

AL-MU'AYYAD AL-SHĪRĀZĪ
AND FATIMID *DA'WA* POETRY

A Case of Commitment in
Classical Arabic Literature

BY

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Chapter on the
Tradition of Munajaat:
Communion with God

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CHAPTER FOUR

OTHER GENRES

O [my] Lord, I complain of
the wretchedness of my
condition
endlessly, and I sincerely
supplicate you,
in order that you bestow
[upon me] a glance
which suffices me [in] the
oppression of the nights.

يَا رَبِّ أَشْكُو سُوءَ حَالِي
أَبَدًا وَأَخْلِصُ فِي ابْتِهَالِي
كَيْمًا تَجُودَ بِنَظْرَةٍ
أَكْفَى بِهِمَا ضَمِيمَ اللَّيَالِي

(Al-Muʿayyad, *Dīwān*)¹

Al-Muʿayyad was not a man to squander his talents in frivolous pursuits. Accordingly, his *Dīwān* contains not a single poem that could be considered in the least bit frivolous. For example, there is no poem dedicated solely to invective (*hijāʿ*); even where sporadic *hijāʿ* of the Imam’s enemies does occur, the criticism is about ideological beliefs—unlike the norm for this genre—rather than personal shortcomings. Another common medieval genre of poetry predictably absent from al-Muʿayyad’s *Dīwān* is love poetry (*ghazal*) and when he employs the love prelude in a few poems, he employs it primarily to highlight the Imam’s role as true beloved. We can fully expect that al-Muʿayyad’s poetry would comprise solely of serious genres, genres that would serve his purpose of achieving salvation (for self and others). What bears examining, though, is the features that make these serious genres aesthetically meritorious and those that highlight their daʿwa nature.

In addition to praise poetry, al-Muʿayyad’s *Dīwān* contains three² major genres: an original genre of poetry composed to commune with

¹ #28, p. 267, vv. 1–2.

² A fourth genre in the *Dīwān*, that of the “letter poem,” is attested by just one poem in the form of a letter to Abū Kālījār in explanation of al-Muʿayyad’s words and actions, asking the Buyid king to resume his allegiance to the Fatimid state and daʿwa and to reinstate their dāʿī (himself) in the amīr’s favor (#62, pp. 316–322).

God (*munājāt*),³ a second genre with a disputational-heresiographical bent focused on the need for rational thinking and, subsequently, for *tāwīl* and its explicator, and a third genre of poems describing the poet's temporal condition and spiritual stature. Other than some of his disputational verse, these genres are clearly artistic, with a large quantity of metaphorical imagery and poetic innovation. Furthermore, they are all genres that deal with the weighty spiritual issues of belief and prayer, and are, consequently Fatimid da'wa poetry.

Munājāt: *Communion with God*

The term "*munājāt*" is the verbal noun of the form III verb *nājā*, meaning "to hold a secret conversation with someone, to whisper something to someone, or to confide in someone." All these meanings have the sense of intimate communion. The Qur'an uses derivatives of *nājā* (but not the term *munājāt*) eighteen times in several different contexts: tete-à-tetes among Muslims (most common usage),⁴ dialogues between a Muslim and the Prophet Muḥammad,⁵ and a private conversation between Moses and God; the Qur'an says about Moses: "We [God] called him from the right side of Mount Sinai, and drew him close in private conversation (*wa qarrabnāhu najjyyā*)."⁶ This last Qur'anic usage is picked up in Arabic religious literature, where the term "*munājāt*" denotes a literary genre, namely, that of communion with God, supplication, or extempore prayer (in contrast to the ritual prayer, *al-ṣalāh*). The term *munājāt* is generally reserved for poetry, while prose *munājāt* are commonly termed "*du'ā*"⁷ (lit. invocation). Muslims use *munājāts* and *du'ā*'s composed by pious people as private liturgy in popular devotional practice.⁸

³ *Munājāt*, in the singular form, is transcribed in Arabic with a final *tā'* *marbūṭa*, and in Persian with a *tā'* *maftūḥa*. (The term sometimes occurs with a *tā'* *maftūḥa* in Arabic works too, but this is a Persianism). The Arabic pausal form pronunciation is *munājāh*. In the plural form, in both Arabic and Persian, it is transcribed with a final *tā'* *maftūḥa*.

⁴ Qur'an 4:114, 9:78, 17:47, 20:62, 21:3, 43:80, 58:7–10.

⁵ Qur'an 58:12–13.

⁶ Qur'an 19:22.

⁷ For a discussion of the scope and practice of the *du'ā*'s, see article by L. Gardet on "Du'ā," *EF*, vol. 2, pp. 617–18. For a study of Sufi *du'ā*'s, see A. Schimmel, "Some Aspects of Mystical Prayer in Islam," *Die Welt des Islam*, n.s. 2 (1952), pp. 112–25.

⁸ For a study of this kind of private liturgical use of the *munājāt*, see C. Padwick, *Muslim Devotions: A Study of Prayer-Manuals in Common Use*, London, 1961.

The Shi‘a, especially in the Indian subcontinent, also use the term *munājāt* to include supplicatory poetry addressing the Prophet and his family, especially ‘Alī and the present Imam.⁹ The Twelver Shi‘a in India, the Nizārī Ismā‘īlīs, and the Ṭayyibī Ismā‘īlīs of India and Yemen, all use the term *munājāt* for such poetry.¹⁰ The Ṭayyibīs, however, more often call these “*istighāthiyya*” or “*iltijā’iyya*” (plea for succor) verses, and generally reserve the term *munājāt* for poetry composed to commune with God.¹¹

Al-Mu‘ayyad uses the term *munājāt* to mean a genre of prose or poetry composed to commune with God. In his *Majālis Mu‘ayyadiyya*, he quotes both prose and poetry prayers composed by anonymous authors before him and refers to them by the term *munājāt*.¹² In one of his poems, he also employs the active participle *munājīyan* and the verb *unājī* (but not the verbal noun *munājāt*, which is the technical term for the genre) within a description of his visit to ‘Alī’s shrine, in the context of private communion with ‘Alī.¹³

⁹ It is interesting to note that a *Dīwān* of the Lebanese born Australian Christian, immigrant poet, Charbel Bani, which contains direct address “conversational” poetry with ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, is titled *Munājāt ‘Alī* (Sydney, 1992; trans. into English by N. Mourad et al, Merrylands, New South Wales, Australia, 1992, titled *In praise of ‘Alī*).

