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al-NAWĀJĪ

(ca. 1386 – 13 May 1455)

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WORKS

Dīwān shiʿr al-Nawājī (Collected Poetry);
al-Fawāʾid al-ʿarūḍiyyah (Interesting Observations on Matters of Meter);
al-Fawāʾid al-ʿilmiyyah fī funūn min al-lughāt (Interesting Scholarly Observations on Different Branches of Lexicography);
Ḥalbat al-kumayt (The Racecourse of the Bay);
Khalʿ al-ʿidhār fī waṣf al-ʿidhār (Throwing Off All Restraint, on Describing the Sprouting Beard);
al-Ḥujjah fī sariqāt Ibn Ḥijjah (The Proof, on Ibn Ḥijjah's Plagiarisms);
Marātiʿ al-ghizlān fī waṣf al-ḥisān min al-ghilmān (The Ghazelle's Pastures, on the Description of Beautiful Youths);
al-Maṭāliʿ al-shamsiyyah fī 'l-madāʾiḥ al-nabawiyyah (Places of Sunrise, concerning Eulogies on the Prophet);
Muqaddimah fī ṣināʿat al-naẓm wa'l-nathr (Introductory Remarks on the Art of Composing Poetry and Prose);
Rawḍat al-mujālasah wa-ghayḍat al-mujānasah (The Garden of Company and Thicket of Kinship);
Risālah fī ḥukm ḥarf al-muḍāraʿah (Epistle on the Rules concerning the Prefixes of the Verb in the Imperfect Tense);
Riyāḍ al-albāb wa-maḥāsin al-ādāb (Intellectual Gardens and Literary Beauties);
al-Ṣabūḥ wa'l-ghabūq (The Morning and the Evening Drink);
Ṣaḥāʾif al-ḥasanāt (Records of Good Deeds = Pages Full of Good Things = Faces with Beautiful Ornaments);
al-Shifāʾ fī badīʿ al-iktifāʾ (Health-bringing Information on the Effectiveness of Truncation);
Taʾhīl al-gharīb (A Welcome to Marvelous Poetry);
al-Ṭirāz al-muwashshā fī 'l-inshā (Embellished Embroidery: On Artful Documents in Rhymed Prose);
ʿUqūd al-laʾāl fī 'l-muwashshaḥāt wa'l-azjāl (Pearl Necklaces: Strophic Poems in Literary and Colloquial Arabic);
Zahr al-rabīʿ fī 'l-mathal al-badīʿ (Spring Flowers: Amazing Proverbial Verses), abridged version of *Tuḥfat al-Adīb* ("A Precious Gift to the Man of Letters"), now lost.

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Shams al-Dīn al-Nawājī, whose full name is Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿUthmān al-Qāhirī al-Shāfiʿī, is primarily known as an author of literary anthologies, especially in the fields of love poetry and wine poetry, but was also a celebrated poet, especially as an author of poems in praise of the Prophet. In addition, he was a scholar in the field of *adab* and an author of textbooks in various fields in language and linguistics.

With the exception of two pilgrimages, al-Nawājī spent his entire life in Egypt. It is probable that his family had a rural background, since the *nisbah* "al-Nawājī" refers to the village of al-Nawāj northeast of Ṭanṭā in the Western Delta. But it cannot be established whether he was born there or in Cairo, nor do we know the exact date of his birth. According to al-Sakhāwī, al-Nawājī was born in Cairo after 1383. Ibn Taghrī Birdī claims to have heard al-Nawājī say that he was born in al-Nawāj shortly before 1386. Al-Nawājī received his first education in the Zāwiyat al-Abnāsī, where he memorized the Qur'an as well as the standard textbooks on grammar and on Shāfiʿī law. He continued his studies with some of the most respected scholars of the time, including Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Jazarī (d. 1429) in Qur'anic readings and recitation, Shams al-Dīn al-Birmāwī (d. 1428) and Burhān al-Dīn al-Bayjūrī (d. 1422) in the *uṣūl* and *furūʿ* (legal theory and positive law) of Shāfiʿī law, Walī al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d. 1423) in Hadith, ʿAlā' al-Dīn Ibn al-Mughulī (d. 1425), Shams al-Dīn al-Bisāṭī (d. 1439) and others in grammar and lexicography. Another important teacher was ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn Jamāʿah (d. 1416), a widely read scholar who taught grammar, medicine and philosophy. In the field of *adab*, al-Nawājī found a teacher and friend in the famous *adīb* Badr al-Dīn al-Damāmīnī (d. 1424), who is often quoted in al-Nawājī's own works. The same holds true for al-Damīrī (d. 1405), a versatile scholar in many branches of the Islamic sciences, but most famous for his encyclopedia on animals, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān*. A different case is al-Nawājī's relation to Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 1449), the greatest Hadith scholar of post-formative Islam and powerful chief Shāfiʿī judge of Egypt. Ibn Ḥajar was among al-Nawājī's teachers of Hadith. Even later, al-Nawājī, who survived Ibn Ḥajar by only a few years, continued his relations with Ibn Ḥajar and dedicated a fair number of poems to him. During these years, al-Nawājī also spent some time in Damietta and in Alexandria (probably meeting al-Damāmīnī there) as well as in al-Maḥallah al-Kubrā, a town near to al-Nawāj, the place of origin of his family.

