

Ghazal Poetry and the Marwānids: A Study of Kuthayyir
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INTRODUCTION

1.1. 'Transitional' Umayyad Poetry: Approach to the Sources

This dissertation will offer an account of the poetry and life of Kuthayyir b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, a prolific love poet and panegyrist of the early Umayyad period who died in his hometown of Medina, in the Ḥijāz in Western Arabia, in AH 105/723 AD. In order to provide background for this study, this introduction will first discuss some fundamental issues related to the interpretation of the poetry of the early Umayyad/Marwānid period (circa 60-110/680-730), before going on to discuss the transmission of the texts attributed to Kuthayyir, and the sources of information about his life. This introduction will then conclude with a description of the structure of the remainder of the dissertation.

The Umayyad era, and the early period of Marwānid rule in particular (roughly 60-110/680-730), was formative in relation to many of the aesthetic norms and practices of later classical Islamic culture, including, for example, monumental Islamic architecture, and early Arabic scribal practice and manuscript production. The researcher into Umayyad-era art and literature must therefore confront a number of interpretive difficulties that often attend the study of 'formative' periods: works of the Umayyad period are difficult to place coherently into a defined historical context, as they must first be isolated from their later presentation in the sources of the classical period; compounding this difficulty, one often has little concrete evidence about the historical circumstances in which works from the period were produced and first received. In recent decades, the most prominent and illuminating contributions to the study of the Umayyad period have appeared under the rubric of the study of Late Antiquity, i.e., by way of attempts to incorporate the study of early Islamic culture and history within the broader epistemic scope of the world west of India in the first millennium of the common era. Particularly in the fields of art history and religious studies, the Late Antiquity paradigm has produced a great number of remarkably

illuminating treatments that have broken new ground in the study of the Umayyad period.¹ Yet, despite the boon of new studies under the rubric of the study of Late Antiquity, the most voluminous and conspicuous contemporaneous literary source for the study of the early Islamic and Umayyad period, the corpus of poetry in Arabic attributed to poets who lived, composed, and performed within the early Islamic polity, has remained largely neglected.

Very few studies have appeared in recent decades that have attempted to provide detailed historical interpretation of the work of Umayyad-era poets. While this neglect can be attributed in part to traditional disciplinary boundaries, namely the persistent isolation of philology from its adjacent areas in historical and cultural studies, surely compounded by the perception of Arabic poetry as exotic, the neglect is also reinforced, in our view, by elements intrinsic to the poetic corpus itself. It should be useful therefore at the outset of our study to discuss several of these intrinsic difficulties, which we would describe in terms of the ‘transitional’ qualities of Umayyad-era verse.

Renate Jacobi has expressed the problem of Umayyad poetry’s transitional quality quite concisely: ‘It [Umayyad poetry] lacks both the collective oral traditions of the pre-Islamic time (*jāhiliya*), and the formulated aesthetic norms of the Abbasid period.’² This statement is true in several senses. On the one hand, the sources of transmission of Umayyad-era poetry are themselves transitional: it is only at the very end of the Umayyad period, at the earliest, that poetry in Arabic began to be systematically recorded in writing, and even then the overwhelming preference of early scholars seems to have been for the recording of pre-

¹ For recent summaries, see, e.g., the essays in *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture. Volume 1. From the Prophet to the Mongols*, eds. Flood and Necipoglu (London: 2017); and Neuwirth, *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike. Ein europäischer Zugang* (Berlin: 2010) [= KTS].

²Jacobi, “Omaijadische Dichtung (7.-8. Jahrhundert),“ in *Grundriss der arabischen Philologie*, volume 2 (Wiesbaden: 1987) [= GAP 2], 32: Im Vergleich zur vorislamischen Zeit (*ğāhilīya*) fehlt die kollektiv geprägte mündliche Tradition, im Gegensatz zur Abbasidenzeit die formulierte ästhetische Norm.

Islamic Jāhili verse rather than Umayyad-era poets.³ Transmitted by scholars of a later age who cannot have possessed a perfect grasp of its original context and meaning, early Islamic and Umayyad-era poetry was thus caught between the ‘contemporary’ and the prestigiously ancient, as it were, and its textual transmission often reflects this difficulty.

On the other hand, Umayyad-era poetry itself was already transitional, in a different literary-historical sense: the poetry shows divergences in form and content from the later ‘classical’ poetry of the Abbasid age, as well as pervasive divergence in form and content from the pre-Islamic corpus. Umayyad-era poetry exhibits a formal instability associated with the emergence of new genres, the breakdown of archaic forms, and the expression of a new range of themes and tonalities – modern literary histories have expressed this as the ‘experimental’ quality of Umayyad poetry, and have often sought to explain this experimental quality through reference to the radical social and ‘mental-historical’ (*mentalitätsgeschichtlich*) changes of the first Islamic century.⁴ Fundamental changes in form and genre are attributed to the Umayyad period, including the putative emergence of the tri-partite panegyric structure and the appearance of new poetic genres such as the *ṭardīya* (hunting poem) and the *khamrīya* (wine poem); yet concrete, diachronic descriptions of the emergence of these new forms and the historical dynamics that lay behind their apparent emergence remain lacking, not least because these narratives of emergence are impossible to extricate from the normative explanations and back-projections of Abbasid-era and later critics.⁵

³ On the tendency of early scholars to overlook the Umayyad period, see Gruendler, “Verse and Taxes: The Function of Poetry in Selected Literary Akhbār of the Third/Ninth Century,” in *On Fiction and Adab in Medieval Arabic Literature*, ed. Kennedy (Wiesbaden: 2005), 85-124, esp. 87-88; and “Mufaḍḍaliyyāt”, EI2 [Jacobi].

⁴ On Umayyad poetry as ‘experimental,’ see Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, ed. Beeston et al (Cambridge: 1983), 387-432.

⁵ On these issues, see Schoeler, “The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry. Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Dīwāns,” *QSA* 5-6 (2010-11), 1-48.; Montgomery, “Of Models and Amanuenses: The Remarks on the Qaṣīda in Ibn Qutayba’s *Kitāb al-Shi’r wa-l-Shu’arā*”, in *Islamic Reflections Arabic Musings*, eds. Hoyland and Kennedy (Cambridge: 2004), 1-47; and the discussion in Talib, *How Do You Say ‘Epigram’ in Arabic?: Literary History at the Limits of Comparison* (Leiden: 2018), 1-6.

But prior to these genre-historical questions, the historical approach to this poetry must confront in more detail the issue of the transmission of texts from the Umayyad period. Although one can detect traces of the partial commitment to writing of poetry back into the pre-Islamic period, it is only in the mid-eighth/second century at the very earliest (that is, at the end of the Umayyad period) that any systematic commitment-to-writing (*tadwīn*) of poetry can be shown to have occurred.⁶ The first traces of systematic and standardized recording of poetry are attributed generally to the ‘learned transmitters’ who flourished during the mid-2nd/8th century, such as Ḥammād al-Rāwiyah (d. c. 156/773), al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī (d. c. 164/780) and Abū ‘Amr b. al-‘Alā’ (d. c. 154/770).⁷ The teachings and works of these 8th century scholars resulted in the transmission of the bulk of pre-Islamic (Jāhilī) poetry that is still extant, yielding the earliest major early anthologies of (mostly) pre-Islamic poetry such as the *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* and *Mu‘allaqāt*. Building on the writings and teachings of these early figures, the following generations of 3rd/9th century redactors and editors of poetry, including al-Aṣma‘ī (d. 213/828), Abū ‘Ubaydah (209/824-5), Ibn Ḥabīb (245/860), and al-Sukkarī (d. 275/888) further refined and expanded the methods and achievements of the early ‘transmitters,’ and it is to these 3rd/9th-century scholars that much of the preservation of early Islamic and Umayyad-era poetry is owed. That the collection and editing of the work of early Islamic poets was a major object of study by the mid-9th century is clear, for example, from the extant editions by al-Sukkarī of the Umayyad-era poet Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt and the tribal *Dīwān* of the Hudhayl, or from the extant early *dīwāns* of the Naqā’id of Jarīr and Farazdaq, Dhū al-Rumma, and other early Umayyad poets. Yet this leaves a gap of some 100-150 years between the period we are studying (60-110/680-730), and the period in which the texts were recorded in writing.

In sum, then, the texts of Umayyad-era poetry will have passed through several generations of oral/aural transmission before arriving to the written forms from which the extant texts derive— during this transmission, varying aural recensions (*riwāyāt*) will have circulated,

⁶ See Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam. From the Aural to the Read*, trans. and ed. Toorawa (Edinburgh: 2009), 5 and 18-21.

⁷ See Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe des origines à la fin du XVe siècle de J.C* (Paris : 1952) [= HLA], volume 1, 101 f.

and multiple versions of texts will have been appreciated.⁸ In the most straight-forward case, when an early Abbasid edition of a poet's work is available, the researcher relies on the editorial work of scholars of the 8th-10th centuries, who committed to writing texts that were first transmitted through decades of recitation and reception. But these anthologies and *dīwāns* do not represent contemporary transcriptions of Umayyad-era poetic composition and performance; they are the results of Abbasid-era editorial practice.

What is more, the recensions of poems in Abbasid-era anthologies and *dīwāns* represent only a limited portion of our available evidence about Umayyad-era poetry. In addition to these texts, the researcher has recourse to a tremendous wealth of poetry that is not transmitted in *dīwāns*, but is rather quoted or embedded in works of Arabic prose. Across the full range of scholarly and literary prose genres in Arabic literature, from accounts of the early 'battle days of the Arabs' to prose romances illustrating the lives of famous poets, to geographical and lexicographical works, poetry is encountered frequently, usually in relatively short quotations that require to be considered within their embedded literary context;⁹ particularly when an early *dīwān* of a poet is not available, the researcher relies on the collection and study of this often vast wealth of embedded poetry to piece together the work of early poets.

There is one major strain of this 'prosimetric' literature in particular that is of essential importance to the understanding of the poetry of the Umayyad period: namely, the collections of 'lore' or prose accounts (*akhbār*) that are related about the lives of the poets. These prose accounts, which offer a vast array of biographical and anecdotal detail about the world of early poetry, are available now in compilations produced by scholars of the 9th and 10th centuries, most notably in the *Kitāb al-aghānī* ('Book of Songs') of Abū l-Faraj al-Isbahānī (d. circa 360/970) and the *Kitāb al-shi'r wa l-shu'arā'* ('Book of Poetry and Poets')

⁸ See "Riwāya," EI2 [Leder].

⁹ See in general Heinrichs, "Prosimetrical Genres in Classical Arabic Literature," in *Prosimetrum: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Narrative in Prose and Verse*, ed. Harris et al. (Cambridge: 1997), 249-75; and the discussion in Webb, "Poetry and the Early Islamic Historical Tradition: Poetry and Narratives of the Battle of Şiffin," in *Poetry and Warfare in Middle Eastern Literatures*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (London: 2013), 119-148, esp. 119-124.

of Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889). Within these 9th and 10th century works, accounts of the poets' lives are presented, connected to chains of attribution (*isnāds*) that purportedly trace the accounts back to sources contemporary to the poets, applying a scholarly apparatus for the naming of sources that was first developed in the *ḥadīth* literature.

The *akhbār* material contains a great deal of information that is vital to the historical understanding of Umayyad-era poetry, but there are serious problems that attend the use of the *akhbār* as historical evidence. As in the transmission of early poetry that would eventually be recorded in *dīwāns*, the extant texts of *akhbār* literature are the result of several generations of previous aural transmission. Early collections of *akhbār* were collected and issued by scholars such as al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/870), al-Madā'inī (d. 228/843), and Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (235/850), but their *akhbār* collections are rarely extant.¹⁰ Rather, these and other 9th century scholars, who were also involved in the recording of poetry, feature prominently within the *isnāds* of the *akhbār* in the later compilations, and written collections (*kutub*) of *akhbār* are attributed to them in early sources such as the famous *Fihrist* of al-Nadīm, but it is on the later compilations by Abū l-Faraj and Ibn Qutayba that the researcher must rely.

The problems that attend the *akhbār* as source material in fact go beyond simple issues of transmission. Although the information in these sources is often historically plausible, offering, for example, important information about the patronage relationships and historical involvements of poets, the *akhbār* also abound with picturesque narratives illustrating the adventures and 'sentimental lives' of the poets, clearly tailored to the exegetical interests and literary imagination of the Abbasid period. Particularly for poetry from the earlier periods, much of this material quite obviously arises from later exegesis of the poetry. In many cases, the *akhbār* must then be considered as fiction or folk-tale, rather than historical scholarship, and must therefore be used with caution as sources for the historical-contextual interpretation of early poetry.

¹⁰ On the state of survival of the works of these early *akhbārīs*, traditionists, and historians, see Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Oxford: 2003), esp. 28-30, with further references to secondary literature.

In order to approach the evidential claims of this diverse body of sources with consistency and hermeneutic transparency, we will attempt to be explicit here about the ways in which we will use these various sources. In this dissertation, we offer on the one hand a translation and commentary on texts by Kuthayyir that derive from Abbasid-era recensions of his poems; but our interpretations of these texts, particularly in our discussion of Kuthayyir's panegyric career in chapter 3, are supported crucially, and in many cases derive from, the transmitted *akhbār* connected to the poet. Approaching the extant *akhbār* as the end-result of an aural scholarly transmission that reached from the time of the poet to the period of written systematizing (*taṣnīf*) in the 9th-10th century, we assume, at least heuristically, that the *akhbār* often contain valid historical information derived from the early exegetical reception of the poetry. This assumption is supported by the work of scholars such as Gruendler, Leder, and S. Stetkevych, who, in various ways, have explored the *akhbār* as essential resources for the early narrative-exegetical reception of the poetry that, while shaped to the literary ends of the compilers, nonetheless presents a historical core of information, presented with a concern for verisimilitude.¹¹ In this context, S. Stetkevych has argued for the existence of what she calls a 'semantic' relationship between the *akhbār* and early poetry, whereby the two corpora partake in the same signifying regimes and mutually illuminate each other; Beatrice Gruendler, in a study of the *akhbār* about the meetings between poets and patrons in the early Abbasid period, has described these accounts as a 'literary refraction' of contemporary realities, tailored to the literary ends of the compilers, but also coherent and credible sources for the history of patterns in poetic practice and patronage.¹² Although our study deals with *akhbār* whose extant versions were compiled more than a century after the poet's death, we will likewise approach the *akhbār* as evidence of the early exegetical reception of the poetry, which must

¹¹ See especially Gruendler, "Meeting the Patron: An *Akhbār* Type and Its Implications for *Muhdath* Poetry," in *Ideas, Images, Methods of Portrayal: Insights into Arabic Literature and Islam*, ed. Günther (Wiesbaden: 2005), 59-88; Leder, "*Akhbār Manzūma*: the Romance of Qays and Lubnā in the *Aghānī*," in *Festschrift Ewald Wagner*, eds. Heinrichs and Schoeler (Beirut: 1994), 350-361; and Stetkevych, *The Mute Immortals Speak. Pre-Islamic Poetry and the Poetics of Ritual* (Cornell: 2010), *passim*.

¹² See Stetkevych, *Mute Immortals*; and Gruendler, "Meeting the Patron," *op cit*.

be tested critically, on a case by case basis, for its usefulness in the historical interpretation of the poetry.

1.2 Kuthayyir: Texts and Life

The textual tradition of the work of Kuthayyir exemplifies the problems often encountered in the study of Umayyad-era poetry. Although there is early testimony that Kuthayyir's poetic output was very prolific, and there is evidence that a collection (*dīwān*) of the poet's work was in circulation by the 3rd/9th century, no early edition of the poet's *dīwān* is extant. In a report preserved in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, we read a quotation attributed to 'Abdallāh b. Abī 'Ubayda (d. 169/785) claiming that 'whoever has not gathered thirty poems rhyming in *Lām* by Kuthayyir, has not [fully] gathered his poetry' (*man lam yajma' min shi'ri Kuthayyari thalāthīna lāmīyatan fa-lam yajma' shi'rahu*).¹³ This, the earliest specific reference to the scholarly transmission of the works the poet, is followed in the *Aghānī* by a quote attributed to al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/870) claiming that Abū 'Ubayda 'would dictate Kuthayyir's poetry for thirty dīnār.'¹⁴ That a *dīwān* (or *dīwans*) circulated among scholars during the 9th and 10th centuries is clear as well from a number of other citations, such as references to commentaries on Kuthayyir's poetry by Ibn Ḥabīb and Ibn al-Sikkīt.¹⁵ The most significant and extensive attestations of the *dīwān*, however, occur in the works of the Iraqi-born philologist al-Qālī (Abū 'Alī al-Baghdādī, d. 356/967). In his *Kitāb al-Amālī*, a philological *adab* work produced in Cordoba under Andalusian Umayyad patronage, al-Qālī claims to have read the *dīwān* complete, in two parts (*ajzā'*), with his teacher, the great Baṣran scholar Ibn Durayd (d. 321/933). Within the *Kitāb al-Amālī*, in addition to numerous short quotations from Kuthayyir's poetry, al-Qālī transmits two recensions of apparently complete long-form *ghazal* poems by Kuthayyir, in each case introducing the

¹³ See Agh 9.5 [=al-Iṣbahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo Edition, Book 9, page 5].

¹⁴ See Agh 9.5.