¹⁰ In the Twelver Shi‘ite tradition of India, poems addressed in a plea for succor to the Imams are popularly known as *munājāt*, and titles of popular compilations of such “*munājāt*” addressed to ‘Alī, or the Imam, contain the actual term, e.g. *Maqbūl faryād-i nawha va munājāt*, Hyderabad, n.d. An Iranian Twelver Shi‘ite popular compilation of *munājāt*, also contains a few poems addressed to Muḥammad and to ‘Alī, and some poems in their praise which are in the third person; these are probably random inclusions (*Naghma-yi āsmānī: majmū‘a-yi munājāthā-yi Dhabīhī az Rādyo Īrān*, Tehran, n.d.) The term is reserved for communion with God in the clerical version of Iranian Twelver-Shi‘ism.

In the Ṭayyibī Ismā‘īlī tradition, the term *munājāt* has been used in the manual of prayer, *Ṣaḥīfat al-Ṣalāh* (Bombay, 1409H, pp. 356, 434) to introduce supplicatory verses addressed respectively to the Imams and ‘Alī. This might indicate that this usage was at one time more common than it is now.

¹¹ The term “*munājāt*” has also been used in modern times for poetry that communes with the corporeal beloved, i.e., *nasīb* and *ghazal*, although not consistently enough to constitute a sub-genre (cf. the modern compilation of medieval love poems titled *Munājāt al-ḥabīb fī al-ghazal wa al-nasīb*, by B. Ramaḍān, Beirut, 1327H). Another modern usage of the term is to mean communication with the spirit world (“*munājāt al-arwāḥ*”) through a psychic medium (cf. discussion of this topic in Y.T. al-Bustānī, *Bahjat al-afrah fī munājāt al-arwāḥ*, Cairo, 1919).

¹² These are collected in the *Jāmi‘ al-ḥaqā’iq* (ch. 15, fols. 525 ff.) in a separate chapter, alongside exhortations and sermons. Some of these may be found in *al-Majālis al-Mu‘ayyadiyya*, vol. 4, majlis 14, 22, 24, 25, 43.

¹³ #17, p. 246, vv. 28–29.

Verses addressing the Imam in supplication have been discussed earlier in the section on plea-for-succor closures. This chapter contains an analysis of al-Mu'ayyad's poems that were composed to commune with God.

Development of the munājāt Genre in Prose and Poetry

The medieval literary critics do not include the *munājāt* genre in their discussions of the various genres of Arabic poetry. This neglect is probably due to a combination of various factors, among them the late development of the genre, its religious character, and its peripheral nature in terms of popularity. Nevertheless, the genre is quite visible within the corpus of medieval Arabic literary texts, and the following paragraphs outline some of its important milestones, in poetry as well as prose.

The Qur'ān contains a large number of short supplications to God that are made by various prophets and believers,¹⁴ and the Hadith compilations contain many short *du'ā's* of the Prophet (d. 11/632).¹⁵ 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) is believed to have composed a large number of prose *munājāt*,¹⁶ as is his son, the second Shi'ite Imam, al-Ḥusayn (d. 61/680),¹⁷ and his grandson, the third Imam, Zayn al-Ābidīn 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 95/714). Those written by the latter are some of the earliest lengthy Arabic prose *munājāt* of relatively certain authenticity, and they include prayers that Zayn al-Ābidīn

¹⁴ For *du'ā's* prayed in the Qur'ān by various prophets and by the believers, see A. Farid (ed. & trans.), *Prayers of Muḥammad* (Karachi, 1959, in original Arabic with English translation), and A.M.Q. al-Rifā'ī (ed.), *al-Ad'īya wa al-adhkār al-ma'thūra 'an al-nabī al-mukhtār* (n.d., n.p., popular edition, pp. 33–40).

¹⁵ For *du'ā's* believed to have been composed by the Prophet culled from early Hadith compilations of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, al-Tirmidhī, Abū Dā'ūd, etc., see *Prayers of Muḥammad* and *al-Ad'īya wa al-adhkār*.

¹⁶ For *du'ā's* believed to have been composed by 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, see *al-Shāhīfa al-'alawīyya al-mubāraka* (Beirut, n.d.); *Nahj al-balāgha* (compiled by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī, commentary by M. 'Abduh, analysis of sources for individual sermons, etc., by Ḥ. al-A'lamī, Beirut, 1993, pp. 155, 253–55, 290–91, 444–45, 448, etc.); and *al-Munājāt al-ilāhīyyāt* (lithographic print, [Tehran?], 1381H, with interlinear Persian translation).

¹⁷ For *du'ā's* believed to have been composed by al-Ḥusayn, the martyr of Karbala, see his supplication on the day of 'Āshūrā', beginning: "O God, You are my support in every trouble"—*allāhumma anta thiqatī fī kulli karbin*, and his *du'ā's* for each day of the week recorded in the Ṭayyibī tradition, in a manual of daily morning supplications, titled *Ghamām al-raḥma* (Bombay 1365H, pp. 256–57, 94–98, 114–15, 135–40, 154–61, 175–80, 197–202, 221–225).

composed on various religious occasions (such as his prayer on the day of ‘Arafa), times of human need (such as his prayer for rain during drought), or more generally to praise God and ask for forgiveness of sins; they are collected in the *Ṣaḥīfa Sajjādiyya*,¹⁸ and the term *munājāt* is used in them in the sense of private communion with God.¹⁹ In the Fatimid tradition, two and a half centuries after the Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, the Imam al-Mu‘izz (d. 365/975) composed some prose *munājāt*,²⁰ thus it was a genre known to and used by the Fatimids before al-Mu‘ayyad.

Over the next several centuries after Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, the genre became closely identified with Sufism.²¹ The Sufi prose *munājāt* focused on God’s unveiling of Himself to His servant, and the annihilation (*fanā’*) of the servant in the path of union with his Creator. The Sufi master al-Junayd (d. 298/910) is said to have composed a book by the title *Kitāb al-Munājāt* (The Book of Munājāt).²² The Sufi martyr al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922) is believed to have uttered several brief prose (and a couple of very short poetic) expressions primarily on union with God collected anonymously within the framework of biographical reports in a slim volume titled *Kitāb akhbār al-Ḥallāj* or *Munājayāt al-Ḥallāj*.²³ A hundred years later, Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. 414/1014) composed *al-Ishārāt al-īlāhiyya* (Divine Signs), a work

¹⁸ ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, *al-Ṣaḥīfa al-kāmila al-sajjādiyya*, published in a large number of editions, including the one in Beirut, 1992; trans. into English alongside the original Arabic by W. Chittick, titled *The Psalms of Islam*, Oxford, 1988. Fifteen prayers in the *Ṣaḥīfa* are termed *munājāt*, the rest are termed *du‘ā’*; the fifteen “*munājāt*” are also translated into Persian by M. Shujā‘ī, titled *Dar yāfū az munājāt-i khams ‘ashara: dast-i du‘ā’, chashm-i umīd*, [Tehran,]1366H

¹⁹ *Al-Ṣaḥīfa al-sajjādiyya, du‘ā’ yawm ‘Arafa*, p. 180.