Al-Nawājī's education allowed him to pursue a career as an academic teacher. We know that he taught different branches of *adab*, especially prosody. But since the *madrasah*s offered only a few well-paid teaching positions in the field of *adab*, he derived a better income as a teacher of Hadith in the Jamāliyyah Madrasah and in the Madrasah of Sultan Ḥasan. Among his pupils in these fields were the historians Yūsuf Ibn Taghrī Birdī (d. 1470) and al-Sakhāwī (d. 1497), to whom we also owe most of the information about the life of al-Nawājī. Another source of income, and probably even a more important source for him, was copying. He had an ability to write at once both beautifully and swiftly and used this talent to produce manuscripts of books by other authors and especially of his own books, which met an ever-increasing demand. Their price even rose after al-Nawājī's death. Economic considerations were clearly behind the creation of some of al-Nawājī's own books.

Writing books, therefore, was an activity that was linked to the different roles in al-Nawājī's life. Although the creation of the aesthetic no doubt provided al-Nawājī with satisfaction, he may also have been motivated by other factors

as well, including the following:

(1) As a scholar, al-Nawājī was ambitious and wanted to become recognized as a specialist in the field of *adab*. Therefore, he sought to cover the whole field by writing a series of relevant books, some of which were intended to serve as textbooks for students.

(2) To make a living as a copyist, al-Nawājī compiled anthologies on popular subjects such as love and wine poetry to meet the demand of the book market.

(3) He aspired to write poetry while a member of the *ʿulamā'*, for whom the exchange of poetry was a preeminent medium of communication; poetry that falls in this category fills the greater part of his *Dīwān*.

(4) He decided to compose a series of odes in praise of Muḥammad and to write a treatise on the rites of the pilgrimage to Mecca; al-Nawājī was a pious Muslim and an eager worshipper of the Prophet.

Al-Nawājī's major works are his own poems, especially his poems in praise of the Prophet, and his large anthologies on themes of love and wine. But in order to place these works in their proper context and to determine their role in the life of their author and in contemporary scholarship and literature, one must also consider al-Nawājī's other works, some of which are only short epistles of no more than a few pages. These demonstrate that al-Nawājī did not simply consider himself an *adīb* producing *adab* in the sense of belles-lettres, but also a professional scholar who is an overall expert in the field of *adab* (a word now taken to mean the scientific discipline that comprises linguistics as well as the study of literature). The *adīb* and Sufi ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Ibn Ghānim al-Maqdisī (d. 1452), an exact contemporary of al-Nawājī, presents a neat classification of the *ʿilm al-adab* (the science of *adab*) that corresponds with al-Nawājī's understanding of *adab*. A short résumé of ʿAbd al-Laṭīf's classification system, which has been handed down to us in Ḥājjī Khalīfah's book catalog *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, thus proves useful in our understanding of al-Nawājī and *adab*.

In a first step, Ibn Ghānim distinguishes between spoken and written information. As a consequence of the primacy of the spoken word, the different linguistic disciplines are categorized as *al-dalālāt al-lisāniyyah* "information provided by means of the tongue" and contrasted with the art of writing, which is given as a separate category. In a next step, Ibn Ghānim distinguishes between those linguistic disciplines that are concerned with the single word, those concerned with words combined into phrases, and those that use both together. Single words may either be examined for their meaning, that is, what the subject of *ʿilm al-lughah* "lexicography" is, or they may be examined for their form, that is, what the subject of *ʿilm al-ṣarf* ("inflection and derivation") is. Ibn Ghānim then moves to the disciplines that study combinations of words. First he singles out the two subjects that deal with the formal parameters of poetry, *ʿilm al-ʿarūḍ* ("metrics") and *ʿilm al-qāfiyah* ("the science of rhyme"). Other disciplines are relevant for both poetry and prose. The first of these is the discipline that examines the correctness of the phrase, *ʿilm al-naḥw* or "syntax." The last three remaining disciplines fall under the headings *ʿilm al-balāghah* and *ʿilm al-faṣāḥah*, or the "science of eloquence and good expression." These headings (used in a slightly unconventional way by Ibn Ghānim) designate disciplines that comprise what in the West is called rhetoric, pragmatics, and stylistics. The first of these disciplines is called *ʿilm al-maʿānī*, or "the science of meanings." It is akin to modern pragmatics and examines the relation between expression and speech situation in order to provide the knowledge necessary to adapt one's utterances to different communicative situations and requirements. *ʿIlm al-bayān*, "the science of clearness of expression," examines the use of tropes. Finally, *ʿilm al-badīʿ* is roughly equivalent to "stylistics." It examines the beauty of an utterance, especially the whole range of figures of style (in addition to those that are already treated in *ʿilm al-bayān*).