¹⁵ Reference to Ibn al-Sikkīt's commentary occurs, for example, in Yāqūt, *Buldān*, 1:312, 565; for the reference to Ibn Ḥabīb, see *Tāj al-'Arūs*, 5:242.

redacted poem as a text that he read with his teacher, Ibn Durayd.¹⁶ Additionally, in the *Fihrist* of Ibn Khayr (575/1179), a catalogue of books that circulated in 12th century al-Andalus, the list given by Ibn Khayr of the books brought to Spain by al-Qālī includes a mention of Kuthayyir's *Dīwān*.¹⁷

In addition to these specific citations of the *dīwān*, one is confronted by a great mass of quotations from Kuthayyir's poetry in early prose works, geographical works, anthologies, and other works of scholarship – in all, some 1500 lines of extant verse are attributed to the poet in early sources.¹⁸ But among the sources for the text of Kuthayyir's poetry, there is one source of transmission that is of particular note, and which will be a central source for this dissertation. The *Muntahā al-Ṭalab min Ash'ār al-'Arab* is a vast anthology compiled in the late sixth/twelfth century in Baghdād by the relatively unknown anthologist Muḥammad b. al-Mubārak b. Maymūn al-Baghdādī (died after 597/1201).¹⁹ This anthology, which was first brought to light in modern scholarship by S.M. Husain in a 1937 article describing the discovery of three partial manuscripts of the work,²⁰ contains the recensions of sixteen complete poems by Kuthayyir, totaling some 700 lines of verse, including versions of the two poems transmitted also by al-Qālī. In contrast to other transmissions of Kuthayyir's poetry, these are not embedded fragments, but rather are presented by Ibn Maymūn as the complete texts of poems copied from an edition of Kuthayyir's *dīwān*. Because our reading of Kuthayyir's poetry relies quite heavily – but not exclusively – on these recensions of his poems, and because the *Muntahā* is a decidedly late anthology by a

¹⁶ Al-Qālī, *Kitāb al-amālī*, 2:107: *wa- qara'tu 'alā Abī Bakri bni Duraydi li-Kuthayyirin*.

¹⁷ Ibn Khayr, *Fahrasa*, 396.

¹⁸ This number includes only texts whose attribution to Kuthayyir is considered unambiguous in Iḥsān 'Abbās's modern edition of Kuthayyir's *Dīwān*.

¹⁹ Outside of the anthologist's preface to the *Muntahā*, in which he lists the names of his teachers in Baghdad, no biographical information about Ibn Maymūn seems to appear in other early sources.

²⁰ Husain, "Notice of an Unknown Anthology of Ancient Arabic Poetry, "Muntaha 'l-Ṭalab min Ash'ār-i 'l-'Arab," by Muḥammad b. al-Mubārak b. Muḥammad b. Maimūn," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 3 (1937), 433-452; see also Sezgin, *GAS*, II, 79; and Seidensticker, "Verlorene Teile des *Muntahā aṭ-Ṭalab* in 'Umarīs *Masālik al-absār*," *Die Welt des Orients* 25 (1994), 116-122.

relatively unknown scholar, a more detailed description of the *Muntahā* as a source is in order.

The enormous anthology is said in its preface by Ibn Maymūn to have originally consisted of 10 parts, each containing 100 odes; as Husain notes in his article, the slightly expanded version of the *Muntahā*, which was divided by an early redactor into six large volumes (*mujalladāt*), in fact consisted of 1051 recensions of complete poems and 29 fragments, attributed to 264 poets. In his preface to the anthology, which Husain translates in his article, Ibn Maymūn states that he made the selection of texts, ‘after having spent sixty years, since my boyhood, in the perusal of poetry’, and claims to have used the best written sources (*dawāwīn*) that he could find, including the anthologies of al-Mufaḍḍal and al-Aṣma‘ī, the *Naqā’iḍ* of Jarīr and Farazdaq, the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, and ‘the poems mentioned by Ibn Durayd in his book, called *al-Shawārid*.’²¹ He also names two of the teachers with whom he studied poetry.

Husain described three manuscripts of the work (two in the then Royal Library in Cairo, now in Dār al-Kutub, and one in the then Laleli library, now the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul),²² two of these being copies of the first of the six volumes of the anthology, which contain the poems by Kuthayyir. A facsimile of the Istanbul manuscript, which contains the sixteen poems by Kuthayyir, was published in the Frankfurt series edited by F. Sezgin.²³ The second (Cairo) manuscript of this volume, which Husain described as identical to the Istanbul manuscript, has not been published, but was consulted by Iḥsān ‘Abbās, who edited the modern edition of Kuthayyir’s poetry. Indeed, the first sixteen texts in Iḥsān

²¹ See Husain, “Unknown Anthology,” 434.

²² In addition to these three manuscripts known to Husain, two further manuscripts of the *Muntahā* have since become known, in the Yale University Library, representing the third and fifth volumes of the work.

²³ *The Utmost in the Search for Arabic Poetry, Muntahā al-Ṭalab min Ash‘ār al-‘Arab by Abū Ghālib Ibn Maymūn*, ed. Sezgin (Frankfurt am Main: 1986); cf. the strong criticism of the editorial practice employed by Sezgin in this series of facsimile reproductions, in Witkam, “Arabic Manuscripts in Distress: The Frankfurter Facsimile Series,” *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 4 (1989), 175-180. Witkam’s critique of Segin’s editorial methods are certainly valid, but fortunately do not significantly affect the presentation of Kuthayyir’s poems in the facsimile edition of the *Muntahā*.

‘Abbās’s edition of Kuthayyir’s poetry (K 1-16) consist of the sixteen poems transmitted in the *Muntahā*, edited by ‘Abbās from the two extant manuscripts of the volume of the *Muntahā*. These poems, consisting of eleven *ghazal* texts and five panegyric poems for Umayyad patrons, are introduced in the Istanbul manuscript by scribal comments identifying the ‘genre’ of the piece (e.g., *wa-qāla Kuthayyiru yataghazzalu* to identify a piece of *ghazal*); and, in the case of panegyric poems, notes identifying the figure being praised (the *mamdūh*). Three of the poems (K 8, 9, and 10) are preceded by the scribal comment ‘not in the selected’ (*laysat fī l-mukhtār*), presumably a reference to either another selection of Kuthayyir’s poetry, or to an earlier edition of the *Muntahā*.

Despite its late date, there are several convincing reasons to affirm the reliability of the *Muntahā* texts as authentic reproductions from an early *dīwān*. In the first instance, where we are able to compare the texts in the *Muntahā* to other recensions of Kuthayyir’s poetry (namely, if we compare K 3 and K 4 in the *Muntahā* with the recensions of these poems by al-Qālī)²⁴, the versions in the *Muntahā*, while not identical to al-Qālī’s 10th century texts, are overall quite similar to al-Qālī’s texts, and thus are quite convincing as versions that would have been available to a 10th century scholar. Secondly – and this entails a broader point about the value of the *Muntahā* as a source for the study of early poetry – several recent studies of texts preserved uniquely in the *Muntahā* show that the anthology contains valuable authentic texts, particularly from the early Islamic and Umayyad period, that are not transmitted elsewhere. To cite the most important example, the *bā’iyyah* of Laylā al-Akhyaliya, transmitted only in the *Muntahā*, is the only extant *qaṣīda* poem by a woman from the early (Jāhili through Umayyad) periods. Laylā’s text has been the subject of recent studies by Marlé Hammond and Dana Sajdi that do not call into question the ‘authenticity’ of the poem, but rather put forward convincing literary-historical interpretations of the text, affirming incidentally the authenticity of the text transmitted in the *Muntahā*.²⁵ We

²⁴ See below, section 2.3.

²⁵ See al-Sajdi, “Trespassing the Male Domain: the “Qaṣīdah” of Laylā al-Akhyaliyyah,” *JAL* 31:2 (2000), 121-146; and Hammond, *Beyond Elegy. Classical Arabic Women’s Poetry in Context* (Oxford: 2010).

believe our interpretations of Kuthayyir's poetry lead to similar conclusions about the value of the *Muntahā* as a source for early poetry.

The first modern edition of Kuthayyir's poetry was edited in 1928 by Henri Pérès, who collected the quotations and fragments of Kuthayyir's poetry from early sources that were known up to that time.²⁶ This edition was superseded in 1971 by Iḥsān 'Abbās's edition of the *Dīwān*,²⁷ which, in addition to collecting and annotating the poetry and providing useful appendices, includes the texts from the *Muntahā*. It is on the basis of the edition produced by 'Abbās, whose text will be followed here in all but a very few instances, that the interpretive work of this dissertation is able to proceed.

As we have mentioned, in addition to the texts of Kuthayyir's poetry, our study is also based on a reading of the *akhbār* transmitted in connection to the poet. In Kuthayyir's case, this material is particularly rich. The *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, our main source for information on the life of Kuthayyir, provides *two* articles dedicated to the poet, which include in total quotations of some 150 lines of poetry by Kuthayyir, embedded within reports covering the stages of the poet's upbringing, panegyric career, involvements in contemporary conflicts, love life, and death. In addition to the main article on Kuthayyir in the *Aghānī*,²⁸ a second article is provided that is dedicated to Kuthayyir's friendship with Khandaq al-Asadī, for whom the poet composed two elegies (*marāthī*).²⁹ Outside the *Aghānī*, the *Kitāb al-Shi'r wa l-Shu'arā'* by Ibn Qutayba likewise contains valuable *akhbār* material in an article on the poet.³⁰ Among the sources named in the chains of attribution (the *isnāds*) given in the *akhbār* about Kuthayyir, one source is particularly dominant: al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, who is easily the most prominent source of reports on Kuthayyir in both the *Aghānī* and Ibn Qutayba. This scholar, who was born into the illustrious Zubayrid family in Medina and served as the *qāḍī* of Mecca for over a decade before his death in 256/870, is a central

²⁶ *Sharḥ Dīwān Kuthayyir*, 2 volumes, ed. H. Pérès (Algiers: 1928-30).

²⁷ *Dīwān Kuthayyir 'Azza*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut: 1971).

²⁸ Agh 9.1-39.

²⁹ Agh 12.172-92.

³⁰ Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-shi'r wa l-shu'arā'*, 316-329.

source for the study of Kuthayyir's work, and for Umayyad-era Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poetry more generally. In addition to al-Zubayr's prominence in the attribution of the *akhbār* about Kuthayyir, al-Zubayr's role in gathering and transmitting information on the poet is evident also from the entry on al-Zubayr in the *Fihrist* of al-Nadīm, where among al-Zubayr's works are listed a 'Book of the Accounts of Kuthayyir' (*Kitāb Akhbār Kuthayyir*), and a 'Book of Kuthayyir's Onslaught on the Poets' (*Kitāb Ighārat Kuthayyir 'alā l-Shu'arā'*).³¹ Although these works are no longer extant, they attest to the importance as a transmitter of al-Zubayr, whom Leder termed 'among the finest representatives of classical Arabic *akhbār* literature'³²

Before proceeding to a description of the contents of this dissertation, a brief outline of the poet's life should be useful at the outset. Although the date of the poet's birth is not clear, it is certain that he died, having achieved great fame, in Medina in 105/723. He was born into the Ḥijāzī tribe of Khuzā'a, within the tribe's 'main area of abode...between Mecca and Medina.'³³ The toponyms within Kuthayyir's poetry, if they can be used (with some caution) to adduce the area where he lived during his early years, refer primarily to areas in the environs of Medina, including the Ḥijāzī coastal plain down to the Red Sea (the Tihāma), and the hills surrounding Mecca.³⁴ Leaving to one side the picturesque anecdotes reported about the poet's amorous adventures and love life, the most reliable guidelines to the course of the poet's life and career are provided by the evidence of the patronage relationships he formed, which are confirmed both by the extant panegyric poetry and the early accounts. As will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, Kuthayyir first appears as a panegyrist in the Ḥijāz during the turbulent years of the Second Fitna or Civil War (60-72 / 680-692), attached to the cause of the Hashimite Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (known as Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, d. 81/701). During the late 680s and throughout the years of 'Abd al-Malik's caliphate (66-86 / 685-705), Kuthayyir was a panegyrist for the Marwānids,

³¹ See al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 111; translated in *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, trans. Dodge, 2 volumes, (New York: 1970), 243.

³² "al-Zubayr b. Bakkār", E12 [Leder].

³³ "Khuzā'a," E12 [Kister], 77.

³⁴ See the appendix on place names in Kuthayyir's poetry in 'Abbās's edition of the *Dīwān*, 551-570, produced by al-Shaykh Ḥamdu l-Jāsir.

composing *madīh* for ‘Abd al-Malik and for his half-brother, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān (d. 85/704), who was the governor of Egypt and ‘caliph in waiting’ (*walī al-‘ahd*) during his half-brother’s caliphate. During the thirteen-year period following the death of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Kuthayyir produced no extant panegyric for Umayyad patrons; he reappears as a panegyrist during the caliphate of his former patron’s son, ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (‘Umar II, ruled 99-101/717-720). The final evidence for Kuthayyir as a panegyrist is attested in praise poetry for Yazīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik (ruled 101-105/720-724).

Among the details reported in the *akhbār*, two salient elements have a significant bearing on the interpretation of his poetry. The first is his relationship to Jamīl Buthaynah (died 82/701 in Egypt), the poet of the ‘Udhra tribe of the Kalb, and central figure of the so-called ‘Udhri school of love poetry. Kuthayyir is reported, twice in the *Aghānī*, to have been the transmitter (*rāwī*) of Jamīl’s poetry, and thus the last in a purported inter-tribal chain of *ruwāt* leading back into the pre-Islamic period.³⁵ While the historical reality of this inter-tribal chain of transmitters may be suspected as a product of later exegesis, the stylistic and thematic connections between Kuthayyir’s and Jamīl’s extant poetry are clear and have been affirmed by scholarship,³⁶ and the connection between these poets seems clearly historical. A second notable historical element of Kuthayyir’s biography is his reported ‘Shī‘ism.’ Kuthayyir is reported to have been attached to the movement known as the Kaysānīya or Khashabīya, an early Shī‘ite movement that held Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (Ibn al-Ḥanafīya) to be the *mahdī* (messianic redeemer) and *waṣī* (successor/heir) of his father ‘Alī b. ‘Alī Ṭālib.³⁷ Kuthayyir’s Shī‘ism, which is commonly the context in which

³⁵ See Agh 7.78-79, 85-86 and Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-shī‘r wa l-shu‘arā*, 57; on this supposed chain of transmitters, see also “Rāwī,” EI2 [Jacobi] and Sezgin, GAS, II, 20.

³⁶ See Gabrieli, “Rapporti tra poeta e rāwī: echi di Ğamīl in Kuṭayyir ‘Azzah,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 93:3/4 (1939), 163-168.

³⁷ See al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysānīya fī al-ta’rīkh wa l-adab* (Beirut: 1974), *passim*, and, on Kuthayyir, especially 312-322; see also “al-Kaysānīya,” *Encyclopedia Iranica* [Anthony]; and van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. Und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra*, volume 1 (Berlin: 1991), 233-235 and 304-305.

Kuthayyir is mentioned in general works on early Islam,³⁸ is reported in a number of *akhbār* transmitted about Kuthayyir, which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.2, below.

1.3 The Structure of this Dissertation

Chapters Two and Three of this dissertation study Kuthayyir's love poetry (*ghazal*) and praise poetry (*madiḥ*), respectively. It is hoped that from the reading of the two chapters, a picture will emerge of Kuthayyir's semiotic register as a poet in both of these genres and that, most crucially, Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetry and panegyric will be read together to better understand Kuthayyir's achievements in the context of the historical environment in which his poetry was patronized, appreciated, and disseminated.

Chapter Two begins with an account of the secondary scholarship on the emergence of *ghazal* poetry, focusing on the ways in which narrative literary histories have depicted an apparent 'emergence of the lyric' in Arabic in relation to the events of the first Islamic century (2.1). Following this (2.2) we argue, drawing primarily on the article about Kuthayyir in the *Aghānī*, that Marwānid patronage should be considered as an important factor in assessing the historical context of *ghazal* poetry in this period. After a description of the corpus of Kuthayyir's eleven *ghazal* poems transmitted in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab* in terms of their formal structure and the incorporation of motifs familiar from the pre-Islamic poetic corpus (2.3), we then provide a translation and commentary on three of Kuthayyir's long-form *ghazal* poems (2.4). These three poems have been selected both because they are among Kuthayyir's most widely transmitted and quoted texts, but also because they share a striking and important feature: each contains a 'pilgrimage-oath', as we have termed it, an oath (*ḥilf*) sworn between lovers by the Ka'ba and the sanctuary (*ḥaram*) of Mecca. Following these three texts, we offer an essay interpreting Kuthayyir's frequent reference to pilgrimage and the complex of rituals surrounding it. In the final

³⁸ See, for example, the reference to Kuthayyir as an 'extremist' member of the Kaysāniyya in Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: 2004), 82.

section of the chapter (2.5), we then provide a translation and commentary for one more *ghazal* poem by Kuthayyir, followed by an essay investigating a major thematic element of Kuthayyir's poetry, namely his creation of a 'lovesick' persona.

Chapter Three then focusses on Kuthayyir's career as a panegyrist and praise poet. We first study his attachment to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya during the Second Fitna, focusing on the *akhbār* related to this period of his life, and assess the fragmentary panegyric poetry embedded in these accounts (3.2). Following this, we provide a study of Kuthayyir's most extensive extant panegyric poem, an ode of praise addressed to 'Abd al-Malik in connection with the caliph's campaign to re-take the Ḥijāz from Ibn al-Zubayr in the late 680s (3.3). Kuthayyir's attachment to 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān (governor of Egypt, d. 85/704) is the subject of the following section (3.4), which argues that the patronage of Ḥijāzī poets by the Marwānids in this period can be understood in terms of the agonistic attempts of the Banū Marwān to establish a kind of '*Ḥijāzī* prestige' in the years after the Second Fitna. Finally, the last stage of Kuthayyir's career, in which he praised the caliph 'Umar II, is discussed in 3.5; in this section, we focus on the ways in which the image of 'Umar II in the historical tradition as 'pious' is confirmed and enriched by the texts of *ghazal*-infused panegyric by Kuthayyir for this patron, as well as the interesting *akhbār* that depict their interaction. The last section of this dissertation, entitled 'Patronage and the Sacred Ḥijāz,' consists of a general conclusion, in which we offer more general observations about Kuthayyir's work as a poet and its place within the history of Umayyad-era poetry in Arabic.