²⁰ See one such *munājāt* by al-Mu‘izz in M.S. Guyard, *Fragments relatifs a la doctrine des Isma‘īlīs*, Paris, 1874, text pp. 48–53, French trans. and notes, pp. 168–82; and one in L. Massignon, *Recueil de textes inédits concernant l’histoire de la mystique en pays d’Islam*, Paris, 1929, p. 217.

²¹ There are some brief studies of the *munājāt* genre, and these focus exclusively on Sufi *munājāt*. See, for example, articles by A.J. Arberry, “The Divine Colloquy in Islam” (*BĴRL* 39/1, 1956, pp. 20–44); and the two-paragraph article by C.E. Bosworth, “Munādījāt” (*EI2*, vol. 7, p. 557). Other brief studies of *munājāt* occur within studies of Sufism, like C.E. Farah’s section on “Literature of Divine Converse,” in his chap. on “The Prose Literature of Sufism” (*CHALRLSAP*, pp. 67–68); and A. Schimmel’s chap. on “Free Prayer” in her book *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1975, pp. 155–67).

²² See article on him by A.J. Arberry, “al-Djunayd,” *EI2*, vol. 2, p. 600.

²³ Anon., *Kitāb akhbār al-Ḥallāj aw munājayāt al-Ḥallāj*, eds. L. Massignon and P. Kraus, Köln, 1999, first published 1936.

largely influenced by Sufi ideas, roughly half of which is prose *munājāt*.²⁴ Another half century after that, the Sufi ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī (d. 481/1089) composed his Persian work, the *Munājāt*.²⁵ All in all, the prose *munājāt* genre had become fairly well known by al-Mu‘ayyad’s time.

Al-Mu‘ayyad (who died, as we know, in 470/1078) composed prose *munājāt* (termed *du‘ā’*) which were collected (perhaps by Lamak?) in his *Ad‘iya Mu‘ayyadiyya*.²⁶ The compilation also contains several *du‘ā’*’s composed by anonymous da‘wa authors, and these might have been quite early, even as early as the Umayyad period.²⁷ Al-Mu‘ayyad’s prose *munājāt* are distinct from those in the Sufi style but somewhat similar in content to the *Ṣaḥīfa Sajjādiyya*. They praise God, and contain prayers that implore the intercession of the progeny of Muḥammad for the forgiveness of sins. They are also different from al-Mu‘ayyad’s own poetry *munājāt* in their highly esoteric nature and their heavy use of cosmic symbolism.

In Arabic poetry, the earliest attestations of *munājāt* are the few ascribed to the very same figures who composed the earliest prose *munājāt*, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib²⁸ and his grandson Zayn al-‘Ābidīn.²⁹

²⁴ Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī, *al-Ishārāt al-ilāhiyya*, ed. W. al-Qāḍī, Beirut, 1973. For an analysis of the contents of the book, and an evaluation of its Sufi outlook, see al-Qāḍī’s introduction, pp. 11–22. Also edited earlier by ‘A. al-Badawī (Cairo, 1950), who calls the *Ishārāt* a pioneering work in its genre, and one with tremendous influence on later Sufi *munājāt* (Introduction, pp. 1–t).

²⁵ See article on him by S. De Beaurecueil, “al-Anṣārī al-Harawī” (*EI2*, vol. 1, pp. 515–16), and a translation of his *munājāt* into English by W. Thackston, titled *Intimate Conversations* (New York, 1978); and earlier by A.J. Arberry, titled “Anṣārī’s Prayers and Counsels” (*Islamic Culture* 10, 1936, pp. 369–89).

²⁶ Al-Mu‘ayyad, *al-Ad‘iya al-Mu‘ayyadiyya*, lithographic print, Bombay, 1380H; another lithographic print titled *al-Tuḥfa al-du‘ā’iyya al-fakhīma*, Bombay, 1412H.

²⁷ These *du‘ā’*’s by anonymous authors are quoted by al-Mu‘ayyad in the *Majālis: al-Ad‘iya*, #1, in *al-Majālis*, vol. 4, majlis 25; #6 in vol. 6, majlis 12; #10 in vol. 4, majlis 43; #18 in vol. 4, majlis 14; #19 in vol. 4, majlis 24; #20 in vol. 4, majlis 22.

²⁸ In the Ṭayyibī tradition, two *munājāt* attributed to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib are: “*yā dha ‘l-ma‘ālī ‘alayka mu‘tamadī*” (O You of elevated actions upon You is my support), and “*wa kam li llāhi min lufin khafiyī*” (How many a mysterious benevolence does God grant!) (*Khazā’in barakāt al-du‘ā’*, popularly known as “*bihōrī nī hafīṭī*,” in Bohra Gujarati meaning “manual for late-night prayer,” Bombay, 1389H, pp. 9–10, 91–92). In the Twelver Shi‘ite tradition, a *munājāt* attributed to ‘Alī is “*laka l-ḥamdu yā dha l-jūdī wa l-majdī wa l-‘ulā*,” (All praise is for You, O [God] of generosity and nobility and elevation), (cf. Aghā Buzurg al-Ṭīhrānī, *al-Dharī‘a ilā taṣānīf al-shī‘a*, Beirut, 2nd ed., 1983, vol. 22, pp. 237–38, under “*munājāt*”); the *munājāt* is quoted in full in *Naghma-yi āsmānī*, pp. 122–24.

²⁹ In the Ṭayyibī tradition, a *munājāt* attributed to Zayn al-‘Ābidīn is “*yā man layhi l-mushtakā*” (*Khazā’in barakāt al-du‘ā’*, pp. 34–35).

However, according to many scholars, the attribution of these *munājāt* cannot be positively confirmed. Next we have a *munājāt* poem composed by a proto-Fatimid, possibly from the Umayyad period (ended 132/750), and quoted by al-Mu'ayyad in his *Majālis*.³⁰ Parts of Sufi poetry, beginning in the eighth century with the poems (also of uncertain authenticity) of Rābi'ā al-'Adawiyya (d. 185/801) have some of the characteristics of the *munājāt* genre. Unlike Sufi prose supplications, however, most Sufi poetry is not written in direct address (an essential element of the *munājāt* genre), but in the third grammatical person, and it follows the descriptive *ghazal* tradition, with the divine beloved taking the place of the corporeal one; hence, it cannot be categorized as true *munājāt*.³¹ Thus, al-Mu'ayyad is the first to whom we can, with any degree of certainty, ascribe Arabic poems from the *munājāt* genre.