A juxtaposition of this schema and the works of al-Nawājī yields the remarkable result that all the disciplines of *adab* mentioned above were touched upon by al-Nawājī, some of them more comprehensively, others in only a few pages. The only exception is *al-khaṭṭ*, the art of handwriting, which was rarely a subject of theoretical works in any case. We are therefore left with a strong impression that al-Nawājī quite con-

sciously tried to leave his traces in all areas of *adab* in order to prove his comprehensive mastery of this field.

Al-Nawājī's contribution to lexicography is *al-Fawāʾid al-ʿilmiyyah fī funūn min al-lughāt* (Interesting Scholarly Observations on Different Branches of Lexicography). As the title suggests, it is a loose collection of unconnected matters such as the lexicography of different semantic fields, the function of certain particles, the forms of certain words in the dialects of the ancient Arabs, and other related matters. A treatise like this is highly reminiscent of the efforts of the philologists of the early Abbasid period, who also furnish a great part of its material. But it is also atypical for the Mamluk period, both in content and in size. Mamluk lexicographers compiled large and comprehensive dictionaries rather than small treatises on particular matters. But al-Nawājī did not try to vie with the voluminous works of Ibn Manẓūr (d. 1311), author of the *Lisān al-ʿarab*, al-Fayyūmī (d. 1369), author of *al-Miṣbāḥ al-munīr*, and al-Fīrūzābādī (d. 1415), author of *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*. Instead, by returning to the historic fundaments of lexicography, he forged his own way in order to contribute to a field that may have seemed somewhat exhausted after the appearance of the prodigious works in the generations before. Only a few decades later did al-**Suyūṭī** (d. 1505) find a fresh and methodologically new approach to the science of lexicography in his *al-Muzhir fī ʿulūm al-lughah wa-anwāʿihā*.

The chapters of *al-Fawāʾid al-ʿilmiyyah* are not strictly limited to the field of lexicography. Some of them concern matters of morphology (*ʿilm al-ṣarf*), and one of the chapters is dedicated to the theory of rhyme (*ʿilm al-qāfiyah*). Of relevance to the fields of *ṣarf* and of *naḥw* (syntax) is a short treatise of only a few pages, entitled *Risālah fī ḥukm ḥarf al-muḍāraʿah* (Epistle on the Rules concerning the Prefixes of the Verb in the Imperfect Tense).

The general popularity of poetry during the Mamluk period and its importance for the *ʿulamāʾ* encouraged the composition of quite a number of works on metrics (*ʿilm al-ʿarūḍ*). Al-Nawājī dedicated two titles to this subject and probably used them as textbooks for his students. First, he authored a commentary on a well-known didactic poem written by a Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Khazrajī (d. 1228) and thus known as *al-Qaṣīdah al-Khazrajiyyah*. About thirty commentaries on this poem have been preserved, but al-Nawājī's own version has not yet been discovered. It has been eclipsed by a commentary written by al-Nawājī's teacher and friend al-Damāmīnī. Al-Nawājī's second work in the field is referred to in the manuscript simply as *al-Fawāʾid al-ʿarūḍiyyah* (Interesting Observations on Matters of Meter) and treats five different points within the field of metrics.

The three disciplines of *maʿānī*, *bayān* and *badīʿ*, generally considered sub-disciplines of *ʿilm al-balāghah* or the "science of eloquence," flourished in an unprecedented way during the Mamluk period. Two major tendencies can be observed. The first is represented by scholars such as Badr al-Dīn Ibn Mālik (d. 1287), the "Preacher of Damascus" Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 1338), and Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 1370). These scholars systematized and developed the ideas of the eastern Iranian and central Asian philosophers and linguists al-Jurjānī (d. ca. 1078), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 1210) and al-Sakkākī (d. 1229) and introduced them into the lands of the Mamluk realm. Their approach is characterized by the effort to develop a theoretical framework, not only for the production and analysis of literary texts, but also to yield a better understanding of the normative texts of Islam (Qur'an and Hadith). This was clearly not the domain of al-Nawājī, who does not stand out as an extraordinarily systematic thinker. Although al-Nawājī devoted a chapter of his monograph on *iktifāʾ* (truncation) to the difference between the concept of "brevity" in *ʿilm al-maʿānī* (pragmatics) and in *ʿilm al-badīʿ* (stylistics), and in his "Preliminary Remarks" talked about the *tashbīh* (comparison), a traditional subject of *ʿilm al-bayān*, excursuses such as these do not detract from the fact that al-Nawājī's proper field was the more practically-oriented field of *ʿilm al-badīʿ*, stylistics, and literary criticism.