The two central chapters adopt somewhat different methods of interpretation. While Chapter Two on the *ghazal* is primarily literary and textual, putting primary stress on the glossing and direct reading of the transmitted texts of the poems, Chapter Three, on the other hand, while offering literary interpretations where possible, offers a chronological delineation of the poet's historical attachments and career. It is hoped that this doubled approach represents at least a balanced response to the complex and polysemous nature of the poetry; and, above all, that our readings of the texts might be usefully incorporated into future narratives of early Islamic and Umayyad-era literature and history.

KUTHAYYIR'S *GHAZAL*

2.1 Reading the Emergence of *Ghazal* Poetry

In this introductory section, we will provide a critical sketch of the most significant scholarship on the love poetry (*ghazal*) of the early Islamic and Umayyad period. We will first briefly discuss the traditional picture drawn in scholarship of two 'schools' of early Islamic and Umayyad-era love poetry (the so-called 'Umarī and 'Udhrī varieties of *ghazal*); this will then be followed by a more detailed discussion of the work of two scholars, Régis Blachère and Renate Jacobi, whose work has been particularly influential in the interpretation of the corpus of early love poetry in Arabic. Following this, we will then describe, in relation to our discussion of earlier scholarship, several of the basic historical and hermeneutical assumptions that we wish to emphasize in our approach to Kuthayyir's poetry.

The appearance of *ghazal* poetry during the first Islamic century and the early Umayyad period is acknowledged as one of the key moments or 'turning points' in Arabic literary history. The available narrative histories of Arabic literature ascribe the first appearance of *ghazal* poems -- defined as 'monothematic poems...entirely devoted to the erotic theme'³⁹ - - to texts by poets from the Ḥijāz in the Mukhaḍram period, that is, to the period that included and just followed the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad.⁴⁰ Subsequently, in the early Umayyad period, and more specifically within the 'generation of poets which arose around 50/670' in the Ḥijāz and north western Arabia, one notes a flourishing of independent love poetry attributed to poets such as 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a (d. 93/712 or

³⁹ Jacobi, "Theme and Variations in Umayyad Ghazal Poetry," in *JAL* 23 (1992), 111.

⁴⁰ The most detailed available exposition of the traditional account of the 'emergence of *ghazal*' is Wagner, *Grundzüge der klassischen arabischen Dichtung*, ii. (Darmstadt: 1987), 61-87.

103/721), Jamīl b. Ma‘mar al-‘Udhri (82/701), and others.⁴¹ This apparent new era in Arabic poetry, coinciding with the end of the first Islamic century, characterized by poetry devoted to the theme of love and showing new formal and thematic features as against the corpus of pre-Islamic verse, has been called ‘one of the few revolutionary developments generally conceded to Arabic literary history,’⁴² and has continuously triggered attempts to explain the first appearance of ‘lyric’ poetry in Arabic.⁴³

The traditional narrative of the emergence of *ghazal* views the new genre as a development from the amatory prelude (*nasīb*) of the early Arabic ‘poly-thematic’ ode (*qaṣīda*), assigning this development to the context of the turbulent historical environment of the first Islamic century. Yet, as in so many cases of literary periodization, the concrete circumstances of this putative evolution from *nasīb* to independent love poem are far from clear. The first extant texts of *ghazal* poetry have been identified in poems transmitted in the *Dīwān* of the Hudhayl tribe of the Ḥijāz, namely in poems attributed to the late Mukhaḍram poet Abū Dhu‘ayb, who died in Egypt circa 30/650;⁴⁴ but even if Abū Dhu‘ayb’s lifetime serves as a useful *terminus post quem* for the appearance of *ghazal* poetry, the nature of the literary evidence makes it difficult to apprehend even the most fundamental details of how, for whom, and even when independent love poetry first appeared in Arabic.

⁴¹ See Jacobi, “Omaijadische Dichtung (7.-8. Jahrhundert),” in *Grundriss der arabischen Philologie*, ii (Wiesbaden: 1987) [=GAP 2], 35.

⁴² Jacobi, “Time and Reality in Nasīb and Ghazal,” *JAL* 16 (1985), 1.

⁴³ On Ḥijāzī *ghazal* as the emergence of ‘lyric’ in Arabic, see especially Heinrichs, “Literary Theory: the Problem of its Efficiency,” in *Arabic Poetry: Theory and Development*, ed. von Grunebaum (Wiesbaden: 1973), 18-69; and Stetkevych, “The Arabic Lyrical Phenomenon in Context,” *JAL* 6 (1975): 57-77.

⁴⁴ See Jacobi, “Die Anfänge der arabischen Ġazalpoesie: Abū Dhu‘aib al-Hudhali,” *Der Islam* 61 (1984), 218-250.

Following broadly the picture of this phenomenon drawn in the indigenous critical tradition, literary histories have described the love poetry produced during the first Islamic century according to a basic two-fold division. On the one hand, critics note the existence of an urban (*ḥadarī*) or ‘Umarite form of *ghazal*, a genre expressing a more light-hearted and boastful attitude to love, and associated with poets in the urban and aristocratic milieu of West Arabia’s newly wealthy cities, most prominently the great Makhzūmī poet ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a, as well as the Umayyad Ḥijāzī poet al-‘Arjī (d. 120/738) and the Meccan poet of the Quraysh Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt (d. after 84/703).⁴⁵ The *dīwān* of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a represents the most voluminous and conspicuous corpus of Ḥijāzī *ghazal*, and ‘Umar’s work necessarily predominates to some degree in any understanding of Umayyad-era lyric.⁴⁶ But there are significant problems in taking ‘Umar’s *dīwān* to be representative of a new lyric genre. On the one hand, scholars have raised the question of the extent to which ‘Umar’s *ghazal* may represent a continuation of largely unrecorded earlier strains of poetry in the western Ḥijāz, making it difficult to assess the novelty of ‘Umar’s work.⁴⁷ Amplifying this difficulty, the lack of extant evidence from the Ḥijāz in the pre-Islamic poetic corpus – which is dominated by the court poets of the Najd and eastern Arabia – can easily distort our understanding of the later period, so that ‘Umar’s *ghazal* appears falsely as a kind of *ex nihilo* phenomenon, obscuring important aspects of regional diversity, and strains of continuity with earlier practices, within the corpus.⁴⁸

⁴⁵On these ‘*Ḥijāzī* lyricists’, see especially Blachère, *HLA*, 620-648.

⁴⁶ See Abdallah, “Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a,” *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 311. Arabic Literary Culture, 500-925*, eds. Cooperson and Toorawa (Michigan: 2005), esp. 288-291.

⁴⁷ The question of ‘Umar’s precedents was raised by Montgomery, “Arkhilokhos, al-Nābigha al-Dhubayāni and a complaint against blacksmiths - or, a funny thing happened to me ...,” in *Edebiyat* 5: 1 (1994), 22; and “‘Umar b Abī Rabī‘a,” *EI2* [Montgomery].

⁴⁸ See now the work of Miller, “Tribal Poetics in Early Arabic Culture: the Case of Ash‘ār al-Hudhaliyyīn,” (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2016); and *ibid.*, “Seasonal Poetics: the Dry Season and Autumn Rains among Pre-Islamic Najdi and Hijazi Tribes,” *Arabica* 64 (2017), 1-27.

‘Umar’s brand of *ghazal* is commonly contrasted to what is referred to as the ‘Udhri or Bedouin *ghazal*. The ‘Udhri ‘school’ of love poetry is distinguished by the expression of all-consuming ardor and the devotion to a single beloved, and is associated generally with the semi-nomadic tribes of north-western Arabia. As its title implies, this brand of poetry is associated with the ‘Udhra sub-tribe of the Kalb.⁴⁹ The earliest poets of this ‘school,’ however, appear to be legendary or semi-legendary figures, folk-heroes whose depictions in the sources are fueled by the literary imagination of the early Abbasid period. Among these early ‘Udhri figures, the poet with the strongest claim to being historical appears to be ‘Urwa b. al-Ḥizām al-‘Udhri (death attributed to circa 30/650). ‘Urwa’s lovesickness and thwarted love for his beloved ‘Afrā’ are the subject of prose romances that may have circulated already during the Marwānid period and are extant in versions collected by scholars of the early Abbasid age.⁵⁰ The poetic remains attributed to him amount to some 200 lines, consisting primarily of fragments of a single *nūniya* poem that modern scholarship has viewed as a composite of poems by various authors, having likely arisen in connection to the illustration of the prose romances.⁵¹

It is only at the end of the 7th and in the first decades of the 8th century, that is, in the years during and following the Second Fitna (60-73/680-692) and the establishment of Marwānid rule, that a generation of *ghazal* poets emerges that is of unambiguous historical existence, leaving relatively extensive and authentic texts to posterity. The figure in this generation that is associated with the ‘Udhri/Bedouin *ghazal* is Jamīl b. Ma‘mar al-‘Udhri, who died at the court of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān in Egypt in 81/701.⁵² Jamīl left a significant corpus of poems that circulated in a *dīwān* by the 3rd/9th century; although

⁴⁹ See “‘Udhra,” E12 [Lecker]; and “‘Udhri,” E12 [Jacobi].

⁵⁰ On ‘Urwa, see Leder, *Das Korpus al-Haitham ibn ‘Adī* (Frankfurt: 1991), 104-10; “‘Urwa b. Al-Ḥizām,” E12 [Bauer]; and Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-shi‘r wa l-shu‘arā’*, 394-399.

⁵¹ Bauer, op cit.

⁵² See Gabrieli, “Ġamīl al-‘Udhri: Studio critico e raccolta dei frammenti,” *RSO* 17 (1938), 40-71; “Djamīl,” E12 [Gabrieli]; and “Udhri,” E12 [Jacobi].

Jamīl's *dīwān* has not survived, some 800 lines of his poetry are now extant, including a transmission of ten poems in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*.⁵³ Contemporaneously with, and following, Jamīl – i.e., in the last two decades of the 1st/7th century and first decades of the 2nd/8th – a number of other poets emerged from the Ḥijāz, achieving fame for their love poetry as well as producing panegyric poetry for the Marwānid line. Kuthayyir, who was closely associated with Jamīl and considered to be his transmitter (*rāwī*), was among these poets, as were the Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrists Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī (d. after 76/695), Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt (d. after 80/700), Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ (d. 108-113/726-731), and the Anṣārī Medinan poet al-Aḥwaṣ (d. 110/728). Each of these poets produced extant praise poetry for Marwānid patrons, and each is associated also with the production of *ghazal*.

The interpretation of the Umayyad *ghazal* according to two types or 'schools' of love poetry, defined primarily by the tonality of the love expressed within the form, and then associated secondarily with certain formal-metrical traits, is an inheritance from the indigenous Arabic philological tradition. The thematics associated with the 'Udhrī 'school' of *ghazal*, including chaste devotion to a single beloved and thwarted love, were emphasized in the prosimetrical *akhbār* compilations produced throughout the 3rd/9th century, by scholars such as al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/870) and al-Haytham b. 'Adī (d. 206-209/821-823).⁵⁴ This biographical-exegetical literature, concerned with the elaboration of an "Udhrī ideal,' enjoyed great popularity among the literary public of late 8th-10th century Iraq.⁵⁵ While a historical understanding of the development of the "Udhrī genre' is thus crucial to the study of late 8th-10th century literary culture and taste, this later

⁵³ See *Muntahā l-Ṭalab min Ash'ār al-'Arab* (Frankfurt: 1986), 160-174.

⁵⁴ See Leder, "The 'Udhrī Narrative in Arabic Literature," in *Martyrdom in Literature. Visions of Death and Meaningful Suffering in Europe and the Middle East from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. Pannewick (Wiesbaden: 2004), 163-187; and Blachère, *HLA*, 760-763.

⁵⁵ In addition to Leder, op cit., see Vadet, *L'Esprit courtois en Orient dans les cinq premiers siècles de l'Hégire* (Paris: 1968).

literary (fictive) paradigm is obviously likely to represent a distortion of the realities of 7th-8th century Ḥijāzī poetry. It is somewhat surprising, then, that modern scholarship has largely retained the designation “Udhrī” as denoting a more or less unified strain of love poetry in the early Umayyad period, and continues to present the two-fold schematic history of Umayyad-era love poetry.⁵⁶

Indeed, a number of attempts have been made to explain the supposed brooding, melancholic, and ‘disaffected’ ‘Udhrī poetic persona in the context of early Islamic history. T.L Djedidi, for example, in a 1974 monograph dedicated to studying “Udhrī poetry,” put stress on the connections between the socio-economic isolation of certain Bedouin elements in the Ḥijāz and the themes of alienation and frustration in ‘Udhrī poetry; Djedidi argued that one could draw a ‘homologie’ between the spread of Islamic monotheism and the expression of love for a ‘dame unique’ in ‘Udhrī poetry.⁵⁷ Similar strains of argument, bringing together the poetry of the ‘Udhra broadly with qur’ānic ethics and eschatology, can also be seen in the arguments of Taha Hussayn and A.Kh. Kinany, who both drew on the traditional outlines of Umayyad poetry sketched by the tradition to explain the ‘Umarī and ‘Udhrī genres as two strains of reaction to early Islamic ethics and eschatology, again relying heavily on the Bedouin/urban binary.⁵⁸ Other more recent research has also re-affirmed the narrative of ‘Udhrī poetry as a Bedouin ‘response’ to social change: Bauer’s study of *ghazal* poetry, which focusses on the Abbasid-era poet al-‘Abbās b. al-Aḥnaf (d. 188/803 or 192/807), for example, in its introduction reproduces the outlines of the

⁵⁶The shortcomings of a strict ‘Umarī/‘Udhrī binary have often been pointed out, as in the comments by Wagner, *Grundzüge*, ii., 58-77; Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. Und 10. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: 1998), 52-55; and Dmitriev, *Das poetische Werk des Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī. Eine literaturanthropologische Studie* (Wiesbaden: 2008), 536. But see, for example, the restatement of the binary hermeneutic in *Ghazal as World Literature I. Transformations of a Literary Genre*, eds. Bauer and Neuwirth (Beirut: 2005), 12-13.

⁵⁷ Djedidi, *La poésie amoureuse des Arabes. Le cas des ‘Udrites* (Algiers : 1974).

⁵⁸ Kinany, *The Development of Gazal in Arabic Literature* (Damascus: 1950); Ḥusayn, *Ḥadīth al-Arbi‘ā’* (Cairo: 1925).

traditional narrative of love poetry in the Umayyad period, with branches of ‘Umarite and ‘Udhri *ghazal* produced, respectively, by bon vivant aristocrats in the Ḥijāz and disaffected western Arabian semi-nomads.⁵⁹ Renate Jacobi’s work, which we will examine in more detail below, represents also a strong affirmation of the unity and sincerity of the ‘Udhri ‘viewpoint’ as a response to the first Islamic century.⁶⁰ Irfan Shahid, in the course of a study of the evidence for pre-Islamic religious tendencies in northwest Arabia in the century before Islam, put forward the idea that a distinctive poetry connected to the ‘Udhra may be related to pre-Islamic attachment to Christianity and Mary cults; this proposal, which has not been taken up in later scholarship, was not accompanied however by any direct discussion of so-called ‘Udhri poetry.⁶¹

The understanding of early Ḥijāzī love poetry as presenting opposed strains of response to social and intellectual change in the early Islamic period, occurring along a supposed Bedouin/sedentary binary and enacted in the texts through differing adaptations of the pre-Islamic poetic repertoire, has proven a useful hermeneutic for modern studies of the *ghazal*. In discussing the poetry of the Marwānid period, these studies have argued that as the capital of the caliphate moved to Damascus and the holy cities of the Ḥijāz suffered a concomitant loss in political power, this decline of political ‘responsibility’ was accompanied by the prosperity brought about by the institution of the Ḥajj; these factors gave rise to a ‘refined and self-indulgent society, dedicated to luxury and the pursuit of the arts.’⁶² Furthermore, the events of the Second Fitna, between 60-73/680-692, which

⁵⁹ Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung*, chapter 2, esp. 49-50.

⁶⁰ See especially her “The ‘Udhra: Love and Death in the Umayyad Period,” in *Martyrdom in Literature. Visions of Death and Meaningful Suffering in Europe and the Middle East from Antiquity to Modernity*, ed. Pannewick (Wiesbaden: 2004).

⁶¹ I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Washington D.C.: 1989), 443-445.

⁶² Rowson, “The Effeminate of Early Medina,” in *JAOS* 111 (1991), 671-692, 671. See also Enderwitz, *Liebe als Beruf. Al-‘Abbās ibn al-Aḥnaf und das Gazal* (Beirut: 1995), 12-16; and Abdallah, “‘Umar ibn Abi Rabi’ah,” *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, 345-346.

immediately precedes the flourishing of the most significant generation of Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets, presumably played a role here, perhaps by isolating the Ḥijāz further politically, although the concrete impact of this factor on the development of poetry has been little approached or explained.

Following this sketch of the theories of the the *ghazal*'s emergence, it will be a helpful preliminary to our study to look further at how these theories incorporate the corpus in more detail. Here it is helpful to look in particular at the work of two scholars, Régis Blachère and Renate Jacobi, whose work has been particularly important in directing research on the Umayyad corpus.

In a series of articles and encyclopedia entries on the *ghazal*, and in the section of his *Histoire de la littérature arabe* dedicated to 'poetry in the Ḥijāz 50/670 to 107/725,' Blachère put forward a thorough critical investigation of the sources available for the history of the Umayyad-era and early Islamic *ghazal*, as well as several synoptic treatments of the themes and content of *ghazal* poems.⁶³ Blachère's work on the *ghazal* is distinguished by his careful critical articulation of the problems related to the source material for the study of Ḥijāzī *ghazal*. Blachère clarified that the literary historian's task was to describe the authentic traces of the lyric poetry that appeared in Western Arabia during the first Islamic century and Umayyad period, while stressing that these remains had to be carefully extricated, so to speak, from the work of 2nd and 3rd / 8th and 9th century Abbasid-era scholars by whom they were transmitted, in whose hands they were subject to 'courtly contamination.'⁶⁴ Highlighting the difference between the 'original Ḥijāzī' elements and the 'courtly' (i.e. 'Udhri') elaborations of later ages, Blachère asserted the existence of a genuine corpus of 'West Arabian lyricism' that could be detached from the influence of later

⁶³ See Blachère, *HLA*, III, 594-716; *ibid.*, "Le ġazal ou poésie courtoise dans la littérature arabe," *Analecta* (Damascus: 1975); *ibid.*, "Les principaux thèmes de la poésie érotique au siècle des Umayyades de Damas," *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales de l'Université d'Alger* 5 (1939-41): 82-128; and "Ghazal", EI2 [Blachère].