The earliest Persian *munājāt* poems were written by poets contemporary with, or a little later than al-Mu'ayyad. One is the above-mentioned author of the *Munājāt*, Anṣārī (d. 481/1089), who included snippets of poetry *munājāt* within his prose; another is al-Mu'ayyad's contemporary Fatimid dā'ī Nāṣir Khusrau (d. c. 481/1088), who included a short set of *munājāt* verses at the end of his long didactic poem, the *Rawshanā'ī Nāmeḥ*,³² a third is the founder of the Nizārī state, Ḥasan Ṣabbāḥ (d. 518/1124).³³ Hence, as with Arabic *munājāt*, there is no definite attestation of Persian *munājāt* before al-Mu'ayyad, and we can state with caution, barring any new findings, that al-Mu'ayyad seems to have been the first to compose poetic *munājāt* consistently as a genre in any language in the Islamic world.

³⁰ *Al-Majālis al-Mu'ayyadiyya*, vol. 4, majlis 14. Al-Mu'ayyad says he is quoting a *munājāt* by "one of the truthful, sincere ones, who composed a *munājāt* at a time of dissemination and fear, and a period of the stretching of hands of one of the oppressors (named as the Umayyads in the poem, v. 8) upon the people of the da'wa, in oppression and tyranny". The opening line is "[O] my God, hopelessness has surrounded us from every side / and every path has become narrow for us" (*ilāhī aḥāṭa l-ya'su min kulli jānibī / binā wa binā dāqat jamī'u l-madhāhibī*). The poem is incorrectly included in al-Mu'ayyad's *Dīwān* ed. by Ḥusayn, #63, p. 323).

³¹ For a survey of the major poets and trends in Sufi poetry, see A. Schimmel, *As Through a Veil: Mystical Poetry in Islam*, New York, 1982; and M. Lings, chap. on "Mystical Poetry," in *CHALABL*, pp. 235–64. A study of the poetry of the famous Sufi Ibn al-Fāriḍ is by Th. Emil Homerin, *Umar Ibn al-Fāriḍ: Sufi Verse, Sainly Life*, New York, 2000.

³² Nāṣir Khusrau, *Rawshanā'ī nameḥ* (appended to Nāṣir's *Dīwān*) eds. Taqīzādeh & Mīnovī, Tehran, 1368H, p. 542.

³³ For a translation and analysis of Nāṣir's, Ḥasan's and 'Aṭṭār's *munājāt*, see Van den Berg, *Minstrel Poetry*, chapter on "Prayer-Poems: Munājāt and Du'ā'," pp. 287–300.

Later, the genre became more prolific, although never as popular as praise-poetry. The Ṭayyibīs continued the composition of *munājāt* in al-Muʿayyad’s tradition.³⁴ In addition, the modern Shiʿite bibliographical work *al-Dharīʿa* contains notations of some later *munājāt* poems in Arabic and several more in Persian.³⁵ *Munājāt* poetry also began to be composed in the other, new languages that Muslims used, such as Urdu, Sindhi, and Pashto in the Indian subcontinent.³⁶ Arab Christians, too, utilize the term for prose and poetry composed to commune with God.³⁷

Analysis of al-Muʿayyad’s munājāt Poems Composed to Commune with God

Al-Muʿayyad’s *Dīwān* contains six *munājāt* altogether, which comprises about ten percent of his *Dīwān*: four complete poems from the *munājāt* genre,³⁸ a short-piece *munājāt*,³⁹ and a *munājāt* which comprises the last four verses of a twenty-verse poem.⁴⁰

³⁴ Cf. compilations of poetry *munājāt* composed by the Ṭayyibī dāʿī Ṭ. Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1385/1965, *Majmūʿat al-Munājāt al-sharīfa al-ramaḍānīyya*, Dubai, 1411 H) and the current dāʿī M. Burhān al-Dīn (b. 1334/1915, *al-Munājāt al-sharīfa al-ramaḍānīyya*, Dubai, 1410 H).

³⁵ *Al-Dharīʿa*, vol. 22, pp. 234–42. Also see collection of poetry (and some prose) *munājāt* in *Naḡhma-yi āsmānī*; mostly Persian, some Arabic; contains *munājāt* of medieval poets like Anṣārī and Saʿdī, and modern ones like ʿAbbās Shahrī and Muḥammad Jaʿfar Irānpūr. Some other Persian *munājāt* collections are: Mīrzā Abū al-Ḥasan Hamadānī Ṭūfī, *Munājāt-nāmeḥ khamsat ʿashar yā kilīd-i dūstī bā khudā* ([Tehran]: Sharq, [1920]; Raḥīm Kārg, ed., *Chalchirāgh-i ashk: Munājāt-o madāʿih-o marāthī-ye ahl al-bayt*, ([Tehran]: Mashʿar, [1958]).

³⁶ In Urdu, for e.g. the *munājāt* of the poets Jōsh Malihābādī (in Faḡl-i ʿAbbās (ed.), *Intikḥāb-i Kullīyyāt-i Jōsh*, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 168–77), Aḥmad Farāz, *Jānān Jānān*, Hyderabad, 1993, pp. 16–17, Maqbūl Karīmī, *Munājāt-i Maqbūl Karīmī*, Allahabad: Asrār-i Karīmī Press, [1970], pp. 89–152.

³⁷ E.g. the Lebanese Maronite bishop Kh.A. Aṣfāf’s translation of Saint Augustine’s writings (Beirut, 1867), where he uses the term *munājāt* for Augustine’s supplications to God (Introduction, p. 4, & pt. 2, p. 4 ff.); and the Syriac Christian J. Shulḥūt’s *Kūṭāb al-Najwā fi al-ṣināʿa wa al-ʿilm wa al-dīn* (Beirut, 1903), where he says his introduction and conclusion are “on *munājāt* with God” (*fi munājāt Allāh*) and the four parts in between are “on *munājāt* with the soul” (*fi munājāt al-naḡṣ*, p. 7). Cf. also the *munājāt* of ʿAlī Shēr Navāʿī in Chagatay (trans. into Persian, German and Russian, Tashkent, 1991.)

³⁸ #21, p. 253, 15 verses; #26, p. 265, 15 verses; #27, p. 266, 13 verses; #28, p. 267, 14 verses.

³⁹ #43, p. 289, 6 verses. Two more short pieces (#49, p. 297, 5 verses; #53, p. 301, 5 verses) reiterate al-Muʿayyad’s love for the Prophet and ʿAlī and their progeny, and assert that his hope lies in them. These, with their sense of supplication, have a flavor of the *munājāt* genre, but not being in direct address, nor directly supplicatory, they cannot be termed *munājāt*.

⁴⁰ Written in challenge to the vizier who was responsible for his exile. #20, p. 252, vv. 17–20, end.