The two main forms of works on *badīʿ* were the *badīʿiyyah* and the monographic treatment of a single stylistic device. A *badīʿiyyah* is a poem that imitates the *Burdah* of al-Būṣīrī (d. 1296), the most famous poem in praise of the Prophet, in its form and content. But additionally, every

line exemplifies one (or more) of the different stylistic devices that are the main subject of *ʿilm al-badīʿ*. Some authors provided their *badīʿiyyah* poems with a commentary in which every stylistic form is explained and illustrated by further examples. The most famous *badīʿiyyah*-cum-commentary of the time was the *Khizānat al-adab*. It is easy to understand that al-Nawājī did not dare to compete with this monumental work of his friend (and rival) **Ibn Ḥijjah** al-Ḥamawī (d. 1434). Instead, he resorted to the second form, the monographic treatment of single stylistic features. This tradition had been established by al-**Ṣafadī** (d. 1363), who in several of his works combined a theoretical treatment of a certain stylistic form with an anthology of exemplary verses. The subjects of al-Ṣafadī's monographs were *tashbīh* (comparison), *tawriyah* (double-entendre, metalepsis), and *jinās* (paronomasia). Two of these subjects were taken up by Ibn Ḥijjah and al-Nawājī. Whereas Ibn Ḥijjah wrote a greatly improved treatise on the *tawriyah*, al-Nawājī took on the subject of *jinās*. The title of the work, *Rawḍat al-mujālasah waghayḍat al-mujānasah*, is itself an exercise in *jinās*. A translation like "The Garden of Company and Thicket of Kinship (= Resemblance, i.e. *jinās*)" cannot convey a proper impression of its depth of meaning. In this book, al-Nawājī gives a survey of the role of *jinās* in earlier works on *badīʿ* and takes a critical look especially at al-Ṣafadī's *Jināns al-jināS*. And in it, al-Nawājī also proposes his own sub-classification of the different forms of *jināS*.

But al-Nawājī did not content himself with criticizing and improving earlier works. Instead, he wanted to have a stylistic form "of his own." He found it in a stylistic device called *al-iktifāʾ*, translated by Cachia as "truncation," and entitled his monograph *al-Shifāʾ fī badīʿ al-iktifāʾ* (Health-bringing Information on the Effectiveness of Truncation). Using an *iktifāʾ*, a poet (or prose writer) suppresses the end of an utterance, omitting either a whole word or part of a word, but in such a way that the listener can infer the suppressed part from the context. The device of *iktifāʾ* was hardly used by poets prior to the Ayyubid period (ca. 1169-1262), and only few theorists had even mentioned this stylistic device before. Al-Nawājī's main points of reference were Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī (d. 1349 or 1350) and Badr al-Dīn Ibn al-Ṣāhib (d. 1386). In his turn, al-Nawājī makes an effort to find a better definition and to delimit the stylistic device of *iktifāʾ* from different forms of brevity that were the subject of *ʿilm al-maʿānī*. In the following chapters, al-Nawājī provides a sub-classification of *iktifāʾ* according to whether the suppressed part consists of a whole word or only of part of a word. In both instances, the author further distinguishes between cases in which the truncated element yields a *tawriyah* and those in which it does not. Each chapter is illustrated by a number of examples so that the work represents a combination of theory and anthology in the tradition of similar works by al-Ṣafadī. Of all of al-Nawājī's works on language and stylistics, *al-Shifāʾ* was by far his most successful. Whereas only one or two manuscripts are known of the other works mentioned above, ʿAbd al-Hādī lists more than twenty manuscripts of the *Shifāʾ*, obviously one of the most often studied treatises on a single stylistic device in the history of Arabic rhetoric.

A last work pertaining to the field of stylistics should also be mentioned here. The single extant manuscript that has been uncovered so far is titled *Muqaddimah fī ṣināʿat al-naẓm wa'l-nathr* (Introductory Remarks on the Art of Poetry and Prose), but the extant work lists do not mention a work of this title, and it is not entirely certain that the manuscript represents a deliberately devised book. It may be, rather, accidental remarks that were not necessarily intended for publication. Besides some notes on rhyme in both poetry and rhymed prose, the treatise mainly deals with questions of how to start and end a poem appropriately, and how to link aptly the introductory *nasīb* of an ode (*qaṣīdah*) with its concluding panegyric part. In light of al-Nawājī's important poems in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, his thoughts about how to adapt the traditional theme of love in the *nasīb* in order to introduce poems in praise of the Prophet in a decorous manner are of particular interest.

With al-Nawājī's book on *iktifāʾ*, we have already entered the realm of anthologies, with which al-Nawājī's name is most intimately connected until the present day. Three of his an-

thologies still exist today in more than ten (*Khalʿ al-ʿidhār*) or even more than twenty (*Ḥalbat al-kumayt*, *Marātiʿ al-ghizlān*) manuscripts. They must have been al-Nawājī's best sellers and were among the most widespread literary texts of the period for centuries.