⁶⁴ Blachère's view on the sources and their 'contamination' is stated concisely at *HLA*, III, 593-598.

critical constructs. The study of early *ghazal* poetry had to proceed, therefore, by way of a careful ‘sifting’ of the poetic texts and *akhbār* literature for genuine material. In his description of this Ḥijāzī material, Blachère depicted West Arabian lyricism generally in terms of a new ‘freedom’ of attitudes and moods occasioned by the new wealth and ‘urbanity’ (*citadinité*) of the Ḥijāz.⁶⁵ According to Blachère, privileged aristocrats such as al-‘Arjī and ‘Umar led the trend of ‘song for song’s sake,’ creating metrically and thematically innovative verse for high entertainment, employing personae marked by individualism and tenderness, and depicting new patterns of social interaction and freedom between the sexes. ‘Aristocratic’ attitudes and the pursuit of pleasure are prevalent in Blachère’s description of the work of the Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets.

While Blachère’s interpretation of the frivolous ‘aristocratic’ *ghazal* often seems inattentive to certain thematic strains in the so-called urban *ghazal* corpus,⁶⁶ his views on trends among the so-called Bedouin or ‘Udhri poets of this period are very instructive. While he argued that the evidence for the Western Arabian lyrics attributed to the early ‘Udhri poets was overwhelmed by influence from late-eighth century Irāqī literary fashions, he carefully distinguished between semi-legendary early figures such as ‘Urwa and Majnūn, and the Marwānid-era Ḥijāzī poets associated with the ‘Udhri tradition. Crucially, in the sections of *HLA* dedicated to ‘Ḥijāzī poetry 50/670 to 107/725,’ he identified and discussed an important group of ‘Ḥijāzī panegyrist-elegiasts,’ i.e. poets famous for their *ghazal* poetry, who also prominently produced praise poetry for the Umayyads and others. It is into this class of poets that Blachère places Kuthayyir, as well as Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ, Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, and several others. Blachère contrasted the work of these panegyrist-elegiasts with their more urban and aristocratic peers, arguing that poets from more humble backgrounds, such as Nuṣayb and Kuthayyir, were compelled by circumstance to produce praise poetry, while privileged poets such as ‘Umar and al-‘Arjī

⁶⁵ *HLA*, 676.

⁶⁶ For a different view, see Montgomery and Mattock, “The Metaphysical ‘Umar,” *JAL* 20/1 (1989), 12-19.

were left to art for art's sake.⁶⁷ Blachère's identification of the panegyrist-elegiasts associated with the 'Udhrī *ghazal*, in contrast to the figures whose personalities underwent a later 'courtly' transfiguration, provides a valuable historical starting point for our approach to the so-called 'Udhrī movement in the Marwānid period. Furthermore, his distinction between poets who were 'compelled' to produce panegyric and those who were not is useful to some degree, although one should question strongly Blachère's position that the 'aristocratic' situation of 'Umar can serve as the normative case for Ḥijāzī lyric. Indeed, while 'Umar's poetry dominates in the sections of Blachère's history that summarize the themes of Ḥijāzī poetry, it is clear from the other sections of Blachère's work that the panegyrist-elegiasts were more numerous, and likely more impactful in their own time, than the so-called 'pure lyricists.'

Significantly for our study, Blachère's work observes an important epistemic difference between the study of the 'Udhrī tradition as such, and the study of Marwānid-era love poetry. Thus, while Blachère maintained that the texts attributed to Jamīl and even to 'Urwa and Majnūn contained a core of authentic early texts that provided the spark for the later courtly taste among scholars,⁶⁸ he excluded the early 'Udhrī figures from the panegyrist-elegiast section of his literary history. In addition to this key distinction, Blachère's work is distinguished by a critical, rather than hyper-skeptical, approach to the *akhbār* literature. While attentive to the pervasive fictive elements of the *akhbār*, Blachère also widely quoted the *akhbār* material in his studies, when this material was found to contain historically plausible information. His approach is founded on the assumption that the researcher can distinguish between, on the one hand, historical details such as patronage relationships and other plausible external facts reported about a poet on good authority, and, on the other hand, depictions of the 'sentimental lives' of poets by way of picturesque narratives that seem to arise from the exegesis of texts.⁶⁹ Here, Blachère's

⁶⁷ See *HLA*, 677.

⁶⁸ See "Ghazal," E12 [Blachère].

⁶⁹ See *HLA*, 595.

critical inclusion of the *akhbār* transmitted about Umayyad-era poets can be contrasted with work that would read this poetry completely detached from the *akhbār* frame, thus explicitly or implicitly rejecting the *akhbār* as the imaginative products of later exegesis irrelevant to the ‘close reading’ of the texts themselves.

After Blachère, the most significant contribution to the study of *ghazal* poetry has been the work of Renate Jacobi. In a series of articles and encyclopedia articles – first dedicated to the work of the Mukhaḍram poet Abū Dhu’ayb al-Hudhalī, and later applying her approach to the poetry of Jamīl and the Umayyad caliph and late *ghazal* poet al-Walīd b. al-Yazīd (ruled 125-126/743-744) – Jacobi has offered close readings and historical-contextual interpretations of what she identified as the earliest *ghazal* texts. Her interpretations have greatly influenced all recent readings of the *ghazal*.

In her 1984 study of the poetry of Abū Dhu’ayb al-Hudhalī, Jacobi, following the suggestion of J. Hell in his edition of the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, identified the works of this poet preserved in al-Sukkarī’s edition of the tribal *dīwān* of the Hudhayl as the earliest extant examples of independent love poems in Arabic.⁷⁰ Abū Dhu’ayb died in c. 28/649 and was thus a Mukhaḍram poet, having lived during the time of Muḥammad’s preaching and the early conquests, and having composed his most famous poem, an elegy for his fallen sons, while serving in the conquest of Egypt under Ibn al-Zubayr.⁷¹ According to Jacobi, Abū Dhu’ayb’s poetry exemplifies two significant formal innovations: on the one hand, the inclusion of an amatory prelude (*nasīb*) within the elegy form (*marthīya*); on the other hand, the existence of independent love poems formally and tonally distinct from the *nasīb* of the *qaṣīda*. The former innovation in the form of the elegy, which appears in four poems by Abū Dhu’ayb

⁷⁰ See Jacobi, “Anfänge” (1984).

⁷¹ See “Abū Dhu’ayb al-Hudhalī,” EI2 [von Grunebaum]; and Miller, “Tribal Poetics” (PhD), 354-391.

(V, VII, IX, and XI) was not, according to Jacobi, widely carried forward into later poetry.⁷² But the existence of the independent *ghazal* poems by Abū Dhu'ayb marks, according to Jacobi, an important diachronic shift in the history of Arabic poetry.

Jacobi did not assert that Abū Dhu'ayb himself should be considered to have personally introduced these structural innovations into the tradition. Jacobi remarks that, within the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, these formal innovations appear already, in less developed form, in the work of the earlier Mukhaḍram poet Sā'ida b. Ju'ayya (d. approx. 8/630), whose transmitter (*rāwī*) Abū Dhu'ayb is reported to have been. But even if the appearance of *ghazal* can be traced back at least to the generation preceding Abū Dhu'ayb, so that its 'first traces appear in texts from the beginning of the 7th century, thus coinciding with the preaching of Muhammad,'⁷³ it is nonetheless in the texts attributed to Abū Dhu'ayb that we have the first significant corpus of *ghazal* poems that can be submitted to detailed literary study.

Jacobi provided a groundbreaking and influential literary study of the *ghazal* of Abū Dhu'ayb, contrasting his poetry to the amatory prelude (*nasīb*) of the pre-Islamic ode. The primary distinction drawn by Jacobi between *ghazal* and *nasīb*, is that while the poet of the *nasīb* is always oriented toward the description of a love affair that occurred in the past, the *ghazal* poet is oriented toward feelings and events that endure and exist into the future. This is reflected in a number of features in the texts of *ghazal*, primarily by the use of imperfect (*muḍāri'*) verb forms, often accompanied by the future-particles *sa-* and *sawfa* and negated by *lā*, where in the *nasīb* of the *qaṣīda* we find perfect (*māḍī*) forms, or imperfect forms negated by *mā*. Concomitant with this change in the temporality of the poem, Jacobi identified changes of broader significance: in *ghazal*, one finds a new 'attitude

⁷² Cf., however, the discussion in Miller, "Tribal Poetics" (PhD), 316 f., which suggests *marthīya* with *nasīb* is a particular local feature of Hijāzī poetry. Kuthayyir's two preserved *marāthī* for his friend Khandaq al-Asadī (K 22 and 23, not studied in this dissertation) both contain *nasībs*.

⁷³ Jacobi, "Time and Reality," 2.

towards reality'⁷⁴ expressed by the poet, wherein *individuality* is given emphasis as against the 'communal' emphasis of the Jāhilī *nasīb*. This shift entails also a new understanding of nature, and of the relationship between the exterior world and the poet's own feelings, as the introspective *ghazal* poet 'projects' feelings onto nature where the Jāhilī poet simply viewed nature objectively. Whereas the poet of the old *qaṣīda* produced his art to forward the collective through the exemplification of the ideals of the Bedouin hero, namely by overcoming the pain of erotic separation in the *nasīb* and 'moving on,' the poet of *ghazal* enters into the exploration of his own feelings. Whereas earlier poetry framed its drama as a struggle against brute forces outside oneself, the *ghazal* poet, according to this reading of Abū Dhu'ayb, projects his own feelings onto the natural world around him, thus making possible what Jacobi calls "'Lyrical" poetry in the traditional, romantic understanding of the term."⁷⁵ Taking this interpretation a step further, this 'lyrical' phenomenon can be viewed, according to Jacobi, as a kind of subjective, melancholic rebellion against the prevailing, tribal, system of values.

Jacobi's interpretation of *ghazal* is based on a close reading of texts in terms of the new deployment and re-purposing of the repertoire of motifs familiar from the pre-Islamic poetic corpus; in Jacobi's close readings, emphasis is placed on diachronic shifts in the meaning of these motifs and semiotic elements. To better grasp the bases for her broader claims about the *ghazal*, let us look now at one example of Jacobi's close readings of Abū Dhu'ayb.

Poem XXVI attributed to Abū Dhu'ayb in the Hudhalī *Dīwān* has twice been interpreted by Jacobi.⁷⁶ Although the text of the poem is attributed to Abū Dhū'ayb in al-Sukkarī's

⁷⁴ Jacobi, "Time and Reality," 2.

⁷⁵ Ibid., "Time and Reality," 17.

⁷⁶ The text appears at the conclusion of "Anfänge," 241 f., and is translated with commentary in "Time and Reality" (1985).

recension of the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, Jacobi rejects this attribution on the basis of stylistic divergences between this poem and the rest of Abū Dhu'ayb's poetry. The attribution of the poem is indeed somewhat complex: the poem appears in three partial recensions in the *Aghānī*, once attributed to Abū Dhu'ayb, and twice attributed to the Khuzā'ī poet Ibn Abī Dubākīl, who was active toward the end of the 7th century, a contemporary of al-Aḥwaṣ, to whom he is linked in the *Aghānī*.⁷⁷ Although Hell did not challenge the attribution of the poem to Abū Dhu'ayb, Jacobi saw sufficient ground to reject the attribution to the poet, while arguing that the very attribution to Abū Dhu'ayb at once confirms the Arabic tradition's recognition of Abū Dhu'ayb's association with the new *ghazal*.

Introducing the poem, Jacobi writes that 'what is new in the *dīwan* of the poet [i.e., Abū Dhu'ayb], but still mixed and overlapped with conventional traits, appears fully developed in poem XXVI.'⁷⁸ In what follows, we first quote the text⁷⁹ in Jacobi's translation, then provide a summary of the most important aspects of Jacobi's interpretation:

1. Oh tent of Dahma that I am avoiding! Youth has passed away, but my love for her will never pass.
2. Why is it that I sigh when your camels are brought near, and that I turn away from you when you are nearest to me?
3. How lovely you are! May a man in distress have confidence in you, and may he ever hope to win your love?

⁷⁷ Agh 21.96; see Jacobi, "Anfänge," 241.

⁷⁸"Anfänge," 241: Was sich an Neuem im Diwan des Dichters findet, aber noch mit konventionellen Zügen gemischt oder von ihnen überlagert ist, erscheint in Gedicht Nr. XXVI bereits voll entwickelt.

⁷⁹ In "Time and Reality," Jacobi provides two separate interpretations of the two variant recensions of the poem, referred to as versions A and B. Only version A is discussed here, as the significant variations between the structure of the two recensions does not affect the 'micro-structural' features of Jacobi's literary reading, which are the focus of our discussion here.

4. The dove cries out its grief and moves my heart, and longing returns at night like a herd grazing far away.
5. A land where you are not dwelling seems barren to me, even if it is moistened by dew and flourishing.
6. Whenever my people settle in a place, I find myself unable to cast a glance at any other woman.
7. I treat the slanderers kindly, pretending to keep away from you, whereas they hate me and are busy plotting against me.
8. Whenever a nightly wind rises from the direction of your abode, it seems to me, as if the camp-site were chosen or avoided with regard to it.
9. And if I find my enemy loving you, then I love him, whether he belongs to your tribe or not.

The use of the negated imperfect verb in the first line, ‘will never pass,’ *lā yadhhabu*, initiates a persistent usage of the imperfect tense that is characteristic of *ghazal* from this period, and marks a break with the backward-looking temporality of the *nasīb*. Jacobi points out that the use of the imperfect verb here contributes to a re-purposing of the ‘complaint of age’ (*shakwā ‘an al-shayb*) motif familiar from the Jāhilī corpus. In Jāhilī verse, the ‘complaint of age’ is employed within the poet’s boasting about his past amorous adventures, as a device by which the poet conveys his former prowess, i.e. ‘the motif is used as a transition to self-praise.’⁸⁰ Here, however, where the poet declares that his feelings endure into the future (*lā tadhhabu*), the ‘complaint of age’ conceit takes on a new meaning quite opposed to the archaic heroic boast: the poet declares that he has *not* overcome erotic attachments. While this may remain in some altered sense ‘self-praise’, it is clear that a new valence attends the use of the motif.

⁸⁰See “Time and Reality,” 5.

Jacobi argues that line 5 of the poem, in which the poet states that ‘the land where you are not dwelling seems barren to me’ (*wa-arā l-bilāda idhā sakanti bi-ghayri-hā jadban wa-in kānat tuṭallu wa-tukhaṣṣibu*) exemplifies a new attitude toward reality, indeed a new degree of subjectivity and consciousness, that is achieved in *ghazal* verse, as against the Jāhilī *nasīb*. Jacobi explains that while the earlier, archaic, mindset of the Jāhilī poet could only view reality as a pure object of his perception, the *ghazal* poet projects his feelings into the environment consciously. As Jacobi explains, ‘For in realizing that the world changes according to the mood or perspective of the observer, he has lost the naive, unconscious objectivity characteristic of pre-Islamic and all early poetry.’⁸¹ This subjectivity, whereby all perceptions are conveyed through an ‘introverted’ perspective, is exemplified throughout the text, Jacobi maintains, by the usage of *arā* ‘I see’, which occurs in verses 5, 6, 8, and 9.

Line 6, where the speaker declares he is ‘unable to cast a glance on any other woman’, shows the importance of the *unique* beloved, which is characteristic of the so-called ‘Udhri attitude. The poem’s last line, then, in showing the poet declaring that his ardour for his beloved will even lead him to love his sworn enemies, shows, according to Jacobi, that “Tribal loyalties and preferences are set aside in favour of individual relations.”⁸²

In her general analysis of the poem, Jacobi draws attention to the way in which the text displays a conception of time that differs from that of the Jāhilī *nasīb*. Whereas the *nasīb* is always oriented toward the over-coming of erotic attachment and love in order to affirm a collective tribal code,⁸³ in the *ghazal*, ‘even if the past is alluded to sometimes, [the poem] is concerned with a present love-affair, which means that the poet’s imagination is dominated

⁸¹ Ibid., 8.

⁸² Ibid., 10.

⁸³ Jacobi here cites Hamori, *The Art of Medieval Arabic Literature* (Princeton: 1974), chapter 2, “The Poet as Hero.”

by the future, by hope and fear.’⁸⁴ According to Jacobi, the *ghazal* poet, through this future-oriented declaration of enduring feelings, stages a kind of protest, founded in individualism, against a collective, tribal, social structure. This protest becomes manifest in the poet’s fixation on gloom and death, and ultimately in his attitude of steadfastly remaining within the condition of erotic loss. According to Jacobi, ‘His defiance of society is equivalent to a negation of life.’⁸⁵ It is clear in Jacobi’s analysis that this shift represents a new, sincere, more ‘advanced’ stage of ‘consciousness’ to be discerned in the author: “The later poet’s realization of his own subjectivity suggests to my mind a different stage of knowledge, which presupposes the same shift of attention or “introversion.”⁸⁶

Jacobi’s interpretation of the poem seeks to establish that in the Umayyad-era lyric phenomenon – and specifically, as she remarks several times, in the ‘Udhrī genre of *ghazal* – one can observe literary reflections of the ‘emergence of the individual’ during the first century of Islam. Jacobi’s interpretation asserts clearly that the new attitude toward time in the *ghazal* is related to, and entails, a new sense of introspection, and indeed, a new level of consciousness. Jacobi’s conclusion makes explicit the basic underpinnings of her approach:

The experience of time thus described presupposes a degree of introspection unknown to poets of the *Jāhiliya*. It is a well-known psychological fact, which can be applied to individuals and to peoples as well, that the discovery of the world precedes the discovery of the self. The pre-Islamic poet’s perception of reality, his naive objectivity, constitutes a previous stage of knowledge compared to the later poet’s reflection of his own subjectivity. The shift of attention from the external world to the poet’s self, which must have taken place in the course of the 7th century, necessarily provided a strong impulse

⁸⁴ “Time and Reality,” 16.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

to his creative faculties... [For the *ghazal* poet] the phenomena of nature, people and events, even the beloved, are not mentioned for their own sake, but offer an opportunity to dwell on his inner experience. ... If we wanted to express it somewhat pointedly, we might say that the poet of the *nasīb* regards himself as part of the world, whereas the poet of the *ghazal* regards the world as part of himself. "Lyrical" poetry in the traditional, romantic understanding of the term has become possible in Arabic literature.