Al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt* poems have eight features that are common to all *munājāt*, prose and poetry, earlier and later, Arabic and Persian, Sufi (except for direct address), Twelver Shi'ite, and Fatimid, and they may be said to define the genre:

- Direct address to God
- Spontaneous, personal style
- Plea for forgiveness of sins
- Appeal for succor
- Invocation of the names of Muḥammad and his progeny
- Vocabulary dominated by terms of pathos and complaint
- Poignant imagery
- Qur'ān and Hadith quotations

In his *munājāt*, al-Mu'ayyad addresses God directly, pleading with Him in various ways, begging, informing, and describing his pitiful condition. The *munājāt* poems all begin with direct address in the second person: "O my God" (*ilāhī*, three poems), "O my Lord" (*yā rabbi*, two poems), and more unusually, "O You Who see the spreading of the mosquito's wing" (*ya man yarā madda l-ba'ūdi janāḥahā*, one poem). He explicitly uses the vocative "yā" as the first word in three and implicitly in the other three. He personalizes the address, using the personal pronoun explicitly in three (*ilāhī*) and in a truncated form in another two (*rabbi*). The following is an opening verse of a *munājāt* addressing God directly:⁴¹

[O] my God, I hope
for salvation,
by the vast mercy of the
One Who grants it.

إِلَهِي إِلَهِي لِأَرْجُو النِّجَاةَ
بِوَأْسِيعِ رَحْمَتِهِ وَهَابِهِ

Not only do they begin with direct address to God, but the *munājāt* poems are entirely in direct address, and the vocative particle (*yā*) and the expressions "My Lord," "My God" and the like recur after every few verses in the poems. The imperative form of verbs is often used in supplication, such as "End our night!" (*ikshif laylanā*), "Give me ease!" (*yassir*), "Be generous with . . . !" (*jud bi- . . .*), "Grant me . . . !" (*umnun 'alayya*).

The formal aspects of the *munājāt* all convey a sense of spontaneity. The length of al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt* is shorter than that of both his

⁴¹ #27, p. 266, v. 1.

praise-poetry and his disputational verse: the four complete poems range from thirteen to fifteen verses, the short piece six verses, and the *munājāt* included in another poem, four verses. This brevity gives the impression of probable composition in one sitting. The rhymes, despite the shortness of the *munājāt*, are all relatively simple ones (*l* –two, *n, r, b, j* –one each), reinforcing the feeling of spontaneity, as does the fact that in four of the six poems, the *maṭlaʿ* (opening verse) is without *taṣrīʿ* (rhyming of the two hemistichs); this feature seems to make the *munājāt* more occasional pieces rather than deliberated-upon odes. His preferred meter is *mutaqārib*, (three *munājāt*, followed by two in *kāmīl* and one in *rajaz*), which a medieval critic said has “softness and simplicity” as well as “continuity and uninterrupted sequence.”⁴² The use of the *mutaqārib* meter thus confers an impression of extemporaneity. Moreover, all three of these meters are “simple,” having a single repeated *tafʿīla* (metrical foot), which also contributes to the feeling of spontaneity.

Al-Muʿayyad also exploits the spontaneous, conversational possibilities of some other syntactical devices. He uses the conditional for the purpose of reasoning, for explaining to God why He should forgive the poet: If I, he says, with my paltry, insignificant strength, were to have my enemy in my control, I would still forgive him. And I am not an enemy. You with Your omnipotence are more worthy of generosity.⁴³ In addition, as in the following verses, he uses the rhetorical question to emphasize the poet’s dependence on God for all his hopes:⁴⁴

*I see something like
a barrier*

*between the answer and
the plea.*

*If You turn away the
hand that*

*I have stretched out towards
You, O Sublime One,*

*do I have any other lord
[to go] towards whom I
can fasten my saddles?*

وَأَرَى كَمَثَلِ السَّيِّدِ مَا

بَيْنَ الْجَابِبَةِ وَالسُّؤَالِ

فَلَمَّا رَدَدْتَ يَدًا إِلَيْكَ

مَدَدْتُهَا يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ

أَسْـَٔلُكَ لِي رَبُّ أَنْتَ مَنْ
إِلَيْهِ يَسْتَأْمِنُ رَحْمَتِي

⁴² *Sabāṭa wa suhūla*, and *ḥusn al-ittirād*; al-Qarṭājammī, *Minhāj al-bulaghāʿ*, pp. 268–69.

⁴³ #26, p. 265, vv. 4–8.

⁴⁴ #28, p. 267, vv. 4–7.

Will you make sorry with
the answer,
like me, like the iniquity of
my deeds?

أُتْسِئِي رَّبَّ إِجَابَةً
مِثْلِي كَسُوئِي فِي فَعَالِي

A plea for forgiveness of sins is a common theme, and often carried over a number of verses.⁴⁵ Al-Mu'ayyad does not, however, describe or recount his individual sins, but mentions them as a large, umbrella category. He begs God to pardon his sins, even though he is most unworthy and of no significance, for granting pardon is what God is worthy of. In the following two verses, he asks God for forgiveness and clemency:⁴⁶

Your pardon is not too narrow
[to encompass] my sins,
even though they have the
weight of mountains.

مَا ضَاقَ عَفْوُكَ عَن ذُنُوبِي
لَوْ حَوَاتِ ثِقَلِ الْجِبَالِ

Far be it from Your forbearance
to become slight⁴⁷
at my weighty transgressions!

حَاشَا لِحِلْمِكَ أَنْ يَخِفَّ
لِذُنُوبِي الْثِقَالِ

Asking for aid and succor is also a recurring motif in the *munājāt*. The succor al-Mu'ayyad requests is either this-worldly, in the context of the poet's many troubles, or eschatological, in a plea for salvation. In making his plea effective, the poet recounts why he should be granted God's aid: his proclamation of the unity of God; his love for the true Imams—the progeny of Muḥammad—and the trials and tribulations he has faced in their cause. He says in one such plea:⁴⁸

So forgiveness, O my God!
For I am a man
who has "entered the city
from its door,"⁴⁹

فَعَفِّرْهُ يَا إِلَهِي فَإِنَّنِي أَمْرُؤُ
دَخَلْتُ الْمَدِينَةَ مِنْ بَابِهَا

⁴⁵ For a discussion of the role of repentance in Muslim worship and the concept and vocabulary of sinning in Muslim prayer manuals, as well as of God's forgiving nature, and traditional petitions for forgiveness, see *Muslim Devotions*, pp. 173–203.

⁴⁶ #28, p. 267, vv. 8–9.

⁴⁷ Lit., to become light.

⁴⁸ #27, p. 266, vv. 9–10.

⁴⁹ Refers to a Prophetic Hadith which says: "I am the city of knowledge and 'Alī is its door. Whosoever wishes [to enter] the city must enter through the door." (*anā madīnatu l-'ilmī wa 'alīyyun bābuhā wa-man arāda l-madīnata fa'l-yadhkhal bi'l-bāb*).

And I have fought well in
God's cause,
and have offered my life
for its lords.