Though the *ʿulamā'* (scholars with a predominantly religious training) formed the intellectual elite of this time, it was not at all unusual to expect great success from an anthology of wine poetry. On the contrary, wine poetry had an established place in the Mamluk era. It thrived not only with popular poets (e.g. the architect al-Miʿmār, d. 1348), but poets like Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Ḥillī and Badr al-Dīn Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 1377) also included chapters on wine poetry in their collections. It was not even risky at that time to make wine the subject of even two anthologies, as al-Nawājī did. The smaller and less popular one is called *al-Ṣabūḥ wa'l-ghabūq* (The Morning and the Evening Drink). It deals mainly with open-air drinking parties in the morning, a custom that was especially popular among the ruling classes in Abbasid times. The book is subdivided into three chapters, dealing respectively with princes, ministers and other members of the ruling class, and the common folk, according to the social rank of the drinker. Most verses and anecdotes quoted pertain to the Abbasid period. In this respect the book differs from most other anthologies by al-Nawājī.

Judging from the number of surviving manuscripts, the book was fairly successful, but not as successful by far as the author's other book on wine, *Ḥalbat al-kumayt* (The Racecourse of the Bay), al-Nawājī's absolute bestseller. At first, the author had given it the title *al-Ḥubūr wa'l-surūr fī waṣf al-khumūr*, in van Gelder's congenial translation "Joy and Frolic: On Drinks Alcoholic." The title is a reference to a book on wine by al-Raqīq al-Nadīm al-Qayrawānī from the early eleventh century called *Quṭb al-surūr fī awṣāf al-khumūr* or "The Pivot of Joy: On the Description of Wine," one of al-Nawājī's models. Al-Nawājī used titles of this type, comprised of two rhyming cola, for most of his books. Later he changed the title to *Ḥalbat al-kumayt*. This is a title following a more sophisticated pattern that was cultivated especially by **Ibn Nubātah** (d. 1366). It consists only of two words and contains a *tawriyah* (double entendre), since the words *al-kumayt* ("the reddish-brown") may refer either to a bay horse or to red wine. In the book, poets compete in the description of wine like horses on a racecourse. Therefore, it is called "The Racecourse of the Bay Horse/Red Wine." This anthology combines poetry with prose, Abbasid and older texts with Mamluk and even contemporaneous productions. Furthermore, it deals not only with the topic of wine proper, but also with objects that can be associated with the occasions of wine drinking, such as drinking vessels, candles, lanterns, singers, and musical instruments. Since drinking sessions were often held outdoors, a remarkable part of the book is dedicated to nature poetry describing flowers, rivers, water wheels, the Nile, winds, doves, clouds, rain, sun, and the stars and so on. The book concludes with an epilogue "on repentance and sincerity." As van Gelder has shown, this chapter may be seen as a pious expiation for the preceding sections on wine as well as be interpreted as a subversive text. This is because the author does not demand any abstinence from drinking, but deals only with repentance, and in doing so does not conceal the negative effects of repentance, such as losing one's companions.

Reactions to this book were varied. On the one hand, it was al-Nawājī's greatest success. On the other hand, it caused him a great deal of trouble when it was made subject of an inquisition (*miḥnah*) in which he was accused of instigating people to engage in sinful acts. As with many other *miḥnah*-cases, the whole affair may have been the outcome of a personal feud between different *ʿulamā'* rather than a true quarrel about moral standards. Al-Nawājī himself was certainly not faultless in arousing this controversy. Al-Sakhāwī characterizes him as "narrow-minded, bad-tempered, irascible, and prone to satirize others." Al-Sakhāwī, who himself was not a paragon of impartiality, may have been on target with this characterization. Thus al-Nawājī attacked the most important fellow poet of his age, Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī (1336-1434) in his book *al-Ḥujjah fī sariqāt Ibn Ḥijjah* (The Proof, on Ibn Ḥijjah's Plagiarisms) in a harsh and unjust way that bewildered many of his friends and contemporaries. One of his fellow men of letters decided to take revenge and started to assemble

satires about al-Nawājī. He also found a fair number of people who harbored a hidden rancor against al-Nawājī and were glad to have an opportunity to take vengeance on him. The anonymous author collected these texts and entitled his collection *Qubḥ al-ahājī fī 'l-Nawājī*, "The Disgrace of Satires against al-Nawājī." He then he ordered a broker to make his rounds among the book sellers in the book market on the pretence of selling the book to them, since he knew that al-Nawājī would be in one of their shops. When the broker passed by a shop in which al-Nawājī happened to spend time, al-Nawājī asked to look at the book and immediately realized what it was about. He was shocked by its content, but he had to hand it back to the broker, who returned it to its author, and obviously it was never published. The affair, however, became widely known and left a lasting effect on al-Nawājī. Al-Sakhāwī suggests that this incident even contributed to a serious deterioration in al-Nawājī's health.