The thematics of late-7th century Ḥijāzī *ghazal*, perceived through an entirely 'literary' close reading outside of any putative context of performance or reception, are being read as a radical departure from the precedents of the Jāhilī corpus, asserting *individual* expression as against communal values. One should further note that Jacobi's reading, while highly sensitive to the verbal micro-structures of the text, such as verb tense and the use of Jāhilī motifs, reads the text in isolation from any association with the *akhbār* tradition, which might be probed for information helpful for reconstructing performance or reception context.

Jacobi's work has offered the most influential approach to the Umayyad-era 'lyric' phenomenon in recent decades. Her interpretations have been broadly accepted by several scholars in recent studies, such as Bauer, who, in his study of Abbasid-era *ghazal* poetry, provided an introductory history of the Umayyad *ghazal* that reproduced the most important conclusions drawn by Jacobi.⁸⁷ These conclusions have also been adopted and supplied with further detail in a monograph by Kirill Dmitriev on the work of the Umayyad-era poet Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī.⁸⁸ Abū Ṣakhr, who, like Kuthayyir, found patronage as a panegyrist with the Marwānids during 'Abd al-Malik's caliphate (65-86/685-705), is the most prominent poet of the Hudhayl of the early Umayyad period, and is considered to

⁸⁷ Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung*, 38-55.

⁸⁸ Dmitriev, *Das poetische Werk des Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī* (Wiesbaden: 2008).

have carried forward Abū Dhu'ayb's innovations in the *ghazal*. In his study of Abū Ṣakhr's poetry, Dmitriev applied Jacobi's mode of reading the literary features of the *ghazal* to Abū Ṣakhr's work, focussing on the expression of a forward-looking attitude toward time, and the newly 'subjective' retoolings of conceits from the Jāhilī corpus, which evince, *inter alia*, a new attitude to fate (*al-dahr*) and other basic elements of world-view, again with a stress on the *individual* as the dominant element. Dmitriev also finds in Abū Ṣakhr's love poetry a degree of the proliferation of apparently qur'ānic conceptions, as in the poet's reference to the afterlife. It is clear, then, that Jacobi's interpretations have proven applicable in further studies of early Arabic poetry.

There are several aspects of Jacobi's argumentation, however, that we feel should be subject to a sustained critique, and refined in future scholarship on the *ghazal*. As an introduction to our approach to Kuthayyir's Marwānid-era *ghazal* texts, we will set out two general criticisms of Jacobi's approach here. Our first criticism of Jacobi's understanding of the *ghazal* phenomenon is somewhat general, having to do with certain questionable literary-hermeneutical principles that appear explicitly in Jacobi's interpretation. In order to establish that the Umayyad *ghazal* represents a radically new expression of the 'self' and the 'individual,' Jacobi's approach requires quite a drastic understanding of the limitations imposed on earlier poetic expression by the 'archaic' constraints of tradition. Jacobi explicitly asserted that the aesthetics of Jāhilī verse are based on a kind of 'naïve objectivity'⁸⁹, according to which reality is apparently perceived as wholly cut off from subjective feeling, and only the collective is therefore real. This shows quite an extreme reading of the 'conservatism' of the Jāhilī corpus, evident also in claims such as Bauer's that the objects of love poetry in pre-Islamic verse 'correspond in no way to any characteristics of the subject, but rather merely to his sexual wishes, and [are] therefore exchangeable at any moment with any other object'.⁹⁰ Although Jāhilī poets were predominantly oriented toward the past within the *nasīb*, and although the aggrandizing of a profound and

⁸⁹ "Anfänge," 244.

⁹⁰ Bauer, *Liebe und Liebesdichtung*, 43.

pervasive misogyny is central to the personae and performance of values in the early poetry, a completely conservative understanding of the erotics of the *nasīb* seems overstated. To view the Jāhilī *nasīb* univocally, as a statement of communal and conservative expression leaving little, if any, space for what the reader views as ‘individual consciousness,’ does not seem a judicious starting point for the understanding of later developments. Several promising avenues of research on the Jāhilī corpus currently being pursued in fact stress the multivocity, complexity, and local diversity of strains within the corpus of Jāhilī *nasīb*. The recent work by Nathaniel Miller has developed the earlier ideas of Braunlich, von Grunebaum, and others regarding the ‘schools’ of Jāhilī poetry into a newly articulated picture of regional diversity within the *nasīb*, one in which, for example, differences in ecological and seasonal patterns between the Ḥijāz and Najd refract into late-Jāhilī and early Islamic artistic traditions within the *nasīb*.⁹¹ Regional variations in the tonality of the *nasīb* thus complicate any univocal depiction of pre-Islamic attitudes, and should be taken into consideration in accounts of developments in the Umayyad period. The fine-grain of diachronic detail should caution against seeing the adoption of new artistic/poetic techniques as marking sweeping changes in *Weltanschauung*. While not denying that new literary forms will reflect changes in ideology and social organization, it seems important to stress that the emergence of genre may have more to do with new exigencies of performance, shifting audience concerns, or even simply the mimetic spread of new aesthetics without direct implications for broader perceptual categories, rather than being linked primarily with overarching shifts in the nature of basic concepts such as ‘time’ and ‘fate.’ This point is strengthened by arguments put forward by earlier scholars stressing the co-existence and co-valence of attitudes that we would identify as Jāhilī and Islamic during the Mukhaḍram and early Islamic periods, in ways that make such radical attitudinal shifts seem overstated.⁹²

⁹¹ See Miller, “Seasonal Poetics” (2017).

⁹² See especially Montgomery, *Vagaries of the Qaṣīdah. The Tradition and Practice of Early Arabic Poetry* (Cambridge: 1997), chapter 6.

The second issue which we wish to raise, and which we feel is the most significant point for this dissertation, has to do more specifically with the historical interpretation of the so-called ‘Udhri phenomenon. Jacobi has applied her mode of reading developed for Abū Dhu’ayb’s texts to the later poetry of Jamīl b. Ma‘mar, arguing that the work of the latter poet evinces the ‘negative’ individualist motivations that can first be discerned in the work of Abū Dhu’ayb.⁹³ This seems to elide crucial distinctions of context between the earliest extant examples of Ḥijāzī *ghazal* by poets in the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, and those of the so-called ‘Udhri poets that flourished in the early Marwānid period, under Umayyad patronage. It should be stressed that an interpretive lens devised to understand the poetry of the Hudhalī poets should not be assumed, a priori, to be adequate for the work of so-called ‘Udhri poets (Blachère’s panegyrist-elegiasts), who composed under Marwānid patronage some 50-60 years later, such as Jamīl, Kuthayyir, Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, or Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ. The production of love poetry identified as ‘Bedouin’ or ‘Udhri by the later tradition by poets patronized by the Marwānids, particularly in the period after the Second Fitna, should lead us to ask questions about how and what this poetry may have signified in a post-Fitna Umayyad elite context, and whether a unitary understanding of the so-called ‘Udhri thematics is adequate to account for the success of these poets. In our interpretations of Kuthayyir’s poetry, we will therefore assume, at least heuristically, that while the love poetry cultivated by the Ḥijāzī panegyrist-elegiasts may have drawn on (largely obscure) Ḥijāzī precedents going back to the 7th century or earlier, they performed their so-called ‘Udhri poetry in the context of Marwānid patronage, cultivating an art form apparently well-suited to such purposes.

This image, of Ḥijāzī poets cultivating their love poetry for an elite audience, seems difficult to reconcile with Jacobi’s fully negative interpretation of the genre, which she states as follows: “The poet of the *ghazal* advocates the rights of the individual, but his protest against social demands remains passive and is finally self destructive. His defiance of

⁹³ Jacobi, “The ‘Udhra: Love and Death” (2004).

society is equivalent to a negation of life.”⁹⁴ As we have pointed out above, Kuthayyir, as well as the other Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrists, were prolific and much-favored praise poets for the Marwānid line. The historical data that we possess on the lives of *ghazal* poets, transmitted within the *akhbār*, as well as the survival of a significant corpus of *madiḥ* aimed for the political elite of the Marwānid period by *ghazal* poets such as Jamīl, Kuthayyir, Abū Ṣakhr, Nuṣayb, al-Aḥwaṣ, and Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, indicates that the *ghazal* phenomenon in the Marwānid period was cultivated by a rank of successful ‘professional’ poets who were in contact with, and patronized by, an Umayyad elite, both within the Ḥijāz, and outside of it in Syria and Egypt.

Even if the subject-matter of the *ghazal* does not directly address the situation of patronage, and performance-context of Umayyad poetry is extremely difficult to discern (see 2.2, immediately below), nevertheless it would seem that a historically viable interpretation of Marwānid-era *ghazal* poetry must include some consideration of the panegyric careers of these poets. In chapter 3 on Kuthayyir’s panegyric career, and particularly in section 3.4 on Kuthayyir’s relationship with ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān, we will draw attention to the little-noticed fact that so many of the most prominent *ghazal*-panegyrists of the Ḥijāz were drawn into the ‘circle of generosity’ (i.e. the *nawāl*) of the Marwānids in the aftermath of the Second Fitna, and will seek to offer some historical context for this in the vying for ‘Ḥijāzī prestige’ among the Banū Marwān.

In our commentaries and interpretations of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poems that follow, we will have occasion to note several ways in which the poems can be read to signify inter-textually alongside panegyric texts, and will attend to dimensions of the texts that might resonate meaningfully in an elite Marwānid context. By focussing on aspects of the poems other than the increase in individualism – which is surely also an interesting aspect – we will attempt to offer an interpretation of the texts in relation to the communal codes that

⁹⁴ Jacobi, “Time and Reality,” 5.

resonated alongside the emergence of the *ghazal*. As should be clear in the course of our commentaries and interpretations that follow, we hope thereby to contribute to the effort to contextualize early Umayyad poetry alongside other aesthetic practices that appear in the contemporary literary and material record, such as qur'ānic performance, the ritual institutions of the *ḥajj*, and other modes of the projection of caliphal authority.

2.2 The Performance Context of the *Ghazal*

We have suggested in our foregoing discussion that recent approaches to the Umayyad *ghazal* have not focused adequately on the historical circumstances of the production and reception of the poetry. In what follows, we wish to offer some suggestions about a plausible, if hypothetical, frame in which to situate the context for the production and reception of Kuthayyir's *ghazal* texts. This shift of focus toward issues of performance-context and patronage within the poet's life and career should allow us to account for some elements of signification in this love poetry that do not feature prominently in previous explanations of the 'Udhrī *ghazal*: namely, this poetry is dense with reference to pilgrimage, mentions of prayer and ritual, and verbal parallels between Kuthayyir's *ghazal* and his panegyric corpus. As a preliminary to the translations and commentaries below (2.4, 2.5), in this section we will review accounts drawn from the *akhbār* about Kuthayyir and several of his Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrist peers, which seem to presume an Umayyad-patronage setting for the performance of *ghazal* poetry.

Establishing reliable information about the performance-context of early Arabic poetry, and especially poetry from before the Abbasid period, is in general an extremely difficult, and often impossible, task. For the Umayyad period, a period for which we cannot assume the accuracy of 'classical' practices of court ceremonial described in sources from the Abbasid period, and in which the very *genres* of poetic production were themselves in flux, it is a particularly difficult task to ascertain plausible concrete information about the performance contexts for the extant texts.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ On the establishment of performance context for Umayyad panegyric poetry, see Stetkevych, "Umayyad Panegyric and the Poetics of Islamic Hegemony: al-Akḥṭal's *Khaffa al-qaṭīnu*," *JAL* 28 (1997), 89-122, esp. 90-92.

In what follows, we will draw on accounts in the *akhbār* surrounding Kuthayyir's life for indications of possible audience/performance context for his *ghazal* poetry.

Notwithstanding the caveats we have made in the introduction regarding the reading of the *akhbār* as historical sources, research into the *akhbār* continues to affirm the essential usefulness of reading this material critically as evidence of the early exegetical frame of this poetry. Reading the material for the way in which it depicts patronage patterns, for example, has proven to be a useful approach. In an article analyzing the portrayals of encounters between early Abbasid poets and patrons in *akhbār* sources, Beatrice Gruendler has shown, *inter alia*, that while the details of these accounts can of course contain doubtful elements, the accounts appear to be verisimilitudinous and coherent 'literary refractions' of early Abbasid patterns of patronage and poetic practice.⁹⁶ Gruendler's findings relate, however, only to the depiction of contemporary practices in the *akhbār*; in the reading of Umayyad *akhbār* material one is in a more difficult hermeneutic position. Yet an approach such as Gruendler's at least shows that the *akhbār*, as the result of the early literary-exegetical tradition, contain much material that is essentially historical.

Although the *akhbār* on Kuthayyir provide relatively abundant and detailed information about his patronage relationships and his career as a panegyrist, there is very little direct information transmitted about the performance context or initial reception of his *ghazal*. Nonetheless, if the *akhbār* material is read carefully, there are indications that Kuthayyir's love poetry was perceived by the early exegetical tradition as related to the context of Umayyad patronage.

In the article on Kuthayyir in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, we find several anecdotes that depict the interest of his Marwānid patron, in this case 'Abd al-Malik, in the 'love life' and *ghazal*

⁹⁶ Gruendler, "Meeting the Patron: An *Akhbār* Type and Its Implications for *Muhdath* Poetry," in *Ideas, Images, Methods of Portrayal: Insights into Arabic Literature and Islam*, ed. Sebastian Günther (Wiesbaden: 2005), 59-88.

poetry of Kuthayyir. These anecdotes typically include the caliph asking the poet questions about his experiences in love, thus introducing quotations from Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poems. For example, in a *khavar* going back to al-Zubayr b. Bakkār,⁹⁷ we read a story that 'Azza, the beloved of Kuthayyir, entered into the presence of 'Abd al-Malik, having already become an old woman ('*ajuzat*). The caliph asks if she is the same 'Azza who was made famous by Kuthayyir. When she replies only with her given name (*anā 'Azza bintu Ḥumaylī*), he asks her specifically about an image in a line from a *ghazal* poem by Kuthayyir comparing her to an enduring fire (K 10, line 9, translated below). The caliph asks the woman what it is that pleased Kuthayyir so much about her (*fa-mā allādhī 'a'jaba-hu min-ki*). As the exchange continues, several more lines of poetry are quoted, and then 'Azza tells the caliph: 'What pleased him about me is what pleased the Muslims when they rendered you caliph' (*a'jaba-hu minnī mā 'a'jaba l-muslimīna min-ka ḥīna ṣayyarū-ka khalīfatan*).

Certainly, such an anecdote seems likely to be the invention of a later exegete, and the picturesque notion of the caliph quizzing famous love-pairs about their feelings cannot be taken as historical report. But it is relevant, in our view, that the *akhbār* shows the caliph interested in the poet's expression of the erotic, and then displays an explicit 'homology' between the poet's love and 'the Muslims' love for their caliph. The *khavar* seems to draw an analogy between the poet's work as a *ghazal* poet, and his function as a panegyrist: already here, we might argue that the *khavar* shows traces of an understanding of *ghazal* and *madiḥ* as related arts.

In a second anecdote about Kuthayyir and 'Abd al-Malik given in the article in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, which will be translated and discussed in section 3.4 below, the caliph asks the poet to tell him 'the most pleasing story of you and 'Azza' ('*Abdu l-Maliki sa'ala Kuthayyiran 'an 'a'jabi khavarin la-hu ma'a 'Azzata*).⁹⁸ Kuthayyir responds by telling the story of a

⁹⁷ See Agh 9.27.

⁹⁸ Agh 9.29.

serendipitous meeting between him and ‘Azza, when the two of them were separately making the pilgrimage. This story leads into Kuthayyir quoting lines from K 3, his most widely transmitted *ghazal* poem (translated below). It becomes evident that certain aspects of the story, such as the beloved being forced to curse the poet (as in K 3, line 21: *yukallifuhā l-khinzīru shatmi*, ‘the pig charges her to curse me’) reinforce, and thus are apparently produced in response to, certain concrete details in the poem. Here again, we are not provided with historical data about the occasions of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poetry --- but the framing of the *khobar* within the Marwānid court again shows that the reporters of the *akhbār* (here again, it is on the authority of al-Zubayr b. Bakkār) assume connections between the best-known *ghazal* poems and caliphal patronage.

Outside these two specific *akhbār* attributing to ‘Abd al-Malik interest in Kuthayyir’s relationship with ‘Azza and the circumstances of his *ghazal* compositions, there are several anecdotes that show the patron interested more generally in Kuthayyir’s poetry, again affirming the caliph’s interest in love poetry. These anecdotes show the caliph espousing strong positive critical judgements of the poet’s work, without distinguishing between panegyric genres and *ghazal*. The three *akhbār* in the Aghānī, which follow in sequence one after another,⁹⁹ all show the caliph expressing a strong liking for Kuthayyir’s poetry. ‘Abd al-Malik is first reported to ask Kuthayyir ‘who is the most poetic of the people’ (*man ash‘aru l-nāsi*). When Kuthayyir answers ‘he whose poetry the *amīr al-mu’minīn* recites,’ ‘Abd al-Malik replies ‘you are among them.’ Kuthayyir then asks ‘Abd al-Malik for his opinion on his poetry and he answers that it is ‘superior to magic, and outdoes poetry (*yasbiqū l-siḥra wa-yaghlibu l-shi‘ra*).¹⁰⁰ Finally, in a third *khobar*, ‘Abd al-Malik is said to have given Kuthayyir’s poetry to the educator of his son, so that he would memorize and recite it (*kāna yukhriju shi‘ra Kuthayyirin ilā mu’addibi waladihi makhtūman yurawwīhim iyyāhu wa-yarudduhu*). F. Sezgin, in his entry on Kuthayyir in *GAS*, interprets this last report as historical evidence for a recording in writing of Kuthayyir’s poetry at the time of ‘Abd al-

⁹⁹ Agh 9.23.