وجَاهَدْتُ فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ الْجِهَادِ
وَجُودْتُ بِنَفْسِي لِأَرْبَابِهَا

He also asks God to punish the Imams' enemies soon and severely with hellfire. The same poem continues.⁵⁰

And punish their enemies,
the followers
of their divining arrows and
graven images.

وَعَذِّبْ عُنْدَهُمُ التَّابِعِينَ
لَأُزْلِمَهُمْ وَأَلْأَنْصَابِهَا

And cut out their garments
from hellfire,⁵¹
and indeed, the time to cut
its garments has arrived.

وَقَطِّعْ مِنْ النَّارِ أَثْوَابَهُمْ
فَقَدْ آتَى تَقْطِيعُ أَثْوَابِهَا

For Your hellfire, O my Lord,
is deserving of them,
and they, O my God, are
deserving of it!

فَنَارُكَ يَا رَبِّ أَوْلَى بِهِمْ
وَهُمْ يَا إِلَهِي أَوْلَى بِهَا

Asking for wishes to be granted, either general or specific, is not a theme that occurs in al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt*. Pleading for an "answer" (*ijāba*), however, is a fairly common one; so is imploring a "look" (*nazra*), that, al-Mu'ayyad says, would suffice him in the oppression of the nights and revivify him into eternal life.⁵²

Grant me a look that
I become alive by,
as it was of old in the first age.

أُمْنُنْ عَلَيَّ بِنَظْرَةٍ أَحْيَا بِهَا
كَانَتْ قَدِيمًا فِي الزَّمَانِ الْأَوَّلِ

Invocation of the names of the Imams and appealing for their intercession is a well-known Shi'ite motif⁵³ that takes its legitimacy from the Qur'ānic verse "O believers, fear God, and seek the means to come to him (*al-wasīla*)."⁵⁴ The Fatimids placed great importance on this invocation. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *Kutāb al-Himma* expounds on this motif, quoting a saying of the Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765):⁵⁵

⁵⁰ #27, p. 266, vv. 11–13, end.

⁵¹ Reference to Qur'an 22:19.

⁵² #43, p. 289, v. 6, end; "the first age" refers to the time of first creation, before the original sin, and before the creation of the heavens and earth.

⁵³ See also Schimmel's comments on the importance to all Muslims, including Sunnis, of invoking the name of the Prophet Muḥammad (*Deciphering the Signs of God: A Phenomenological Approach to Islam*, Edinburgh, 1994, p. 146).

⁵⁴ Qur'an 5:35, trans. Arberry; see also Qur'an 17:57.

⁵⁵ *K. al-Himma*, Ḥusayn ed., p. 51, *Code of Conduct* (Eng. trans.), p. 42.

We are the doors to God, and the means [to get near to] Him for His servants: whosoever seeks nearness through us gets near; whosoever seeks intercession from us, his intercession is successful; whosoever begs mercy through us gains mercy; and whosoever turns away from us has gone astray.

Al-Mu'ayyad invokes the names of Muḥammad and his progeny in almost all his *munājāt* and seeks from God the success of their intercession for himself. He uses the term “*tawassul*” (lit. seeking a means of coming near to God, here, through the Imams) explicitly in this context in one poem.⁵⁶

The vocabulary of the *munājāt* reflects its poignant contents. Forgiveness (‘*afw*, *ghafr*) is a common word, as are words related to its theme, such as sins and errors (*dhunūb*, *khaṭāyā*). Words conveying the poet’s troubles and his distressed condition also recur, such as night(s) (*layl*, *layālī*) and care (*hamm*), heat (*ḥarr*) and its antonym, shade (*zilāl*), hardship (‘*usr*) and its antonym, ease (*yusr*), weeping (*abkī*) and complaint (*ashkū*), grief (*ḥazan*), injury (lit. injured person, *mustaḍām*) and troubles (*miḥan*). Words used to convey the positive pleas of the *munājāt* are mercy (*raḥma*), salvation (*najāt*), hope (*amal*, *rajā’*), plea (*da‘wā*, *su‘āl*) and answer (*ijāba*).

The imagery is not abundant, but it is moving and powerful where it does occur: a mendicant stretching out his hand for alms;⁵⁷ the poet constantly prostrating himself before God during the day and continuously weeping and complaining in the darkness of the night;⁵⁸ the roaring sea of God’s strength (*qudra*), which has swamped the poet’s ship from anchoring or from setting forth;⁵⁹ al-Mu’ayyad having become pure gold for the sun of right guidance (Imam) and the futility of fire trying to consume pure gold.⁶⁰ In the following verse, personified night strikes the poet with all kinds of hardships:⁶¹

[O] my God, verily, for the
Progeny of the Prophet,
the nights have struck me
with their sufferings.

إِلهِي إِنِّي بِسَائِلِ النَّبِيِّ
دَهَسْتَنِي اللَّيَالِي بِأَوْصَالِهَا

⁵⁶ #28, p. 267, v. 11.

⁵⁷ #28, p. 257, v. 5.

⁵⁸ #20, p. 252, v. 18.

⁵⁹ #26, p. 265, v. 6.

⁶⁰ #26, p. 265, vv. 12–13.

⁶¹ #27, p. 266, vv. 7–8.

How they have made me
swallow of their bitter drink!⁶²
and how they have wearied
me by raising up their
banner[s]!⁶³

فَكَمْ حَرَّعْتَنِي مِنْ صَابِهَا
وَكَمْ أَنْصَبْتَنِي بِتَنْصَابِهَا

From time to time in his *munājāt*, al-Muʿayyad alludes to Qurʾanic verses and Prophetic Hadiths just as he does in his other genres. In one verse, he quotes a verse from the Qurʾān verbatim, “Verily, with hardship comes ease” (*inna maʿa al-ʿusri yusran*),⁶⁴ prefacing this with a plea for ease. Another time, he alludes to the Hadith “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its door” (*anā madīnat al-ʿilmi wa ʿaliyyun bābuhā*):⁶⁵

In addition to these eight features of *munājāt* that apply universally to the genre, there are two more features that are relevant to our discussion of al-Muʿayyad’s *munājāt* in particular. First, praise of the Imams, which occurs in almost all al-Muʿayyad’s poems regardless of their genre, is relatively light here. It occurs only in the context of the poet’s invoking their names and declaring his love for them. Thus, there are one or two verses in some *munājāt* that contain praise of the Imam in passing,⁶⁶ and none in others.⁶⁷ The longest praise section in al-Muʿayyad’s *munājāt* is the following five verses.⁶⁸

... for I have gained sanctity,
O Sublime One,
through [salvation’s] masjid
and pulpit:

the prophet of night guidance
and his legatee,⁶⁹ who,
when war bares its fangs,

his sharp sword smites necks,
like fire’s burning of its logs.