Whatever the case may be, this affair corroborates Ḥājjī Khalīfah's contention that the attack against al-Nawājī's *Ḥalbat al-kumayt* was motivated by envy and rancor rather than by the book's content. The attack was launched by ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Salām al-Qudsī (d. 1446), who wrote an almost book-length *fatwā* against al-Nawājī's wine book. Al-Nawājī found an eager defender in his prosecutor's namesake ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Salām al-Qaylawī al-Baghdādī (d. 1454), who taught in the Jamāliyyah Madrasah (among other places), a colleague of al-Nawājī, who held Hadith sessions in the same institution. Both ʿIzz al-Dīns were of equal age, shared many experiences, and both had become scholars of renown. But they must have had rather different personalities. Whereas al-Qudsī was a fierce opponent of the teachings of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 1240), al-Qaylawī adhered to Sufism and cherished Ibn al-Fāriḍ's (d. 1235) poetry, including his mystical verses on wine. Therefore, personal motives may have played a role in their taking opposite sides. When the Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī was asked to give a *fatwā* of his own, he declined, according to al-Sakhāwī, because verses of his own were included in the *Ḥalbah*. But one has also to consider that he was well acquainted with al-Nawājī and both ʿIzz al-Dīns as well. Whatever the background of the *Ḥalbah*-affair may have been, in the end nothing serious happened, either to al-Nawājī or to his book, which was to gain unprecedented popularity.

Less controversial than the subject of wine was the subject of love. Modern observers, however, have often been disconcerted by the fact that the majority of Arabic love poetry composed between 800 and 1800 is homoerotic. To explain this phenomenon, one must beware of too glibly identifying male-male relations in pre-modern Islamic societies with modern conceptions of homosexuality. In most pre-modern Islamic societies, the perception of gender and sexuality was similar to that of Classical Antiquity or of Renaissance Florence. In all these cultures, the main social distinction in sexual relationships was the one between an active male partner (a grown man) and a passive non-male partner, who could be either female or a male youth not yet able to grow a beard. This was the distinction that shaped the social norm—i.e., not a distinction between a male and a female partner (heterosexuality) on the one hand, and a deviant sexuality, that is, a relationship between males (homosexuality), on the other. Within this framework, male-male relations of one or another kind were a common experience for young men at all levels of society, at least in urban milieux. It may be assumed as well that male-male love relations were not only an important factor in shaping male identities, but also in creating networks and fostering the overall cohesiveness of society.

Sexual roles for men were strictly defined by age. Until the age of eighteen to twenty, boys were expected to fulfill the role of the "beloved." The growth of a beard demanded their abandonment of the passive role and their entry into the sexual world of the adult male. In the following years of their life, they played the role of the "lover" in same sex activities. Such homosexual affairs, which did not preclude heterosexual relations, were seen as a natural manifestation of masculine lust and desire that first blossomed in their youth and lasted approximately a decade. At the end of this decade, the time of *ṣibā*, "youthful folly," was expected to end. A man in his mid-thirties or forties and older was then

expected to fulfill his role as a responsible member of his class and profession, and public love affairs (of any kind) were no longer seen as compatible with the gravity appropriate for the head of a family.

Seen against this background, it is easy to understand why love poetry could evoke more intense emotions than any other genre of literature. This intensified effect was reinforced by the development of several forms of love poetry characterized by stylistic virtuosity that on its own proved to be quite emotionally effective. Therefore, love poetry, especially in its epigrammatic forms, was not unlike our own (but different) entertainments today and almost certainly fulfilled similar roles.

Seen from a modern perspective, one might have expected that homoerotic love poetry would have met with more reservations among the group of the *ʿulamāʾ* than it actually did. But one has to bear in mind that the culture of the *ʿulamāʾ* was a culture essentially focused on language and thus susceptible to stylistically marked literature; furthermore, the *ʿulamāʾ* shared the same amatory experiences in their youth as other segments of society and the theme of love and youth therefore carried the same emotional value for them as for others; and finally, after all, it was no sin to fall in love with a handsome youth as long as no unlawful sexual acts were committed and no family duties neglected. Therefore the *ʿulamāʾ*, as the culturally dominant class to which both al-Nawājī and the majority of his customers belonged, had a lasting interest in the production of love poetry.

Four of al-Nawājī's anthologies are in this area. Because of a prejudiced attitude against their homoerotic content, only one of them—the least important one—has so far been edited, the *Ṣaḥāʾif al-ḥasanāt*, a collection of epigrams on moles, especially moles on the cheeks of beautiful youths. The title makes use of the multiple meanings of the word *ṣaḥīfah*, which may designate the document of one's good deeds supposedly recorded by angels during the course of one's life, a page of a book, or the skin, especially of the face. A translation such as "Pages Full of Good Things" or "Faces with Beautiful Ornaments" cannot, therefore, capture all of its possible meanings. The book is a remake of a similar anthology by al-Ṣafadi entitled *Kashf al-ḥāl fī waṣf al-khāl* (Revealing the Situation about Describing Beauty Marks). Al-Ṣafadī's book, however, includes theoretical chapters on medical and historical aspects, whereas al-Nawājī's book is mainly an 'update' of al-Ṣafadī's anthological section. The chronology of al-Nawājī's anthologies is not known. It may be presumed, however, that al-Nawājī was instigated to produce this book after he had experienced the success of his *Marātiʿ al-ghizlān* and *Khalʿ al-ʿidhār*.