¹⁰⁰ These three *akhbār* are given at Agh 9.23.

Malik,¹⁰¹ but this interpretation seems unwarranted; it seems much more plausible to interpret it as indicating the assumption among early exegetes of the general interest of the Marwānid in Kuthayyir's poetry. Such *akhbār*, which aim to show the high opinion held by the caliph of the poet's work, do not directly inform us about whether the poet performed his *ghazal* texts for the caliph, in addition to his poems of praise. Indeed, we ought to remember that among compilers of knowledge (*muṣannifūn*) in 2nd-4th/8th-10th century literary culture, the assertion of caliphal involvement is a topos often used to imbue 'pedigree' on one's sources.¹⁰² Yet, the existence of this trope notwithstanding, we believe such passages should be taken into account as evidence, as they establish that for the early stage of reception represented by the *akhbār* tradition, Kuthayyir was closely associated with the performance and reception context of the Marwānid court.

If we look at the *akhbār* material related to other Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets connected to Umayyad patronage around the same time, we find further, and perhaps more historically convincing, evidence for connections between *ghazal* and Marwanid patronage.

In several cases we find reports that provide details about the way in which a poet makes the acquaintance of his patron and enters into his 'sphere of generosity' (his *nawāl*). The *ghazal* poet Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ came, like Kuthayyir, from the area around Yanbū' al-Baḥr, the area inland from the Red Sea Tihāma coast in the environs of Medina.¹⁰³ At some point following the Second Fitna and the (re-)establishment of Umayyad supremacy in 73/692, Nuṣayb famously became the freedman (*mawlā*) and panegyrist of 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān in Egypt. Nuṣayb was best known to posterity as a *ghazal* poet, and much of his surviving

¹⁰¹ See Sezgin, *GAS*, 409.

¹⁰² See Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: from the aural to the read*, trans. and ed. Toorawa (Edinburgh: 2009), 60-63.

¹⁰³ The two *ghazal* poets are connected anecdotally in several *akhbār*; see, e.g., the report of Nuṣayb's and Kuthayyir's shared audience with 'Umar II, translated and discussed below, section 3.5.

ghazal poetry is considered to belong to the ‘Udhri school.¹⁰⁴ The *Kitāb al-Aghānī* contains two accounts of the encounter between Nuṣayb and his patron, as well as anecdotes describing the prince’s interest in Nuṣayb’s poetry. Although the accounts have picturesque elements, they are notable for offering a particularly detailed and plausible model for the circumstances in which the *ghazal* poet established a relationship with the patron.

There are two versions of Nuṣayb’s contact with his patron given in the *Aghānī*.¹⁰⁵ In both versions, the poet begins to declaim poetry in the Ḥijāz, first obtaining approval for his poetry among a group of elders (*mashyakha*) of the Banū Ḍamra and Khuzā’a; one should note here that the Khuzā’a are Kuthayyir’s tribe, while the Banū Ḍamra are the tribe of his famous beloved ‘Azza. In the first, more picturesque version of the *khabar*, Nuṣayb then goes to Medina, where he recites a poem in the company of al-Farazdaq, who jealously tells him to ‘conceal your poetry to yourself if you can’ (*in istaṭa’ta taktum hādihā ‘alā nafsika*); this passage is lacking in the second version. The two versions agree in what happens next: the poet is told to seek out ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Egypt, whom he is told is a great ‘transmitter and scholar of poetry’ (*fa-inna l-amīra rāwīyatun ‘ālimun bi-l-shi’ri*).¹⁰⁶ Once he has reached Fustat, the poet requests to the chamberlain (*ḥājib*) that he be given permission to see the prince, because he has ‘prepared some praise for him’ (*fa-qāla ista’dhin liya ‘alā l-amīri fa-innī qad hayya’tu la-hu madīhan*). Finally, after ‘sleeping four months at the door’ (*wa-rāḥa ilā bābi ‘Abd al-‘Azīzi arba’ata ashhuri*), he is called in, in the presence of a messenger from the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik. The *khabar* then provides a quotation from a panegyric poem by Nuṣayb for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. Pleased by the performance, the prince asks his entourage to decide how much the poetry is worth, confirming that the poet has been fully welcomed into ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s entourage. The narrative, in both versions, provides a plausible image of the poet’s path from the Ḥijāz to the Marwānid court, and shows the importance of praise

¹⁰⁴ See “Nuṣayb al-Akbar b. Rabāḥ,” EI2 [Pellat]; and Rizzitano, “Abū Miḥgān Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ: Notizie Biografiche, Studio critico e Raccolta Dei Frammenti,” *RSO* 20: 3/4 (1943), 421-471.

¹⁰⁵ The first version is given at Agh 1.325, the second version at 1.332.

¹⁰⁶ This and the following quotations appear at Agh 1.327.

poetry as the key way in which *initial* contact is established between the poet and his princely audience.¹⁰⁷

According to this account, it is the poet's ability to impress the patron with praise that gains him a place within the patron's sphere of generosity (the *nawāl*). In our study of Kuthayyir's panegyric career in chapter 3, below, we will see that praise poetry likewise seems to have played the dominant role in his gaining entrance to the circle around 'Abd al-Malik, as a result of his earlier panegyric work for Ibn al-Ḥanafīya during the Second Fitna, with whom 'Abd al-Malik had established contacts.¹⁰⁸ Thus, as we might expect, initial contact with the patron is likely to have been through praise poetry. But later in the article on Nuṣayb in the Aghānī, there are reports of 'Abd al-'Azīz's interest in Nuṣayb's *ghazal*. At Agh 1.375, for example, the prince questions the poet about his love affairs:

Nuṣayb was given an audience with 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Marwān, and 'Abd al-'Azīz said to him, after they had been speaking for a long time: have you ever loved at all (*hal 'ashiqta qaṭṭu*)? He said 'yes, [I loved] a woman of the Banu Mudlij.' So what did you do...'

This passage is followed by three lines of quotation from the *ghazal* poetry of Nuṣayb, followed by questions from the prince asking for the poetry to be explained. Although again we are dealing more with a kind of 'narrative exegesis' of the poetry than with a verifiable historical report, nonetheless we can discern behind these reports a general outline of the *ghazal* poet's attachment to the patron: it seems that while the production of praise poetry was the initial and necessary first step into the patron's *nawāl*, the Marwānid patron is viewed as interested in the 'love life', and thus the *ghazal* poetry, of the Ḥijāzī poet.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Gruendler, "Meeting the Patron," 68-72.

¹⁰⁸ See section 3.3 below.

This picture of a Ḥijāzī poet entering into the Marwanid patron's *nawāl* through panegyric, and then performing *ghazal* for the prince, is confirmed in reports related to another of 'Abd al-'Azīz's favorites, Kuthayyir's friend and poetic master, Jamīl b. Ma'mar. In the account of Jamīl's life in Ibn Khallikan, we find a passage which puts the situation succinctly:

The Qādī Hārūn ibn 'Abd Allāh states: Jamīl b. Ma'mar went before 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān to give him praise [*umtadihan la-hu*]. He called to him, heard his praise, and gave him fine prizes. He asked him about his love for Buthaynah, and he recalled to him [his] great passion [*dhakara wajdan kathīran*]. So he made him promises in his affairs, ordered him to remain, and provided him with a residence and all that he could want. He only stayed there for a little while though, until he died in the year 82 [i.e. 701].

What the preceding passages seem to indicate, or at least to imply, is that a patronage pattern obtained in this period wherein a poet would arrive at a patron's court and perform praise, then, once within the *mamdūh's* circle of *nawāl*, he would go on to perform his *ghazal*.¹⁰⁹

These passages allow us to sketch an outline of the way in which poet-patron relationships may have worked between the Ḥijāzī poets and the Marwānid courts to which they were attached. Although doubt must remain about the degree to which these reports reflect a back-projection of Abbasid patterns, we should certainly not dismiss out of hand the fact that the bulk of the narrative-exegetical material transmitted in connection to Ḥijāzī poets assumes connections to patronage. Most crucially, however, this impression is affirmed when we examine the extant texts of

¹⁰⁹ Again, this is consonant with Gruendler's conclusions for the later period, in "Meeting the Patron," *op cit.*, 68 f.

these poets preserved in *dīwāns* and anthologies. Unfortunately, in the cases of Jamīl and Nuṣayb, the state of preservation of their poetry allows us to access only a small fraction of their panegyric poetry; it is therefore difficult in the case of these poets to establish whether the two corpora of panegyric and *ghazal* show signs of verbal overlap or intertextuality, which might in turn imply a shared audience.¹¹⁰ In the case of Kuthayyir, however, for whom a relatively extensive amount of panegyric poetry is fortunately extant, we are in a much better position to assess the ways in which patronage may be reflected in both praise poetry and *ghazal* pieces.

In view of the evidence we have just presented, we believe it is plausible to suggest that the corpus of *ghazal* poetry connected to the Ḥijāzi poets associated with the so-called ‘Udhri mode in the Marwānid period may have been performed within the same Umayyad ‘elite’ environment in which the praise poetry was performed and received. This is not to claim that the concerns of this poetry should be viewed exclusively or primarily in terms of the dynamics of patronage, or to deny the ‘personal’ significance of the poetry. It is rather to claim that whatever the dimensions of the semiotics of this poetry, we might reasonably attempt to integrate our literary reading of these texts with what we understand historically about the Umayyad court/elite environment.

¹¹⁰ Jamīl’s extant poetry contains only one significant fragment of a praise poem, for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān, preserved in the ‘Umda of Ibn Rashīq. Nuṣayb’s extant poetry, collected by Rizzitano, contains fragments from at least seven praise poems for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, on which see below, section 2.4. The panegyric output of the Ḥijāzi *ghazal* poets Abū Ṣakhr and Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt makes up a substantial portion of their extant texts, and will be discussed further below.

2.3 The Form of Kuthayyir's *Ghazal*

This section will provide a formal description of the eleven *ghazal* poems by Kuthayyir preserved in Ibn Maymūn's *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. Using these eleven poems as a sample-corpus, we will offer a general description of the structuring elements of these poems, focussing on the use of motifs and thematic elements familiar from the pre-Islamic poetic corpus.

These eleven poems – two of which are transmitted also in recensions in al-Qālī's *Kitāb al-Amālī* – represent the only purportedly *complete* extant texts by Kuthayyir. Unlike the great deal of *ghazal*-fragments transmitted elsewhere, they allow us to make some comments about the overall form of the poems. Ibn Maymūn's general preface to the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab* claims that the choice of poems included in the anthology is meant to offer representative personal selections drawn from the poets' *dīwāns*. The poems by Kuthayyir transmitted by Ibn Maymūn include the most well-known and widely transmitted *ghazal* texts by the poet: included are both of the poems transmitted also by al-Qālī (K 3 and K 4), as well as the most extensively quoted poem by Kuthayyir in the *Aghānī* (K 6). Thus, while our description of the form of the eleven *ghazal* poems that follows cannot be considered anything like a comprehensive account of the formal repertoire of Kuthayyir's love poetry, it may at least offer a representative sample based on his major *ghazal* poems.

Unfortunately, there are few descriptive studies of the formal traits of Umayyad-era love poetry available, making it difficult to contextualize our observations within a broader taxonomy or diachronic picture of the various forms of 'lyric' from this period. While the themes or 'content' of Umayyad *ghazal* poetry have been the subject of a number of valuable studies in recent decades, which we have had occasion already to review, the formal features of *ghazal* poetry have not been the subject of extensive study. Steps toward a description and typology of Umayyad *ghazal* poems were taken in Audebert's work on

‘Umar b. Abī al-Rabī‘a,¹¹¹ and several valuable studies now exist addressing the structure of *ghazal* poetry of the Abbasid period,¹¹² but comparable work has not been carried out for the Umayyad corpus. Indeed, Jacobi’s statement of a desideratum, made over three decades ago that ‘a typology of the *ghazal* according to formal criteria is not available’¹¹³ remains true to the present day, as does Jacobi’s later assertion that ‘studies on the form and structure of the *ghazal* are scarce.’¹¹⁴

To a degree, the lack of extensive study given to the formal traits of Umayyad *ghazal* is due to the state of transmission of the corpus. But the difficulties of the transmission should not be overstated. Kuthayyir’s texts in the *Muntahā*, being apparently complete Umayyad-era *ghazal* texts in an (admittedly late) Abbasid anthological recension, should be taken to represent a small portion of the relatively extensive corpus of comparable recensions of Umayyad-era *ghazal* poems, which would include for example, the works of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a, Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, Dhū al-Rumma, and the Umayyad-era poets of the Hudhayl, to name only the most conspicuous examples of Umayyad *ghazal* preserved in early recensions.

Despite the lack of detailed studies, the basic outlines of the form of *ghazal* can be drawn. Based on the elemental criterium of length, Jacobi has identified two basic types of *ghazal* poem from this period.¹¹⁵ The first type is a ‘long form,’ which contains between 20 and 70 verses, in which ‘different thematic units are loosely linked in the manner of the *qaṣīda*, or

¹¹¹See Audebert, “Réflexions sur la composition des poèmes de ‘Umar ibn Abī Rabī‘a,” *Cahiers de linguistique d’Orientalisme et de Slavistique*, 5-6 (1975), 17-29; and 9 (1977), 1-14.

¹¹² See especially Bauer, “Abū Tammām’s contribution to ‘Abbāsīd ḡazal poetry,” *JAL* 27 (1996), 13 f.

¹¹³ Jacobi, *GAP*, ii, 38.

¹¹⁴ “Time and Reality,” 11, n. 18.

¹¹⁵ See Jacobi, “Omaijadische Dichtung”, in *GAP*, ii, 38-40; and idem. “Anfänge,” 226-228.

stand next to each other without being linked.’¹¹⁶ This ‘long form’ *ghazal* poem often contains at its beginning the ‘framing motifs’ associated with the *nasīb* of the polythematic *qaṣīda*, including the description of the beloved, lovers’ vows, complaint (Klage), the description of individual episodes occurring between the lovers, and dialogue. The second form, according to Jacobi, is a short poem (between 4 and 20 lines), which can contain either the description of a single episode between poet and beloved, or else may contain an introspective passage in the so-called ‘Udhrī mode.

It should be apparent that the two *ghazal* forms described here --- the long-form *ghazal* combining various elements related to the *nasīb*, and the short-form (episodic or ‘Udhrī) *ghazal* --- do not entail a determined relationship to the supposed ‘Umarī/‘Udhrī binary: both the longer form and the shorter form can contain elements of urban and ‘performative’ *ghazal*, or else elements of the so-called ‘Udhrī introspective mode. The initial formal distinction here is merely length. One can cite examples of texts in the so-called ‘Udhrī mode that fit into either of these formal categories;¹¹⁷ examples of ‘long form’ *ghazal* that display the ‘urban’ variety of lyric while employing *nasīb*-motifs;¹¹⁸ and examples of short pieces or fragments associated with the ‘Umarī tone.

The eleven *ghazal* poems by Kuthayyir in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab* all correspond to the category of the ‘long form’ *ghazal* poem. These poems range in length from 21 to 53 lines, with most of the poems falling in the range from 30-50 lines, and the poems all display motif-elements related generically to the amatory prelude (*nasīb*) of the *qaṣīda*.

¹¹⁶ Jacobi, “Anfänge,” 226.

¹¹⁷ Dhū al-Rumma’s *ghazal* poems, for example, could be taken to illustrate long-form ‘Udhrī *ghazal* texts with strongly ‘poly-thematic’ elements.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Montgomery’s description, in “Umar b. Abī Rabī’a,” EI2, of the 73-line poem 1 in ‘Umar’s dīwān: ‘[a] blend of all-consuming ardour (similar in spirit to the love known as ‘*Udhrī*) ... and the performative, physical love known as *Ḥidjāzī*.’

Before describing the basic structuring elements of these poems and their repertoire of *nasīb*-motifs, an additional word of caution is warranted about the textual integrity of this corpus. The versions of these texts available in the *Muntahā* should by no means be considered transparent and reliable transcripts of the poems as they would have been conceived and performed. It is clear overall from the nature of the transmission of these texts that editorial intervention and variation between differing recensions will certainly have played a role – often quite a significant one – in the structuring features of these texts. Rather than consider our description of this corpus as a delineation of the precise original form of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poetry, we view this description as an initial step toward cataloguing the variety of formal characteristics that appear in our available recensions of Umayyad-era *ghazal* poetry, recognizing that the extant versions each would have represented only one of a number of co-existing versions of the poems. We would thus seek to avoid the mistake, as described by David Larsen, of ‘letting one iteration of a poem stand arbitrarily for all the others.’¹¹⁹ Furthermore, in describing the sequence of themes within these poems, the relationships between sections of the poems, the appearance of ‘ring composition’, and so on, we hope to avoid the over-reading of features of the text that may be the result of transmission and redaction. At the close of this section, therefore, we will offer a study of the variations between the available recensions of a single poem by Kuthayyir (K 3), including a consideration of the fragmentary transmission of the text in embedded quotations.