فإِنِّي تَحَرَّمْتُ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ
مَسْجِدَهَا وَمِحْرَابَهَا
نَبِيِّ الْهُدَى وَالْوَصِيِّ الَّذِي
إِذَا أَفْتَرَّتِ الْحَرْبُ عَنْ نَابِهَا
تَلَفَّحَ صَارِمُهُ بِالطَّلَبِ
تَلَفَّحَ نَوَارُهَا بِأَقْصَابِهَا

⁶² *Šāb*: a bitter tree, or the milky juice extracted from it (cf., Lane, ṣ-w-b); could also be taken from *šāb* (ṣ-ʿ-b), with the hamza dropped to form *šāb* for poetic need, meaning “full [cup].”

⁶³ *bi-tūṣābihā: tūṣāb tanṣāb* does not occur in any of the many lexicons I have looked at; could be 1) *qiyāsī tafʿāl/tifʿāl* form of *naṣaba*, or 2) *tanāṣīb*: banners, back-formation to singular.

⁶⁴ #26, p. 265, v. 15, Qurʾān, 94:5–6.

⁶⁵ #27, p. 266, v. 9, Hadith cited in *Sharḥ al-akhbār*, 1: 89–90.

⁶⁶ #26, v. 11, #27, vv. 3–4, #28, v. 12.

⁶⁷ *Dīwān*, poems 20, 21, 43.

⁶⁸ #27, p. 266, vv. 2–6.

⁶⁹ I.e., the masjid and pulpit of salvation are the prophet and his legatee. Grammatically, the latter two terms are in apposition (*badal*) to the former pair.

And his progeny,⁷⁰ a progeny
that has become elevated
in its lineage and its good
character.

وعتبرته عترة قد علّت
بأنسها وبأحسها

Allegiance to them, for the
people of allegiance,
is a sign of purity of line.

ولا يثبتهم لرجال الولاء
علامة طهر لأنسها

Second, the contents of four out of al-Mu'ayyad's six *munājāt* do not refer to any particular time or series of events. Two *munājāt*, however, are clearly grounded in a historical context, both were composed during his yearlong exile in Jerusalem. The first historically grounded *munājāt*⁷¹ contains a number of images that refer to the poet's temporal reality: his old, infirm body shaken in howdahs and thrown into the corner of a masjid in Jerusalem, after having spent all sixty years of his life in the service of the Fatimid da'wa. Al-Mu'ayyad expresses shock at the unexpected pain and humiliation forced on him by this exile, and he asks God to end his night and usher in the morning of deliverance. The second historically grounded *munājāt*⁷² is part of another poem, and the historical connection (a challenge to the Fatimid vizier who was responsible for al-Mu'ayyad's exile) is established in the sixteen verses preceding the four *munājāt* verses. The *munājāt* itself has no historical reference; al-Mu'ayyad turns away completely from the vizier, and addresses God in an impassioned plea for aid and deliverance.

Since al-Mu'ayyad's two historically grounded *munājāt* were both composed during his Jerusalem exile, it is possible that all his *munājāt* were composed either just around this time or a little later, during the last stage of his life between exile in 453/1061 and death in 470/1078.

The following is a complete *munājāt* from al-Mu'ayyad's *Dīwān*, which displays all the features discussed above:⁷³

[O] my God, I have called upon
You in private and in public,
O master of the kingdom
in creation and command!⁷⁴

إلهي دعوتك سراً و جهراً
أيامالك الملك خلقنا وأمرنا

⁷⁰ Grammatically, conjoined with (*ma'ūf 'alā*) the prophet and his legate.

⁷¹ #21, p. 253.

⁷² #20, p. 252, vv. 17–20, end.

⁷³ #26, p. 265, vv. 1–15, complete.

⁷⁴ Cf. Majālis Mu'ayyadiyya, vol. 1, majlis II: *khalq* is *dār al-dunyā*; *amr* is *dār al-ibdā'*.

*O You who dispatches us
however he chooses,
in life and in death, in
congregation [after death]
and in resurrection.*

وَيَا مَنْ يُصَرِّفُنَا كَيْفَ شَاءَ
حَيَاةً وَمَوْتًا وَحَشْرًا وَنَشْرًا

*[O] my God, I have fastened
the saddles of hope
towards You, so pardon,
my God, and forgiveness!*

إِلَهِي شَدَدْتُ رِحَالَ الرَّجَاءِ
إِلَيْكَ فَعَفِّوْا إِلَهِي وَعَفِّرَا

*[O] my God, if I were to
have power over the enemy,
I would stretch out a veil of
pardon over him.*

إِلَهِي لَوْ أَنِّي مَلَكَتُ الْعَدُوَّ
مَدَدْتُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْعَفْوِ سِتْرًا

*And what is my value among
[Your] servants,
such that I have the power
of benefiting another or
harming him!*

وَمَا قَدْرُ مِثْلِي بَيْنَ الْعَبِيدِ
فَأَمْلِكْ نَفْعًا لِعِبْرِي وَضُرًّا

*And wherefrom such strength
for me, [for] the sea of
[God's strength]
has swamped my ship
while anchored and
while on course!*

وَمِنْ أَيْنَ لِي قُدْرَةٌ بِحَرْهَا
تَغَطَّمَطْ مُرْسِي لِفُلْكَي وَمَجْرَى

*Then if someone like me,
with my littleness,
and my being the littlest
of the little in value,*

فَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْلِي عَلَى قَلْتِي
وَكُونِي أَقْلَ الْأَقْلَيْنِ قَدْرًا

*can be generous with pardon
if I have power [over my
enemy],
then You are more worthy,
and [yet] more worthy,
of generosity!*

أَمْنُ بَعْفُو إِذَا مَا قَدَرْتُ
فَأَنْتَ بِالْمَنْ أَحْرَى وَأَحْرَى

*[Moreover,] I am not an
enemy, for I have laid open,
[my] heart,⁷⁵ by Your Right,
O [my] Lord, for religion.*

وَلَسْتُ عَدُوًّا فَإِنِّي شَرَحْتُ
وَحَقَّقْتُ يَارَبِّ لِلدِّينِ صَدْرًا

⁷⁵ Lit. breast.

And the proclamation of my
Lord's unity, has become,
in my insides,
the concealed secret of its
secrets.

وتوحيده ربّي بين الحشاشا

غداً سرّاً سرّاً المستسراً

And I have turned my face
towards the progeny of the
Messenger
in allegiance, and I have
turned my back to the
malicious one.

وولّيت وجهي لآل الرسول

ولاءً وولّيت ذاك البعض ظهراً

Then what do I care about
hellfire? The long hands
of my right understanding
make hellfire's hand short!

فمالي وللنار طولى يدي

رشادي ترد يد النار قصراً

I have become pure gold for
the sun of right guidance,
and fire dare not consume
pure gold!

