rewarded in a better way in return for it. I do not do favours from your people sometimes. They become a shield for the lovers in this world (with the hope that) they perhaps would make them to repent for the sins they have committed."
Umar claimed that his love had reached its extreme:

At another place he has said:

The Umarites indulged in this type of exaggeration to gain the favour and sympathy of their mistresses and to have protection against the section of the people who were called pious and who disapproved of their free love and pleasure-seeking life. Despite all, these poets could not escape the punishments at the hands of Umayyad Caliphs and the governors of Hijáz. Poet al-'Arjî was imprisoned and flogged by caliph Muḥammad ibn-Hishām for his love poems on caliph's mother. Caliph Muḥammad ibn Hishām had sworn that he would not set him free till he was the Sultan.

Thus al-'Arjî died in prison. Poet al-Āhwas was flogged

252. Abu'1-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. VI, p. 218, "(They are reproaching a person) whom they have put under Aḥrām and whom they have taken to Mina in the morning of the Haj day. (He i.e.) I do not have control over my passion and mind since I am attached to her (i.e. my beloved). So how the treachery is possible for me."

253. Dīwān, p. 277, "There is no love above the love I have for my beloved except that I kill myself or become mad!"

254. Ibid. p. 268, "Your remembrance for my heart is nothing except it increases my longing and madness for you."

and imprisoned for a long period by Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, Governor of Madīnah.  

Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah was accused of composing love poems on women pilgrims by 'Umar b. 'Abdal-Azīz and was banished to Dahlak. The famous poet, Waḍḍāh was put to death by Caliph Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik on the charge of composing love-poems on Ummal-Banīn, the Caliph's wife. By going through their lives we come to know that the causes of all the punishment meted out to the 'Umarites were their defiance of the moral values upheld by Islam though, they tried to defend their actions by saying that to love a beautiful creation is by nature destined by God. The joys of the 'Umarites were sensual, not intellectual like those of their contemporary 'Udhrites. They passed a frivolous life having numerous love adventures. They were clever and daring. Consequently, their love poems were full of drama and humour. Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah has painted a dramatic picture of one of his love adventures:

256. Abu'l-Faraj al-İsfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. IV, p. 249; Al-Zirikli says that this order was given by Walīd b. 'Abdal-Malik to the Governor of Madīnah: Al-A'lam, Vol. IV, p. 257.


Waddāḥ has no hesitation in mentioning his adulterous experiences in his love poems:

259. Diwan, pp. 140–141, "I said: Who is this? She replied: It is I, on whom you have imposed the sufferings of a lengthy sleeplessness. Whenever you make a promise to me, you fail to keep it. Later on you come to me with an excuse. Allāh may prolong your life! Do you not have pity on me or your heart has become harder than a stone for me. When she finished her talk I said and my tears were running down like pearls: You must know, O, the delight of my eyes, that you are like ears and eyes for me. So you give up reproaching me and excuse me and neglect the reckless sayings of the liars i.e. reproachers."

260. Abu'1-Paraj al-Isfahānī: Kitāb al Aghānī, Vol. VI, p. 222; "I strove for her after that her husband fell asleep in a cold night and her hand was his pillow. She welcomed me by the corner of her eye, saying: Soon you will get what you desire despite of the envy (of my husband)."
These lustful love adventures of the 'Umarites remind us the love adventures of pagan poets like Imru'\-al-Kays and al-\-\-\-\- who were more daring. But the 'Umarites differ from them in other things. They did not hesitate in taking advantage of the religious congregations, even of the congregation at the time of pilgrimage which provided the opportunities of meeting with their mistresses. This aspect of the 'Umarite love adventures was original though it was a blasphemous attitude towards religion. For them the season of pilgrimage was a season of love adventures though the pilgrimage season has great importance and reverence for the Muslims. 'Umar b. Abi Rab'ah went far beyond in wishing that the whole year might be divided only into two seasons — Haj and 'Umrah — when he could get the opportunity of meeting the beautiful ladies:

A typical example is to be found in al-'Arjī:

261. Jabbūr, J.S. : 'Umar b. Abi Rab'ah, Vol. II, P. 60, "The time would have been divided into two days one for Haj and another for 'Umrah."

This verse is given in Diwan, Beirut, P. 188 with slight change; and in Diwan, Egypt, P. 485 among the verses which are said to be attributed to 'Umar....

