My research aims to investigate the figure of speech tawriya with particular reference to its use in the epigram (maq). Starting from Bonebakker’s study published in 1966, my goal is twofold. First, to broaden the theoretical discussion; and, second, to investigate in depth how tawriya functions in literary texts. In the first part, I will discuss the ‘canonical’ formulation of tawriya (first chapter), with particular reference to the work of al-afad (d. 764/1363) and of his contemporaries al-Ruayn l-arn (d. 779/1377) and Ibn bir (d. 780/1378). In the second chapter, I pay particular attention to the theoretical discussion of mulaa manawiyya, a figure of speech that is a precursor to tawriya. In the third chapter, I will analyse the close relationship between tawriya and the Koran, and investigate in particular how scholars of rhetoric and exegetes applied the theoretical work on tawriya to the anthropomorphistic verses of the Koran. In the second part, I deal with the practice of tawriya, focusing on the role of the context of enunciation in the construction of the poetic text, and the role of the reader in decoding the message to achieve aesthetic enjoyment from the literary work. In the fourth chapter, I present a selection of epigrams from the Mamluk period, which I translate and comment upon, with the aim of showing how tawriya was at that time a privileged vehicle for poetic motifs and how it enriched the aesthetic value of the poetic compositions. Comparing theory and practice will sharpen our
understanding of the functioning of this stylistic device. In order to broaden our understanding even further, my work ends (fifth chapter) by analysing tawriya in selected epigrams. To do so, I use modern semiotic theories that highlight the construction of the narrative world and the role of the reader in its reception. In particular, I will focus here on two figures, tamn and iqtilbs, and their connection with tawriya, thereby highlighting the concepts of intertextuality and semantic ambiguity.

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