Khalʿ al-ʿidhār fī waṣf al-ʿidhār (Throwing Off All Restraint in Describing the Sprouting Beard) is a more crucial book, both as a work of literature and as a document for the history of gender and its mentality. Its title is a pun on the word *ʿidhār*, which means "restraint" but also designates the sprouting beard on the cheeks of a youth. The growth of a beard meant a drastic change in status for every male, especially as far as his role in love relations is concerned. Reality, however, did not always prove to be so easy. A love relation between a youth of eighteen years and an older lover involved a great deal of emotional engagement that could not be so easily given up when the beard of the beloved started to grow. This conflict is reflected in epigrams in which the poet excuses himself for not giving up his love for a youth who has already grown a full beard. From the beginning of the ninth century onwards, such apologetic beard-epigrams were composed by the thousands. For his anthology, al-Nawājī chose about five hundred, nearly all of them by poets from the Mamluk era. The typical form of these epigrams is a two-line poem. The first line introduces the subject, which is transformed into a point in the second line. A typical epigram is the following, composed by al-Nawājī himself and included in both *Khalʿ al-ʿidhār* and *Marātiʿ al-ghizlān*. The beard is compared with sweet basil, a time-honored comparison. Another well-known comparison is that of the cheeks with roses. Both are united in the form of a *murāʿāt al-naẓīr*, "harmonious choice of images," by stating that the basil fences the rose-garden. This idea is transformed into the point of the second verse. As in many other epigrams of this kind, there is barely any detectable apology. The sprouting beard is

just another feature that increases the beauty of the beloved:

Sayyaja warda 'l-khaddi rayḥānuhū /
ṣawnan fa-aḍḥat muhjatī fī 'nziʿāj //
Wa-qumtu li'l-khaddi fa-qabbaltuhū /
fī 'l-ḥāli alfan wa-kharaqtu 'l-siyāj //

He fenced the rose-garden of his cheek with basil to protect it, and my heart became agitated.
And so I set forth, broke through the fence, and kissed his cheek a thousand times right away.

Al-Nawājī's greatest enterprise in the field of love poetry was his *Marātiʿ al-ghizlān fī waṣf al-ḥisān min al-ghilmān* (The Gazelle's Pastures, on the Description of Beautiful Youths). With its two thousand epigrams, mostly two-verse poems from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, it is one of the most comprehensive collections of love epigrams ever produced. The anthologist starts with epigrams directed to a beloved with a certain name or of a certain origin. The next chapters treat beloveds who are characterized by profession or craft, and forms the main part of the book. From epigrams about a beloved sultan down to beloved beggars and thieves, all levels of society are present and appear as potential beloveds. Most of these epigrams were not composed out of any personal experience with love, but rather were designed to illustrate poetic wit. Many of them are charming and provide interesting information about the world of craftsmen in the Mamluk realm. These epigrams are the Arabic counterpart of the Persian and Turkish traditions of *shahrāshūb* or *şehrengiz*. Epigrams about youths who are portrayed performing certain actions or having certain individual characteristics then follow. Two subchapters of this part deal with moles and the sprouting beard and are more or less identical with al-Nawājī's monographic treatment of the same subjects. The last chapter again contains apologetic epigrams, in which the poet apologizes for loving a youth with a bodily defect (scarfaced, one-armed, lame, or blind and so on). Epigrams on dead beloveds and on the beloved's grave conclude the book with an elegiac mood. The *Marātiʿ* was al-Nawājī's greatest success along with *Ḥalbat al-kumayt*. Manuscripts are found in most major libraries, and the fact that an edition is still lacking is certainly due to modern attitudes towards its homoerotic content.

Having dealt with love poetry in the form of the epigram in three separate anthologies, al-Nawājī was prepared to deal with the more traditional form of love poetry in the form of longer poems of the *ghazal* genre as well. Thus he collected *ghazal* poems from about four hundred poets of all periods (most of them again from Ayyubid and Mamluk times), including himself, arranged them alphabetically according to the rhyme consonant, and published his collection under the title *Taʾhīl al-gharīb*. Once again, this was a title in the style of Ibn Nubātah's punning titles, to which a translation like "A Welcome to Marvelous Poetry" cannot fully do justice.

Just as al-Nawājī more or less successfully tried to cover the whole field of *adab* with his scholarly writings, he also tried to cover the whole field of literature with his anthologies. He collected strophic poetry in a book entitled *ʿUqūd al-laʾāl fī 'l-muwashshaḥāt wa'l-azjāl* (Pearl Necklaces: Strophic Poems in Literary and Colloquial Arabic). This book contains ninety *muwashshaḥ* poems and thirty-nine *zajal* poems. Its model was a similar collection by al-Ṣafadī, which, however, was limited to the *muwashshaḥ*. Al-Nawājī's book is an extraordinarily important source, especially for Mamluk strophic poetry. It has been edited twice, the edition of Aḥmad ʿAṭā being superior to that of its predecessor.