262. Diwan, P. 74, "These ladies do not come on Haj for the sake of Allah but they come to assassinate the innocent simple minded people. She (i.e, the beloved) pierces the hearts with her eyes when she appears. She possesses the arrows which do not miss their aims."
It does not mean that the 'Umarites did not have any respect for the religious rites. But the fact was that Islam had put an end to the framework of the pagan tribal life. A sense of individuality was promulgating among them and they were not getting opportunities of showing off their individuality but in breaking the rules of morality and religion. As has already been said, they did not possess any glory to celebrate but their frivolous and licentious life. It was (even today, to some extent, it is true) also a contributory fact that the people who live in holy places usually become used to them and regard them with less reverence than occasional visitors. To them the proverbial saying that "a prophet is not valued in his own country" can be applied. They made themselves busy in their own matters and in their love poems they described their own personal experiences without any sense of decorum and decency but all this seemed imaginary. This sense of individuality has influenced their poems as well as their private life. For instance, it can be traced in the lines where the poets kept thinking of themselves only and desired for love and favours granted by their beloveds. Even in the matter of breaking promises they made excuses on behalf of their mistresses and said that it was fate and that Almighty had created such circumstances that they were separated. Wadqah, the poet has said:
In the meetings during the pilgrimage mostly the mistress remained silent and it was enough for the lyricism of the poet which evoked a conversation. The poet himself talk on behalf of the beloved. This conversation seems to have actually taken place between the lover and the beloved. This amorous quest is recorded as an exploit by the poets.

'Umar b. Abi Rabī'ah described his affairs with one of his beloveds, named as Nu'mm thus:

263. Al-Dīnawarī : 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, Vol. IV, P. 100, "When I said: come and do me some favour, she smiled and said: God save me from doing what is unlawful. She showed me no favour till I implored and informed her that Allah permits what is done in insanity."
264. Dīwān, pp. 418-419, "Nu'm sent me the message that: "Pay a visit to me"! I love her more than the irritated sender.
I replied I can't do this. She said: Assure the allegiance of an irritated lover.
I said to Jannād: Take the sword and surround him (i.e., the messenger) carefully and look for the sunset.
Saddle the horse al-Dahmā' for me and bring my raincoat. None of the living person should know my movement.
And your meeting place is Batḥā' at valley of Yājīj or ravines at Mamruḵ in the valley of Mughrib.
When we met she saluted and smiled and said like the saying of a reluctant person.
The reproachers and the backbiters have made a breach between us. You have proved it true and you have not condemned it.
So you have broken the rope of love from me and he who obeys the sayings of the reproachers in his love should be punished."; Nu'm was a Kureshite lady, (Karam al-Bustani: 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah, Ḏutūf al-Aghānī, p. 225);  was perhaps his slave,
Thus sometimes the event was pre-arranged and organised by the mistress themselves. The two lovers used to meet in a secluded spot. This licentious account ended with a physical description of the beloved and the sensual evocation of the lover and the beloved. 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah has said:

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265. Dīwān, pp. 103-104, "She is well shaped. Her shoulders are not flabby, her embrace is complete and faithful. Her body is scented (not ill smelling). Her shin is so plump that her anklets has become silent (i.e. they are not loose to make noise as her shin is not thin). She is full of property of beauty yet she is humble. Her cheeks are bright and she is so slender waisted that it seems as if it would be broken with the weight of buttocks. She smiles with bright and nicely arranged sharp teeth. Her lips are sweet and burnished. She is like musk mixed with the honey as if the snow is mixed with the wine when it was mellowed at Jadar. So (beautiful) is she who has taken away my wisdom and seized it or who has deprived me of my senses and the charming girls betray me if they meet me."
There is one aspect in which the 'Umarite' poets were equal to their contemporary 'Udhrite' poets and their predecessor pagan poets. All of them never celebrated the charms and favours of their wives with a few exceptions, though the reasons differed. In the pre-Islamic period the poets were equally great fighters. They were busy in tribal wars and they had to battle for food and shelter. They had not much spare time for their erotic tendencies at home. On the contrary, the 'Umarites were prosperous and secure and had nothing to do but to enjoy the sensual life to their hearts' delight. Besides, they were boastful. They were strongly of the view that only those should be considered meritorious among their own group who were capable of having more than one mistress. Moreover, they were fully aware that in the Islamic society Taghbib or erotic poetry, was considered as something shameful. So they kept their wives away from it. They gave them such respect as was given to their sisters and mothers.