وأصبحت تبراً لشمس الهدى

وهيئات أن تأكل النار تبراً

[O] my God, my intention
is good,
so be generous with that which
is good as an abode!

إلهي لقد حسنت نيتي

فجدّ بآلتي حسنت مستقرّاً

And give me ease from
my hardship,
for indeed You have said,
"Verily, with hardship
comes ease."⁷⁶

ويسرّ لي اليسر من عسرّي

فقد قلت إن مع العسر يسراً

Thus, we see that al-Mu'ayyad contributed to the development of a new genre in Arabic poetry. Moreover, in the Ṭayyibī da'wa, his own *munājāt* are still used in liturgy and prayer today.

Disputational-Heresiographical Verse

Al-Mu'ayyad was a master of the art of disputation (*munāzara*) that was popular in the medieval Islamic world, and he had participated in at least two religious-sectarian disputations while in attendance at

⁷⁶ Reference to Qurʾān 94:5, 6.

Munājāt

Four of al-Mu'ayyad's six *munājāt* are used for "iḥyā' *al-layl*" (lit. "keeping the night alive"), as a means to pray and commune with God in the deep of the night (*ilāhiya dāqa 'alayya l-khunāqū, ilāhī da'awtuka sirran wa jahrā, ilāhiya innī la'arju n-najāta, yā rabbi ashkū sū'a ḥātī*).¹⁷ All five *munājāt* are included in a Ṭayyibī manual titled *Khazā'in barakāt al-du'ā'*, which contains instructions for supererogatory ritual prayers (*ṣalāt al-taṭawwū'*) meant to be recited in the deep of the night.¹⁸ The manual generally contains prose *du'ās* and poetry—*munājāt*, *iltijā'iyya* verses and panegyrics—taken from various Fatimid-Ṭayyibī sources.¹⁹ The verses are included in the *du'ās* that are the prose counterpart of the poetry *munājāt*, which are meant to be recited after each of the *taṭawwū'* prayers. Al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt* are included with the *du'ās* that come after the five *taṭawwū'* prayers for forgiveness of sins (*maghfirat al-dhunūb*), granting of wishes (*qaḍā' al-ḥawā'ij*), removal of grief and cares (*kashf al-hamm wa al-ghamm*), light in the grave (*nūr al-qabr*), and the twelve-*rak'a* late night prayer (*al-tahajjud*).²⁰

The manual is used by Ṭayyibīs most intensively during the month of Ramaḍān when they pray late in the night, either alone at home or in a maṣjid congregation. *Laylat al-qadr* is the most important of the nights of Ramaḍān, and almost every single Ṭayyibī, everywhere in the world, attends one of the small or large congregational gatherings convened on this night. Al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt*, along with the other poems in the manual, are chanted collectively in the congregation led by a designated clergyman. The following is one of the shorter *munājāt* that is used as liturgy:²¹

¹⁷ #20 (p. 252, vv. 17–20, end), #26 (p. 265, 15 verses), #27 (p. 266, 13 verses), and #28 (p. 267, 14 verses) are recited in Ṭayyibī liturgy. #21 (p. 253, 15 verses) and #43 (p. 289, 6 verses) are not. Also used for liturgy is the *munājāt*-like short poem #53 (p. 301, 5 verses). Many of al-Mu'ayyad's *munājāt* have been translated earlier in this study. See Index.

¹⁸ Bombay, 1389. The deep of the night is the preferred time, but these *taṭawwū'* prayers may be prayed at any other prayer-time as well, and the *du'ās* may be recited at any time during the night or day.

¹⁹ E.g. *du'ās* from *al-Ṣaḥīfa al-kāmila al-sajjādiyya* of the Imam 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn; *du'ās* from *al-Ad'iya al-Mu'ayyadiyya*; *du'ās* composed by the previous Ṭayyibī dā'ī Ṭāhir Sayf al-Dīn (d. 1385/1965), and a couple of *munājāt* attributed to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (one of these <yā dha l-ma'ālī 'alayka mu'tamadī> cited partially in *al-Ṣaḥīfa al-'Alawīyya* pp. 160–61).

²⁰ *Khazā'in barakāt al-du'ā'*, pp. 35–36, 51, 68–70, 82–83, 93–95.

²¹ #20, p. 252, vv. 17–20.

O my God, my throat
is choked
and I have no strength left
[to face] trials;
I shall lay my cheek on the
ground before you in the
day,
and complain and weep
when night becomes dark—
perhaps in pity you will
deliver me from cares
and remove my sorrows.
O my God, grant asylum to
your wronged servant
by your grace, you are the
one worthy of bestowing
grace.

إلهي ضاقتْ عَلَيَّ الخُنَاقُ
وَلَمْ تَبْقَ لِي طَاقَةٌ بِالمِحْنِ
سَأفْرِشُ خَدِّي لَدَيْكَ التَّهَارَ
وَأشْكُو وَأبْكِي إِذَا اللَيْلُ جَنَّ
عَسَى أَنْ تُفَرِّجَ عَنِّي المُمُومَ
حَنَانًا وَتُذْهِبَ عَنِّي الحَزْنَ
إلهي أَجِرْ عَبْدَكَ المُسْتَضَامَ
بِمَنِّكَ إِنَّكَ أَهْلُ المِنِّ

Iltijāʿ

Ṭayyibī liturgy uses three sets of al-Muʿayyad’s plea-for-succor (*iltijāʿiyya*) verses. Two are pieces from larger poems, and the third is a complete short poem. The first piece is made up of six verses from the closure section of a long panegyric, in which al-Muʿayyad addresses the Imams and begs them for succor (*yā bani l-muṣṭafā*).²² The Ṭayyibī prayer manual *Khazāʿin* includes this piece along with the *taṭawwūʿ* prayer for the granting of wishes (*qaḍāʿ al-ḥawāʿij*).²³ This same set of verses is also chanted from time to time in various daʿwa religious assemblies (called “*majlis*”) convened for commemorative or celebratory purposes. The components of the *majlis* are many and varied, integral among them Qurʾān recitation and the chanting of religious poems. Al-Muʿayyad’s poems often form part of the ritual liturgy.

The second piece is made up of three verses from the last part of a description-of-self poem, and in it, al-Muʿayyad asks the Imams and ʿAlī for aid (*idhā*²⁴ *ḍāqa bī*).²⁵ It is recited at the beginning of

²² #3, p. 209, vv. 44–50, 52.

²³ *Khazāʿin barakāt al-duʿāʿ*, pp. 51–52.

²⁴ “*Idhā*” is the current Bohra version, meaning the same as the original “*faʿin*” (cf. all *Dīwān* mss. and ed.) The change was probably deemed appropriate because a conjunction (here, the *fā*) is not needed when these verses are recited without their preceding ones of the original poem.

²⁵ #39, p. 282, vv. 13–14, 16.