In the Mamluk period, an *adīb* could hardly claim perfection unless he had dealt with *inshāʾ*, the drawing up of letters and documents in highly sophisticated rhymed prose. Al-Nawājī again treated the subject in the form of an anthology. Since he never was able to hold a position in the administration and therefore presented few *inshāʾ* documents of his own, there was hardly any other possibility for him to show his competence in this field. His quite voluminous book, entitled *al-Ṭirāz al-muwashshā fī 'l-inshā* (Embellished Embroidery: On *Inshāʾ*) contains many documents written by Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ʿAbd al-Ẓāhir (d. 1292), Egypt's greatest chancery secretary (*munshiʾ*) of the early Mamluk period, as well as documents by later stylists and contemporaries such as Ibn Ḥijjah

al-Ḥamawī. So far only a single manuscript is known, but the collection has a high documentary value.

Other anthologies of al-Nawājī are quite obviously of a more commercial nature. *Zahr al-rabīʿ fī 'l-mathal al-badīʿ* (Spring Flowers, on Amazing Proverbial Verses) is an abridged version of the now lost *Tuḥfat al-adīb* (A Precious Gift to the Man of Letters). The small booklet presents more than four hundred verses or verse groups of a proverbial character without mentioning the name of their respective composers. Ambitious members of the middle-class who tried to show off their education in conversation by quoting proverbial verses on every occasion might have been its main target group.

A more substantial anthology is *Riyāḍ al-albāb wa-maḥāsin al-ādāb* (Intellectual Gardens and Literary Beauties), which contains poems from different ages and on different topics, and among which love and wine again play an important role. Other chapters are dedicated to subjects such as wisdom, asceticism, wealth and avarice, enigmas, etc.

Since his anthologies were mainly compiled for the book market, al-Nawājī had to meet the taste of his contemporaries. Consequently, the vast majority of the poems assembled in his anthologies date from the Mamluk and Ayyubid periods. Poetry of the Abbasid era plays a minor role. Only Abū Nuwās and Ibn al-Muʿtazz appear more often. Older poetry found its place in anthologies of a more scholarly character, but hardly ever in al-Nawājī's best sellers, *al-Ṣabūḥ wa'l-ghabūq* and *Riyāḍ al-albāb* being the main exceptions. In his other books, al-Nawājī quite often quotes lines by his contemporaries and friends such as al-Damāmīnī, Ibn Ḥijjah al-Ḥamawī, al-Shihāb al-Ḥijāzī, and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, and he of course includes a great deal of his own poetry. By inserting his verses in his popular anthologies, al-Nawājī could find a much broader public for them than by compiling a *Dīwān* or collection of his poetry. Nevertheless al-Nawājī did collect his poetry in the form of a *Dīwān*, which contains his *muṭāraḥāt* (poetic exchanges) with his fellow *ʿulamāʾ*, as well as other poetic styles.

Another group of poems, his eulogies on the Prophet, fulfilled a different purpose, and al-Nawājī created a separate *Dīwān* for them. In the year 1426-7, ten years after his first pilgrimage to Mecca in 1417-18, al-Nawājī developed the habit of composing one long ode in praise of the Prophet every year. Al-Nawājī sent each poem, probably with one of the pilgrims, to Medina and requested that it be recited in the Prophet's Mosque. On his second pilgrimage in the year 1430, al-Nawājī took the opportunity to recite all of his existing odes again in front of the Prophet himself. In the year 1445-6, al-Nawājī assembled the twenty odes composed up until then in a separate book entitled *al-Maṭāliʿ al-shamsiyyah fī 'l-madāʾiḥ al-nabawiyyah* (Places of Sunrise: Eulogies on the Prophet). He continued his practice of composing a eulogy on Muḥammad every year until his death and sending it to Medina. The last of these odes dates from the year 1454. His eulogies, mostly bipartite odes consisting of an introductory *nasīb* and the eulogy proper, were held in great esteem by his contemporaries and by posterity. Al-Nabhānī (d. 1932) included all those known to him (the twenty poems of *al-Maṭāliʿ al-shamsiyyah*) in *al-Majmūʿah al-nabhāniyyah* and thus made them known to a modern public.

Al-Nawājī died on Tuesday, 13 May 1455 after having been infected by leprosy. His works survived their author almost fully; nearly all of his known works have been preserved. A few commentaries on works about prosody and grammar, a guide to the rites of pilgrimage and the large version of his collection of proverbial verses are the only works of al-Nawājī of which no manuscript has surfaced thus far. His anthologies on love and wine, his study-cum-anthology on *iktifāʾ* and his poems in praise of the Prophet were widely read in the following centuries. Some of his books were among the most popular literary texts in his time and continued to inspire authors even in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, Arab intellectuals directed their attention either to Arabic literature of the first centuries or to Western literatures. Only in recent years has a new interest in the flourishing literary culture of the Mamluk period awakened. Al-Nawājī has found a keen advocate in Ḥasan Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Hādī, to whom we owe a series of diligent editions of al-Nawājī's works. Still editions of his two main anthologies of love poetry, *Marātiʿ al-ghizlān* and *Khalʿ al-ʿidhār*, are lacking, and further studies will be required in order to shed new light on the literary culture of the period that is represented by al-Nawājī's works.

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al-QALQASHANDĪ

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