The 'Umarite poetry reflected the spirit of the refined society. The great popularity that the 'Umarite poetry enjoyed in the Umayyad period may be attributed to the ease and grace of its style. Its vocabulary is free from rare words. It aims at simplicity and naturalness.
The dialogue-form corresponding to the description of real scenes is frequent. It evokes the feelings and brings excitements of the heart and emotions. These poets were only interested in the emotional side of human nature, particularly in love while a group of the zealous Muslim warriors were busy on all the frontiers of the Muslim-Empire and the other group of the pious and ascetic Muslims were busy in the conquest of the inner world through the purification of the human soul from every weak or evil tendency. Like the 'Udhrites the 'Umarite poets were not against the trials in love. They described its developments, signs and secrets as carefully and as minutely as their pagan predecessors did in case of the beloved's encampments, natural sceneries and animals. Waddāḥ described how intelligently and secretly his beloved had managed to visit him:

"أنا آمر وأنا آمرة وج سرak خاشي وضعت للغ지고 الذين غاشي ومسأ وأوصى لينس بفاضي"

"قانت فنيناfelt Keif أتروكم قانت فنان الغومي سلمًا معًا فشروا مسأ زيارة أسي" 266

266. Abu’l-Faraj al-Isfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. VI, P. 205, "She said: "Meet me! I said: How can I meet you while I am a man who fears for the disclosing of your secret."
She said: compromise with my uncles and make friendship with my brothers with whom you walk. Thus with them you visit me peacefully. O, Waddāh! Thus the secret will not be revealed."
The Ghazal is nothing but the description of the poet's love adventures, his own behaviour and the behaviour of the woman with whom he was in love. In the 'Umarite poetry we find the description of the two sorts of women — the beautiful and the adventurous and unrestrained and even sometimes cultured and refined female slaves. Secondly the Arab ladies belonging to the aristocratic families or the relatives of the great companions of the Prophet or of the leaders of Hijaz or of the Umayyad Caliphs. These aristocrat ladies did not want to be surpassed by the female slaves in any matter. But they never liked indecency.

'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah had affairs with the maid servant of Ibn Tuffāna, named as Hamīdah. At the same time he did not hesitate to compose love poems about Sukaynah bint al-Husayn:

\[
\text{قالت}: \begin{align*}
\text{فلاكُ منىُ سلِيْنِةٌ} & \text{ والدُوَارُ دُوَارٍ} \\
\text{فيما أطلِ طَسِيدٌ} & \text{ وطَلَيفٍ} \\
\text{وَإِذَا نَلَّا مَ مُ عَلَى هُوَائِي} & \text{ وَصُبِيَّ} \\
\end{align*}
\]


268. Dīwān, P. 427, "Sukayna said while tears were flowing on her cheeks and her garment. He is that Muḥīrī from whom I have not taken revenge though he prolonged my imprisonment (in love) and my desire (for him). The death may have come to us in those days. So we would have not been reproached for the love and passion!"
He also described the love adventures with other aristocratic ladies like 'A'ishah bint Talhah and Fatimah bint 'Abd al-Malik. Mostly the 'Umarite Ghazal was devoted to these aristocratic ladies and their charming slaves. The 'Umarite poets tried to induce these women to love and adventures and this objective was achieved; firstly by addressing the women's vanity and persuading them to become free and independent which was an indication of aristocracy. They laughed at their prosperous life, made promise to celebrate their beauty in love-poems, or gave them preference to all their previous mistresses. Waṣṣah has said:

269. Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. VI, P. 207, "She was a Kurayshite whose beauty illuminated her and she shone like sun. She surpassed the beautiful fair women with her beauty and clear skin. When she reached her full youth and veiled herself with her Rida', she did not pay attention to the girls of her age and continued to become more youthful."
The other means of inducement that they used was to stir their mistress's emotions and evoke the sympathy by claiming that they were about to die due to lovesickness. For this purpose the 'Umarite poets appealed to the hearts and minds of their mistresses. It is said that 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah had fallen in love with Kultham bint Sa'd al-Makhdūmī. He sent his female messenger twice to her. But every time she abused and turned her back with anger. Lastly he purchased one aged female slave and promised her to set her free if she could go to his beloved with a letter and make her read it. This old woman managed to subside his mistress's anger and made her read his letter in a form of love poem. Consequently, the beloved agreed to meet him and married him. In this letter 'Umar has written:

\[
\text{elijke علیه القهراء، اللهم سلمت عليه،}
\]

\[
\text{عندما أرسلتني إلىك، بين جبال وجبال،}
\]

\[
\text{فما أحدثني من قلبي من غير علهاء،}
\]

\[
\text{والله لقد أرسلك في خمسة}
\]

\[
\text{فأوقفاً بين عينيه، فكانت عينيه}
\]

\[
\text{لم يفديها لفسه يظهر،}
\]

\[
\text{بالله في كلٍّ إمرٍّ، مصلٍّ مُسَلِّم.}
\]