Note on Metre

An immediately striking feature of these poems is the metre in which they are composed. Ten of the eleven *ghazal* poems by Kuthayyir that are collected in the *Muntahā* are in the *ṭawīl* metre, while the one remaining poem, K 15, is in the *wāfir*. If one surveys all of the

¹¹⁹ Larsen, “Three Versions of a Qasida by Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī,” *Cambridge Literary Review* 10 (2017), 120.

texts attributed to Kuthayyir in ‘Abbās’s edition of the *Dīwān*, one finds that of the 226 texts attributed to Kuthayyir, 147 of these are in the *ṭawīl* meter. The second most frequent metre to appear is the *wāfir*, which appears 20 times, followed by *kāmil*, which appears 17 times. Thus the predominance of the *ṭawīl* metre in the poems we are studying, although exaggerated in this limited corpus, is not an accident of Ibn Maymūn’s selection. The rather extreme predominance of the *ṭawīl* metre is a formal feature of Kuthayyir’s poetry that requires some comment.

As the *ṭawīl* metre is the most common metre of the Jāhilī ode and of most *qaṣīda* poetry in general,¹²⁰ its predominance in Kuthayyir’s work should not be altogether surprising. Yet in the context of Umayyad *ghazal* poetry, where a proliferation of ‘metres that were rare in the poetry of central and east Arabia such as the *khafīf*, *hazaj*, and *ramal*’ is a feature that appears in the work of some of Kuthayyir’s contemporaries,¹²¹ the overwhelming preponderance of the *ṭawīl* metre in poetry of the so-called ‘Udhri school is striking. As the statistical survey of the meters used in Umayyad *ghazal* by Frolov shows, the strong preference for *ṭawīl* is a feature also of Jamīl’s verse;¹²² in contrast, the works of other Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets, most notably ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a and Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, are distinguished by a much greater degree of metrical variation.¹²³ This metrical variation is thus a salient feature setting apart the ‘urban’ *ghazal* of ‘Umar and his followers from the ‘Bedouin’ and Western Arabian *ghazal* associated with Jamīl. What inferences can be made then, if any, about the respective ‘modes’ or performance settings of these two parallel corpora of love poetry?

¹²⁰ See van Gelder, *Sound and Sense in Classical Arabic Poetry* (Wiesbaden: 2012), 75-88.

¹²¹ See “Ghazal,” E12 [Blachère].

¹²² See Frolov, *Classical Arabic Verse. History and Theory of ‘Arūḍ* (Leiden: 2000), 277, table 19, which shows that 72 percent of Jamīl’s extant poetry is in the *ṭawīl*, compared to 62 percent of Kuthayyir’s.

¹²³ See Frolov, *Arabic Verse*, 278, table 20.

The metrical variety of Ḥijāzī ‘urban’ poets has been interpreted most often as showing the importance of the setting to music by singing girls and the involvement of music in the original settings of Ḥijāzī verse; Frolov additionally asserts that this metrical variety shows the influence of traditions of court poetry from al-Ḥīra.¹²⁴ Thus, if the metrical variety of the ‘urban’ lyric genre indicates less formal, more occasional performance settings, then perhaps the dominance of *ṭawīl* in Jamīl and Kuthayyir imply more ‘formal’ or court context for the *ghazal* of these poets. Yet one should assert here that it seems very problematic to draw far-reaching conclusions about performance context based on this metrical preference alone. As van Gelder has pointed out, one can point to very little research ‘on the correlation between metre and mode’ in early Arabic poetry; furthermore, within the indigenous critical tradition, one cannot readily identify any firm associations between the various metres and different performance contexts or ‘modes’, at least not for the pre-Abbasid periods.¹²⁵ Nonetheless, it is worth noting that van Gelder goes on to affirm Bencheikh’s conclusion that *ṭawīl* is most closely associated with ‘poesie d’apparat’ and thus with the ‘serious’ modes of verse, which include *rithā’*, *madīḥ*, and *fakhr*.¹²⁶ Tentatively, then, it would seem that the use of *ṭawīl* by Kuthayyir, which is also characteristic of the ‘Udhri panegyrist-elegiasts of the Ḥijāz such as Jamīl and Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, reinforces slightly the plausibility of viewing the long-form *ghazal* poems as evincing a more ‘formal’ poetic register that is related to the register of praise poetry.

2.3.a: Poem Openings

The opening passages of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* employ conventions familiar from the amatory prelude (*nasīb*) of the pre-Islamic ode. In order to provide an inventory of Kuthayyir’s deployment of these motifs, we will use the scheme of motif-classification presented by

¹²⁴ Ibid., *Arabic Verse*, 239-240.

¹²⁵ See van Gelder, *Sound and Sense*, 75.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 75 and 79, quoting Bencheikh, *Poétique arabe: Essai sur les voies d’une création* (Paris: 1975), 214.

Jacobi in her work on the Jāhili corpus.¹²⁷ Jacobi's scheme identifies two basic types of *nasīb*: those with 'frame motif', and those without. There are then three basic 'frame motifs': (1) the complaint at the ruins (*aṭlāl*); (2) the 'morning of parting' (Trennungsmorgen, *ḡa'n*); and (3) the appearance of the phantom (*khayāl*). These three motifs, which can be identified in a given case by the deployment of formal-semantic markers (e.g., the naming of the *aṭlāl*, or the use of *ṭariqat* 'it visited' to introduce the *khayāl* conceit), make up the basic typology of poem-openings. It should be noted, however, that these framing motifs are not only closely related in terms of content, in that all three of them are used to depict a scene that is in many respects unified, i.e., the poet's state of bereavement and longing, but it should also be noted that in a number of cases the framing-motifs may become difficult to distinguish, as when a poem contains both a mention of the *aṭlāl* and a mention of a departing caravan (i.e., the *ḡa'n* or 'caravan' conceit, Trennungsmorgen). Subsuming these various framing motifs, Jacobi identifies two 'motif-cycles': (1) love and parting, which includes expression of loss, description of the faithlessness of the beloved, and the poet's complaint against aging, and (2) 'the beloved', which includes the physical description of the beloved, and the depiction of particular amorous events. Kuthayyir's long-form *ghazal* poems can be said to consist almost entirely of expansion upon these two 'motif-cycles' from the Jāhili *nasīb*, and one can usefully apply the above motif-terminology to much of his *ghazal*.

Of the eleven *ghazal* poems being discussed presently, ten poems employ either the *aṭlāl* motif or the 'parting' (*ḡa'n*) motif. The *khayāl* or 'phantom' conceit, on the other hand, does not occur in the opening of any of Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poems, but does occur at least twice in Kuthayyir's corpus, once in the *nasīb* of a panegyric poem for his patron 'Umar II (ruled 98-101/717-720; K 11, translated and discussed in chapter 3), and once within the *ghazal* poem K 12 (*wa-ṭāfa khayālu* K 12, line 19), near the end of that poem. The *aṭlāl* motif appears at the openings of K 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 14; while the 'parting' (*ḡa'n*) motif appears at the openings of K 2, 4, 12, and 15. The remaining poem under study, K 9, contains a

¹²⁷ See Jacobi, *Studien zur Poetik der altarabischen Qaṣīde* (Wiesbaden: 1971), 14-15 and 37-49.

related motif that is not in Jacobi's classification, yet which to a degree should be considered simply as a framing motif related to the *aṭlāl* conceit: the poem includes a lightning-watching scene, in connection to which place names equivalent to the *aṭlāl* are given.¹²⁸

2.3.b The Aṭlāl

In the six poems that contain an *aṭlāl* motif, the mention of the abandoned site occurs always at the very beginning of the poems, occupying from 1 to 4 lines of verse. The abandoned site is referred to explicitly, with a variety of terms that are close in meaning: *rab* 'spring encampment' (K 3, line 1, and K 6, line 4), *rasm* 'trace' (K 6, line 1 and K 14, line 2), *aṭlāl* 'ruins' (K 7, line 1 and K 8, line 2), and *saḥḥ* 'mountain-side' (K 10, line 1).¹²⁹

It is notable that in five of the six instances of the *aṭlāl* here, the naming of the site is accompanied by a deployment of the root *h-y-j* meaning 'to excite' (toward emotion and passion), 'to blow violently' (of the wind).¹³⁰ This feature thus initiates the poems by declaring the poet's emotional excitement in connection to the *aṭlāl*. It is certainly a stereotyped usage to some degree in the Jāhili period, as usage of the verb *hāja* in connection to the poet's 'excitement' at the ruins appears also in a number of Jāhili *nasīb*

¹²⁸ Hussein, *The Lightning-Scene in Ancient Arabic Poetry: Function, Narration and Idiosyncrasy in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Poetry* (Wiesbaden: 2009), provides a typology and diachronic sketch of the development of this motif; Kuthayyir's deployment would fit into the tradition of 'lightning as an expression of longing for a distant beloved,' which Hussein describes 37-94.

¹²⁹ On the terms used for the deserted site, see Montgomery, "The Deserted Encampment in Ancient Arabic Poetry: A Nexus of Topical Comparisons," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 40:2 (1995), 283-316.

¹³⁰ See Lane's *Lexicon*, 8, 2910.

contexts, although not consistently as an opening element.¹³¹ In four of the five instances in Kuthayyir, the *aṭlāl* themselves are the grammatical subject of the verb *tuhīju*, with the meaning ‘to excite’ the poet’s emotions (K 6.2, 7.1, 8.2, and 14.1). In the remaining instance, line 3 of K 10, the root is used rather in the nominal form *hūj* ‘violent wind’, to denote the forces blowing across the ruins. This consistent pairing of the naming of the *aṭlāl* to the ‘excitement’ or ‘arousal’ of the poet should be viewed as a set initiatory element of these texts.

2.3.c: The *Ḍaʿn* Motif

The theme of ‘parting’ that opens a number of these poems, namely poems 2, 4, 12, and 15, involves likewise an evocation of the departure of the beloved, but does so through reference to the departing train or caravans of the beloved and her people, rather than through reference to an abandoned camp or ruin. It is referred to as ‘the *Ḍaʿn* motif,’ because of its frequent inclusion of mention of the departing *Ḍaʿāʿin* or *aḌʿān* (caravans) of the beloved. This motif has been identified as particularly frequent in panegyric texts from the Jāhilī and early Islamic period, where it has been identified as a marker of the ‘victory ode’, i.e. a panegyric poem, usually bi-partite, in which the *mamdūḥ* is lauded for his victory at war.¹³²

¹³¹ For example, *h-y-j* occurs, with the remains of the encampment as the verbal subject, in texts by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī (Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 8.14 and 21.16), ‘Antara (Ahlwardt, 32.5), Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā (Ahlwardt, 190.4 and 193.19), and Imru’ Qays (Ahlwardt, 160.14). Of these, the instances in al-Nābigha are the closest to Kuthayyir’s usage, as in al-Nābigha, 21.16: ‘Did the trace of the abodes excite you for Asmā’, at Rawḍat Nuʿmī and Dhāt Asāwid?’ (*ʿahājaka min ʿasmāʿa rasmu l-manāzili bi-rawḍati nuʿmīyin fa-dhāti l-asāwidi*).

¹³² See Ezz El-Din, “No Solace for the Heart”: The Motif of the Departing Women in the pre-Islamic Battle Ode,” in *Reorientations*, ed. Stetkevych (Indiana: 1994), 165-79.

In Kuthayyir's poems, the caravans are mentioned specifically in K 12 (*aḏ'ānu* 'Azzata, line 5) and K 15 (*ḥudūj*, lines 1 and 5), while in poems 2 and 4 a scene of parting and departure is clearly evoked, but there is no explicit mention of the beloved's departing train. In fact, in K 4, which we will provide in translation and commentary below, the departure is mentioned (*ajadda raḥīlī*, line 4), but there is some degree of ambiguity throughout the poem about whether it is the beloved's, or rather the poet's, tribe that is departing. In K 2, there is reference in the poem's first line to 'departure' (*intiḡāl*) and to 'severance [of the bond between poet and beloved]' (*ṣarm*), but no specific mention of caravans or attendants around the beloved. It is a notable element of all four of these departure-openings that each begins with a similar opening hemistich, containing a statement of exclamation beginning with the proclitic emphatic syllable 'a: 'O to my people of' (*'a-lā yā la-qawmī*, K 2); 'O, greet... (*'a-lā ḥayyayā*, K 4), 'O is Sūdā departing (*'a-bā'inatun Su'dā*, K 12), and 'O did it sadden you' (*'a-lam yaḥzun-ka*, K 15).¹³³ This exclamatory form appears to serve a purpose similar to that of *hāja* 'to excite' and its related forms in the *aṭlāl* texts: it marks the poet's excited state as a result of the beloved's, or his own tribe's, departure.

We see that the effect, overall, of the beginning of the *ghazal* poems, whether through the parting motif or the *aṭlāl*, is to create a mood of bereavement and mourning that is forward-looking, in the sense that the poet's 'bereavement' is not paired to strong statements of *takhalluṣ* or disengagement in which he exhorts himself to 'move on.' Additionally, we should note that the employment of the motifs associated with the *nasīb* is by no means limited to the openings of poems. It is a distinct characteristic of these texts that such motifs can occur elsewhere throughout the poem. Often, as we will see, a return to the opening-motifs will be particularly marked at the poem's ending section, suggesting a kind of 'ring composition' to the texts (notable in K 2, 3, 4, and 10); we will treat this

¹³³ The proclitic 'a that opens K 15 is more apparently read as an interrogative rather than emphatic particle, but placed as it is as poem-initial syllable, it seems also to take on an exclamatory character. It is used in combination with *lā* as a vocative: see Fischer, *A Grammar of Classical Arabic*, trans. Rogers (New Haven: 2001), §157.4 and §347.

feature below when discussing the closing sections of poems, but it is also to be noted that this feature, achieved through a final line or two of verse, would seem to be particularly susceptible to editorial intervention, and caution is therefore required in identifying it.

In general, the question should be asked whether the two basic types of *ghazal*-openings used by Kuthayyir, the ‘departure’ and the ‘*aṭlāl*’ motifs, mark any significant tonal or thematic categories within the corpus, i.e., whether *aṭlāl*-initial *ghazals* vary generically from departure-initial ones. No such general difference between the two types is immediately apparent: our commentaries below, which include two *aṭlāl* poems (K 3 and K 10), and one ‘departure’ poem (K 4), will show that many of the same themes and signifying elements appear in poems opened by either motif, and the close similarity of the tonality of the two motifs allows for a more or less fluid introduction of themes following the opening. In any case, the texts of Kuthayyir’s eleven poems contained in the *Muntahā* would be too small a corpus to infer general patterns about the themes attached to either opening, even if such were noticeable in the corpus. Given the parallel force conveyed by the [departure + exclamation] and the [*aṭlāl* + verb of excitement] openings of these poems, it should perhaps be no surprise that the two opening-types seem to lead, in this small corpus, to a varied body of themes shared between the two types.

2.3.d: Raḥīl, Oaths, and Transitions

The most immediate structural trait that sets apart long-form *ghazal* poetry from the so-called poly-thematic *qaṣīda* is the lack in the *ghazal* of a *raḥīl* section, a section that would describe the poet’s journey through a wilderness by camel, often (in panegyric contexts) toward a patron who receives his praise (*mamdūḥ*). This is true of the long-form *ghazal* poems in Kuthayyir’s corpus, but it should be stressed that a number of elements do appear in Kuthayyir’s poetry that evoke ‘desert travel’ and movement, and which in our view compromise the traditional depiction of the *ghazal* as a ‘monothematic’ form. It is true that

with the exception of one unusual and likely lacunose poem, K 8, these ‘long-form’ poems do not contain passages of camel- and journey-description such as those encountered in panegyric. Yet within the *ghazal* texts, elements do appear that are connected to the themes and concerns of *raḥīl*. This is achieved most prominently through two striking features of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal*: (1) first, through passages that contain ‘pilgrimage-oaths’, lovers’ vows sworn, most frequently, on ‘the camels that amble toward Minā’ (*al-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*) and (2) secondly, through ‘wish passages’, which are passages in which the poet declares counterfactually his wishes (usually introduced by *layta*) to ‘wander away,’ to be infirm or sick, or to become lost with the beloved. These two elements of the poems, although still closely related to the motif-repertoire of the *nasīb*, could be termed a kind of ‘anti-raḥīl,’ in that they seem to function in relation to the poem-openings similarly to the *raḥīl* section in ‘poly-thematic’ *qaṣīda* poetry.

The first element, the pilgrimage-oath, occurs in K 3, K4, and K10. We have identified this as a marked sub-set of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* corpus, and it is these three poems that will be translated and discussed in the next section. It should be noted here that in two of these poems, the oath-section occurs as the second major element following the opening, as in K 3, lines 6-9, and K 4, lines 7-9; in the *Muntahā* recension of K 10, the pilgrimage-oath occurs in lines 17-20, closer to the poem’s middle. The pilgrimage-oath sections (in K 3, K 4, and K 10) contain descriptions of the camels carrying pilgrims toward Mecca that resonate with the *wasf* typical of a ‘journey section,’ as in K 4, lines 11 and 12, where the pilgrims’ mounts are described as ‘animals that lift the tail for they are hiding a child, [storming] in their reins and vying with each other’ (line 12).

The wish-passages tend to occur later in the poems. In K 3, for example, at lines 16-20, the poet wishes (*fa-layta*, line 16) first that his riding animal, tied by weak rope, would wander away, then that he were a crippled man, or a hobbling old woman, who might wander away with ‘Azza. Likewise, in K 4, lines 34-36, he wishes he could wander the road of the ‘night-travelling women’ (*al-rā’ihāt*). At K 10, lines 25-29, just before the poem’s close, he wishes

that he and the beloved were two mangey beasts wandering from field to field, banished and driven away by the herdsmen. Such passages, which depict the wished-for wandering of poet and beloved, seem to evoke the journey-passage or *rahīl* of the poly-thematic ode, and form a structural element of Kuthayyir's long-form *ghazal*.

It should be noted also that *rahīl*-like material can also appear, somewhat more obliquely, within the ensemble of motifs and themes within poems and at the close of poems – i.e. by means of images or terms, but without a fully formed section of journey description. For example, the final lines of K 2 (lines 22 and 23) and the final lines of K 3 (lines 42-43) contain the image of the poet leaving to travel a road in the rain.