270. Ibid. Vol. I, P.196, "You have killed me, O, the magnificent one, without any crime or sin. Allah has revealed in the Kur'ān firmly and clearly that one who kills some one in this manner without retaliation is an oppressor. Now you tell me what excuse you have to Allah in the matter of killing a person who is Muslim."
Waqqādī also adopted the same method of inducement of the heart and mind of his beloved. He has said:

\[ \text{Al-\\'Umarite poets have used wit and intelligence in their attempts to get their mistresses's favour. They implored the ladies that they should make promise though they did not fulfil it. They would like to live in hope as 'Umar has said:} \]

\[ \text{271, Ibid, Vol, VI, P. 223, "You grant me a favour today or explain me for what reason you have killed a man who is a Muslim."} \]

\[ \text{272, Dīwān, P. 476; Abu'} \text{1-Faraj al-Isfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. I, P. 164, "Promise me to grant me a favour though you may not fulfil it. Verily to live in hope benefits a lover."} \]
This type of verses shows that in spite of being licentious and amorous the 'Umarite poets were to some extent influenced by Islam. They were not fully erring people. In fact they were Muslims by all canons of judgement. It shows that the Muslim institutions had influenced even the development of the conception of love during the Umayyad period. 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah went further to conceive the relation between him and his beloved alike to the relation between a guilty citizen and the administration of Hijāz:

273. Dīwān, PP. 194, 195, "Where is what you had said: I will die before you? Where is the verification of what you had promised me? Set up such a Jury between us that neither you harm me nor he deals with me unjustly. You must know that in the court there is need of witnesses or oath, so bring two witnesses (with you). O, my beloved! If I had power regarding what you told me under the open sky when we met. Allah knows you would not have killed me although I might have fallen as a martyr at Ḥunayn."
But the seriousness of the 'Umarite Poetry was mingled with playfulness. It was a special quality by which it acquired its peculiarity in Arabic Literature. After going through the whole of the text, it seems impossible to draw any demarcation between its earnestness and its humorousness as we find contradiction in their poems. At one place the 'Umarite poets, urged their beloveds to be kind and to grant them some favour; and to gain their aim they used all the means; and at another place, even in the same poem, they wished their mistresses to be unkind, liars regarding their promises and misers in granting favours. This contradiction obviously points out that they were the people who were fond of adventures. Like other adventure-loving people they believed that the kindness and generosity of their mistresses would make their love-affairs uneventful and would diminish their joys of adventurism as has been admitted by al-Ahwāš:

274. Diwan, P. 223, "You are the princess. Listen to my sayings and understand something of what you have not understood. I ask your refuge from you in future to forgive me for my sins and be kind to me."
Thus the 'Umarite poets in general had two aims — inducement of their beloveds to love and adventures and the description of their beloveds. These women were none but the aristocratic Arab ladies and their refined slaves, who, in their day-to-day activities, rubbed shoulders with the pleasure-seekers of Hijāz. These pleasure-seeking poets gave description of their mistresses' beauty, adornment, fragrance and the sweetness of their conversation with more elegance and accuracy than their predecessor pagan poets.

Al-'Arjī has given the description of his beloved thus:

By going through the Diwāns of the 'Umarite poets we find many poems having the same descriptions. These poets have dealt not only with the physical charm of their mistresses but also with their nature, coyness, intrigues and

275. Ibn-Abī Dāwūd al-Iṣfahānī; Kitāb al-Zahrah, P. 165, "His attachment with love increased when she refused to grant him favour because the most desirable thing for a man is which is forbidden."

276. Diwan, P. 182, "Her cheeks are roses and her saliva is wine and the gleam of her beauty is more illuminous than the moon. So there is one who has witnessed wine elsewhere than the vines and who has seen growth of roses elsewhere than the plants. The bird was about to flutter with joy on her when it sang on a chord (or string)."
coquetry in a playful mind. Their realism in this respect was to the point and full of life and interest. Sometimes it became bold and aggressive. They have depicted their beloveds in their indoor life surrounded by their sisters, friends and female slaves. They have talked of their intimate personal and confidential problems as if they themselves were involved in it. They did not hesitate to disclose the artifices used by their mistresses. Once al-'Arjī visited his beloved in the night in full moon. His beloved asked him to wait till it became dark:

فقلت رفيقتي وكنت جئت في قمر هَدْيَتْ نَتِبِيَتُونَ حتى تدخل الظلام

Once when Wādīdāh was warned by his beloved of all sorts of obstacles in visiting her, he replied that he would be able to remove all the hindrances:

أمسى ترى من حولنا من عدوتنا
فقلتُ يا أيهاรอ في أسرتي فأعلمني
اذامآ أخذت السيف لم أحليل العين

Some of the 'Umarite poets showed reluctance in using the undignified tricks suggested by their mistresses.

277. Abu'l-Faraj al-İsfahānī: Kitāb al-Ağhanī, Vol. I, P.364, "She said: I am agreed (to meet you) but you have come in the moonlight. Will you not stay till it becomes dark?"

278. Ibid, Vol. VI, P. 222, "(She said:) Have you not seen our enemies who are around us, and every slave is haughty and arrogant. I said to her: I am a man, so he must know, that when I take the sword I do not give attention to the numbers (of the killed people by me)."
Once 'Umar's mistress with her friends was going round the Ka'bah. The beloved asked her friend to wink at 'Umar who despised it. This is stated by 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'ah in the following verses:

\[
\text{كُلُّ أَمْرٍ يَضَوَّرُهُ يَدُّ فَأَبَّلَنَّا}
\]

Al-Ahwās has claimed that treachery was not his habit:

\[
\text{شَيْطَانُ لَا أَظْلَمُ مُسْلِمًا}
\]

On the other hand Waqqās, as has been mentioned earlier, showed his agreement to the artifice suggested by his mistress.²⁸¹

Unlike their pagan predecessors the love of the 'Umarite poets was not confined to their youth, it lasted during their whole lifetime. So the time factor was not depressing for them. Because almost all their mistresses

²⁷⁹. Diwān, p. 137, "She said: Turn to him so that he should see us, then 0, Sister! wink at him secretly. She replied to her: I have winked at him but he has ignored it. Then she began to follow my steps hurriedly."

²⁸⁰. Abu'l-Farağ al-Iṣfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. IV, P. 266, "Two sort of women I do not attempt to court—the wife of a friend and the next door neighbour; as far my friend is concerned I do not want to cause him pain, and as far my neighbour, my God has made me his trustee."

²⁸¹. Reference No. 266.
were town dwellers, so there was no question of beloveds' final departure which might have prevented them from enjoying their love. Hence the next meeting was always possible. Moreover, as Islam had put an end to the tribal feelings, the jealousy of the one tribe with another was no more a hindrance in their love affairs, while these three things — time, tribal jealousy and final departure of mistress's tribe for unknown places — were main obstacles in the love adventures of the pagan poets. It made the pagan poetry more gloomy. Thus the 'Umarite love-adventures became less tragic but more dramatic or more melodramatic as music and singing was mixed with it. The main obstacles in their love adventures were religious and morals taboos. But some of them were very bold to cross the religious and moral bounds. Due to this the 'Umarite poetry or Ghazal is called more aggressive and bold. Waqqāh has beautifully described one of his love adventures. Due to moral and religious fear his beloved did not want him to pay her another visit. But the poet removed her every fear and made her agree to visit him again:

قُلْتُ: فَأَيْنَ الْمُقْصُورِ صَوْرَهُ؟
فَأَيْنَ فَأَيْنُ فُوقَهُ ظَاهِرٌ
قُلْتُ إِنَّ أَبَا بَنَا سَيَلِيْ عَالِمًا
قُلْتُ: إِِلَّا تَلْبِينُ دَارِنَا
قلت: فَأَيْنَ الْمُقْصُورِ صَوْرَهُ؟
The style of this 'Umarite melodramatic Ghazal is simple, easy and direct, it is fit for music and easy to commit to memory. Due to these qualities it had become very popular in the Umayyad period. Both men and women equally enjoyed it. The 'Umarite poets being pleasure-seekers sacrificed true love to sensual pleasure. They were bold and aggressive and to some extent impious in their Ghazal due to their sense of realism. It is the form of poetry in which the poets used to describe the beauty and

282. Abu'l Faraj al-Iṣfahānī: Kitāb al-Aghānī, Vol. VI, P. 204, "She said: Do not come to our house because our father is an ardent man. I said, I will ask for inattentiveness from him and my sword is severely sharp. She said: The castle is between us. I said: I shall climb (in) from its top. She said: The sea is between us. I said: I am an expert swimmer. She said: There are seven brothers around me. I said: I am the overpowering conqueror. She said: The lion is lying between us. I said: I am a voracious lion. She said: Allāh is above us. I said: My Master is forgiving Merciful. She said: You have made me fatigued (or helpless) in the argument. So you come when the night watchers slumber down."
merits of the loved one and the pleasure of meeting with her, having very little consideration for the sense of honour. It has very subtle and delicate words and beautiful pen pictures. It expresses the fervour of emotions and the elegance of sentiments.