2.3.e: Closing Sections

The most frequent feature found at the close of the poems is a section of one to four lines that recapitulates themes from the opening of the poems. Three basic types of these closing-sections can be observed. In four instances, this final section includes mention of a journey/storm, recapitulating the excitement of the opening. This occurs in K 2, K 3, K 4, and K 10. In each of these poems, a relatively short passage (one or two lines in 2, 3, and 4; four lines in K 10) depicts rain, and makes mention of the poet heading out onto a road.

A second type of closing section, exemplified in K 6, K 15, and K 10¹³⁴, involves a closing reference to pilgrimage, and the complex of rituals associated with the *hajj*. Reference to pilgrimage is a major feature of Kuthayyir's poetics, and will be discussed at length below in the commentaries and interpretive essays.

¹³⁴ We list the ending of K 10 twice, as it contains both a 'journey' and a mention of pilgrimage.

A third group of endings, K 8, K 9, K 12, and K 14, include endings that more generally resume the subject matter of the openings, bearing a sententious or *ḥikma*-like quality. Particularly important here are references to the ‘complaint of old age’ (*shakwā ‘an al-shayb*) conceit. K 12, for example, ends with mention of the ‘ruins of youth’ *aṭlālu l-shabāb*, while K 9 ends with the complaint that the pain of parting is still felt ‘twenty years later.’

In general, it should be said that a less predictable variety of themes obtains toward the end of the poems than in the opening sections. But it is nonetheless clear – and particularly so in the more widely and reliably transmitted poems (i.e., K 3 and K 4), that care is displayed to provide the poems with short closing sections, usually of one or two lines, that often refer back to the themes of the poem’s opening.

In discussing the structure of these long-form *ghazal* poems, we have remarked several times that allowance should consistently be made for the variance between possible recensions of the poem, so that the role of the redactors and transmitters of poems in shaping the apparent ‘structure’ of the poems should not be ignored. In addition to the wide and often radically divergent short quotations of Kuthayyir’s poetry in early sources, only two of Kuthayyir’s poems (K 3 and K 4) are available in multiple, apparently-complete recensions. We thus have only limited evidence on which to base a discussion of the variant recensions of his poetry. But to better grasp the nature of these variations, let us look now at the evidence we do have for the variant transmissions (*riwāyāt*) of Kuthayyir’s work.

Of the two poems (K 3 and K 4) transmitted by both al-Qālī and Ibn Maymūn, only K 3 shows significant variation between the recensions. The 47-line text of K 4 is entirely consistent between the two recensions, with the addition of only one line (line 31) that is found only in al-Qālī’s text. But if we turn to the text of K 3, Kuthayyir’s most widely

transmitted poem, we can see a greater degree of variation between the recensions of Ibn Maymūn, al-Qālī, and the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*.

The text of K 3 established by ‘Abbās in his edition of the *Diwān*, which we have used as the basis of our translation, is 43 lines long. Four of these lines, however (lines 2, 8, and 25-26), do not appear in the printed edition of al-Qālī or in the *Muntahā*, but are quoted from the al-Qālī text in other works of early scholarship, and thence included in the text by ‘Abbās. The modern edited version of the al-Qālī recension thus contains only 39 lines, while that of the *Muntahā* has 38. These two recensions show some significant variation in the sequencing of the lines. Namely, line 3 in the *Muntahā* text occurs later in al-Qālī, as the poem’s seventeenth line; lines 21-23 of the *Muntahā* recension do not occur in al-Qālī; and, perhaps most notably, line 9 of the *Muntahā* version occurs as the final line of the poem in al-Qālī. While these variations do not amount to radical departures in the structure of the poem, they are also not merely ‘marginal’ differences: as we will see in our commentary on K 3, for example, the reading of the *Muntahā*’s line 9 as the final line of the poem would have a meaningful impact on our interpretation of the poem.

Overall, however, it can be said that the study of the al-Qālī and Ibn Maymūn recensions reinforces their basic consistency: one has the impression that Ibn Maymūn’s written source is reasonably close to al-Qālī’s. A much different picture of the transmission of Kuthayyir’s poetry might be formed, however, if we look outside the *Muntahā* and al-Qālī, to the embedded quotations of the poet’s work in *akhbār* sources and other *adab* works. K 3, which we have just discussed in its two variant recensions by al-Qālī and Ibn Maymūn, is quoted as an 11-line fragment in the article on Kuthayyir in Abū l-Faraj’s *Kitāb al-Aghānī*. But if we juxtapose the quotation by Abū l-Faraj with the texts of K 3 transmitted in al-Qālī and the *Muntahā*, we note striking and fundamental divergences. Employing the lines of ‘Abbās’s edition, the *Aghānī* fragment is as follows:

Lines 1-2

Lines 16-17

Line 10

Line 31

Line 22

[Line not in *Muntahā*]

Lines 13-14

[Line not in *Muntahā*]

Clearly, Abū l-Faraj's text bears little resemblance to the other recensions. Rather than allow this to call into question the basic stability of the text, however, it seems more prudent to point out that the quotation of poetry in prose texts should be considered as an independent type of transmission of the poetry, which deserves to be considered on its own terms. The compilers and authors of *akhbār* are not providing texts intended to be read or performed as complete versions of the poems, but rather are often pulling suitable samples of verse in order to forward their own literary aims; furthermore, we would stress that the texts provided in the *Aghānī* have been converted into songs for performance. It should be emphasized that the two streams of poetry transmission, as it were --- the *dīwān* stream and the *akhbār* stream --- are motivated by distinct scholarly purposes; in the case of the establishment of the full texts of poems, one would seem justified in preferring the evidence of a *dīwān* transmission over poetry embedded in the *akhbār*.

2.4 Reading Kuthayyir's *Ghazal*

This section will provide translations and commentary on three of Kuthayyir's long-form *ghazal* poems. The first of these poems, K 3, is the most widely quoted of Kuthayyir's poems in early sources.¹³⁵ In addition to short quotations of the poem in a wide range of early sources, there are two full recensions of the poem available, showing a slight but not insignificant variation in the order of lines: the first recension appears in the *Kitāb al-Amālī* of al-Qālī, while the second appears in Ibn Maymūn's *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. The recension of al-Qālī is introduced in the 4th/10th century work, produced in Spain under Umayyad Andalusian patronage, by al-Qālī's statement that he read the text with his teacher Ibn Durayd (*wa-qara'tu 'alā Abī Bakri bni Duraydi li-Kuthayyirin*).¹³⁶ Despite al-Qālī's version being earlier and attributed to a scholar of more established reputation, we have followed in our translation and commentary the text established by 'Abbās in his edition of the *dīwān*, which prefers the line ordering of the *Muntahā* recension; in our commentary that follows the translation, we put forward some arguments justifying this preference.

The second *ghazal* text studied here, K 4, is likewise available in two early recensions, in the *Muntahā* and *Kitāb al-Amālī* --- in this case, these recensions being identical other than the addition of a single line in al-Qālī's version. A third witness is also available for the text of K 4, in an Escorial manuscript which was edited in 1922 by Paul Schwarz.¹³⁷ The Escorial manuscript edited by Schwarz contains a version of the text identical to the version in al-Qālī, followed by a *ghazal* poem attributed to the poet Qays b. al-Ḍarīḥ, along with

¹³⁵ See the list of citations of the poem, twice the length of that of any other *ghazal* poem by Kuthayyir, that follows the text in the edition by 'Abbās: *takhrīj al-qaṣīda*, 104-107.

¹³⁶ See al-Qālī, *Kitāb al-amālī*, 2:107; on al-Qālī's life, see "al-Qālī" *EAL* [van Gelder], 2, 629.

¹³⁷ See Schwarz, *Escorial-studien zur arabischen Literatur und Sprachkunde* (Stuttgart: 1922).

commentary on the two poems.¹³⁸ Schwarz, who provided a translation of the poem with a short commentary but did not edit the Arabic commentary, doubted the original unity of the text of Kuthayyir's poem, suggesting that the text perhaps represented a conflation of two original poems. Schwarz's doubts about the text's unity are not supported, however, by any manuscript evidence of recensions of the poems, nor, apparently, by the early commentary tradition on the poem, which makes no mention of any problem of unity. In our commentary and interpretation, we will approach the text as representing a single poem, rejecting Schwarz's suggestion that the last section of the poem represents an elaborate editorial inter-splicing.

The third text, K 10, is extant in only one complete recension, that of the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. Quotations of the text do appear in early sources, however, including in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*.

In addition to K 3 and K 4 being the most widely known and transmitted of Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poems, the choice of these three poems has been made on several grounds. The three texts share a striking formal feature, which has not been discussed sufficiently in scholarship on the *ghazal*¹³⁹: each contains a 'pilgrimage-oath', i.e. a vow or oath sworn between lovers, conveyed in reported speech and introduced by the verb *ḥalafa* (to swear), with the language of the oath making reference to the Ka'ba, the 'ambling' camels (*al-rāqiṣāt*) that carry pilgrims toward Mecca, the sacred plain of Minā, and the rituals of the pilgrimage.

We begin with a translation and commentary of K 3.

¹³⁸ As the poem by Qays b. al-Ḍarīḥ is also transmitted by al-Qālī, it seems likely that al-Qālī is the source for the Escorial text.

¹³⁹ See however Gabrieli, "Rapporti tra poeta e rāwī", op cit., 163-168; and Schwarz, *Escorial-Studien*, 15.

K 3: ṭawīl

1. My two companions – this is the Spring encampment of Azza, so rein in your young camels and weep where she dwelled
2. And touch the ground that touched her skin, spend the night and linger where she spent the night and lingered
3. And do not despair for God will erase your sins, if you pray where she prayed.
4. I did not know what crying was, or the pains of the heart until she departed.
5. She did not act fairly, she made women hateful; she was stingy with her gifts.
6. She swore an oath by the sacrifice of the Quraysh on the morning of Ma'zamayn and prayed
7. 'I call on you as long as the pilgrims make the Hajj, and a group makes *takbīr* [i.e. says *Allāhu akbar*] and offers ritual sacrifice at Fayfā' 'Āl,
8. As long as a group makes *takbīr* from atop Rukba peak and offers ritual prayer and sacrifice from Dhu Ghazāl.
9. In cutting the rope between me and her, she was like one who makes a vow, is faithful to it, and dissolves it.
10. So I said to her, 'Azza - in every calamity, the soul is humbled if it becomes accustomed to it
11. And no person experiences of love a first overwhelming instance, nor a blindness that [both] do not clear away.
12. If the gossips ask why you broke it off with her, say "The soul of a free man is consoled and moves on.
13. It was as though I called out to a stone when she turned away – a deaf stone that, if the white-footed ibex were to walk on it, they would fall.
14. Often turning away, she only met you as a miser; anyone who wearies from such meeting, she wearies of.

15. She made lawful a sacred enclosure that the people had not pastured before, and she settled in a highland that had not been settled before.
16. I wish that my young camel were tied in Azza's camp by a weak rope and neglected so that it could wander off;
17. And that her bridle were abandoned among the living of the tribe, and that someone else would want her and go search for her when she goes off;
18. And that I were like a man with one sound leg and one leg hobbled by the passing of time;
19. And that I were like a crippled woman who shifts her weight onto her crippledness, and then moves off after stumbling.
20. I want to stay with her, but I think that when I stay with her for long, she becomes tired of me.
21. The Pig charges her to curse and disgrace me, yet she humbles herself before her owner.
22. Hale and good cheer to 'Azza, no polluted poison, in return for all of the regions of ours that she has made lawful.
23. By God, every time I approached her she would draw away from me with a break, and every time I gave a lot she would give little.
24. I am afflicted with wrenching sighs that, if they continue, will kill me; she who continually brings death to me has turned away.
25. And we used to walk in the highlands of passion, but when we pledged ourselves to one another I held firm and she slipped.
26. And we had forged the bond of connection between us, and when we swore the pact with each other, I bound it tight and she untied hers.
27. And if there is to be satisfaction, then a hearty and warm welcome!; she merits satisfaction in our eye, but our satisfaction from her is little.
28. And if it is to be the contrary, then there is a land behind us that will exhaust the camels when I charge them with it
29. My two companions – the Ḥājibī woman has exhausted your young camels, and has worn out my she-camel.

30. May the connection to ‘Azza not disappear, when its ties which had turned away have been brought to an end.
31. Speak well or ill of us without blame in our eyes, (you are) not despised even if she comes to despise (us)
32. But recall and remember a love for us, out of a fondness that you once had that went astray.
33. And I, even if she turned away, am still full of praises and true-hearted toward her for what she gave to us
34. I am not the one calling for ‘Azza’s destruction or enjoying her failure if her foot should slip
35. And let not the gossips assert that my passion for ‘Azza was a dark torrent that has cleared away;
36. That I have recovered from the sickness for her as a wandering sick camel is struck with illness then healed
37. By God, then by God – no one, no companion, before or after her, has alighted where she alighted.
38. And no day has passed for me to match her day, even if other days have been great and splendid.
39. She settled at the highest summit of his heart; the heart does not forget her and the soul does not weary.
40. What a wonder how the heart finds its recognition, how the soul becomes accustomed and at peace
41. My sickness for Azza and myself, after she has left and parted from what was between us:
42. We are like a seeker in the shade of a cloud – whenever he settles down to sleep, she vanishes
43. She is like a cloud and I a drought-ravaged land desiring her; she gives rain, when she has passed beyond.

Line 1 The use of *ḥallati* ‘she alighted’ as the rhyme word provides the first instance of the frequent iteration throughout the poem of forms from the root *ḥ-l-l*, which has a significant paronomastic effect throughout the poem. The root appears in the poem nine times in total, evincing two basic meanings or semantic domains: in five instances (lines 1, 15 *bis*, 37 *bis*), the verb means ‘to settle’ or alight; this is a familiar usage from early *nasīb* material, where the beloved (or her people) is often said to ‘alight’ or ‘have alighted’ at the abandoned encampment.¹⁴⁰ In two instances in the poem, on the other hand, words from this root are deployed to signify the ‘undoing’ or ‘releasing’ of the bond or ‘covenant’ between lovers (*fa-aḥallati*, ‘she dissolved it’, 9; and *ḥallati*, ‘she untied’, 26). In a further deployment of the root semantics, related to the sense of ‘alight,’ *istaḥalla* is used in line 22 to denote the ‘opening’ or ‘making licit’ of ‘our lands’ (*a’rāḍanā*), in what is a central recurring metaphor of the poem: the poet repeatedly states that ‘Azza has ‘opened sacred land’ and ‘settled in the highest peak of my heart’ (*wa-ḥallati bi-a’lā shāhiqin min fu’ādī*, line 39). That the double-sense of settle/make licit is at play in the poem is perhaps most clear in line 15, where the first hemistich makes apparent the double entendre: *abāḥat ḥiman lam yar’ahu l-nāsu qablahā wa-ḥallat tilā’an lam takun qablu ḥullati* (She made lawful a sacred enclosure that the people had not pastured before, and she settled in a highland that had not been settled before). One finds parrallel imagery, in which the beloved is said to ‘alight’ or ‘make licit’ previously unsettled land, in Jamīl: ‘Buthayna alighted (*ḥallat*) at a settling place in my heart, among the ravines, where no one had settled’ (*ḥallat buthaynatu min qalbī bi-manzilatīn bayna l-jawāniḥi lam yanzil bihā aḥadun*).¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, Imru’ Qays (Ahlwardt, 168.9, second hemistich): ...*wa-ḥallati Sulaymā baṭna zabyin fa-’ar’arā*, ‘Sulaymā alighted at *Baṭn Zaby*, then it became abandoned’; and ‘Abīd b. al-Abraṣ, *Mu’allaqa*, line 5, second hemistich: *wa-kulli man ḥallahā maḥrūbu* ‘everyone who dwelt in it has been despoiled’, translation Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry Vol. 2: Select Odes* (Oxford: 1996), 31.

¹⁴¹ *Dīwān Jamīl*, ed. Bustānī, 53, line 1; see also the text of Jamīl’s poem in the *Muntahā* (Frankfurt: 1986), 164.

Lines 2 and 3¹⁴² consist of an exhortation, addressed to the poet's two 'companions' (*khalīlayya*, line 1), to touch (in prayer) the ground that has 'touched her skin' (*qad massa jildahā*), so that God will 'erase from you (two) your sins' (*wa-lā tay'asa an yamḥūwa llāhu 'ankumā dhanūban*). This explicit reference to ritual prayer (*idhā ṣalaytumā*, line 3) within the initial *dhikr* of the beloved, taken together with the context of pilgrimage-reference that follows in the poem, can be read as an implied reference to the Meccan sanctuary. The reference to prayer (*ṣalāh*) within the *ghazal/nasīb* is striking, but certainly not without contemporary parallels, as in a fragment from a *ghazal* poem preserved in the *Aghānī* by the Medinan poet and 'Murjiite' *faqīh* 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'Abd Allāh, which shows parallel phrasing: 'touch the surface of the ground, from which you are created ...' (*musā turāba l-arḍi minhā khuliqtumā*).¹⁴³ 'Ubayd Allāh was a contemporary of Kuthayyir, one of the 'Seven Fuqahā' of Medina', a loosely affiliated group of early religious scholars and *muḥaddithūn* who flourished under Marwānid patronage in the late first century AH / first decades of the 8th century. Interestingly, 'Ubayd Allāh was, like Kuthayyir, connected to the court of 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn Marwān, and is reported to have been a teacher of the young 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz ('Umar II), who was likewise a patron of Kuthayyir.¹⁴⁴ The integration of a portrayal of 'piety' within Kuthayyir's *ghazal* and panegyric poetry will be discussed in more detail in section 3.5 below, which examines Kuthayyir's panegyric for 'Umar II.

The reference to ritual in the poem's opening is reinforced by the diction of **line 4**, with the declaration that 'I did not know [crying] before 'Azza (*wa-mā kuntu adrī qabla 'Azzata...*). The verb *adrā*, which is used famously in the eschatological 'rhetorical questions' of the

¹⁴² The two lines are absent from the *Muntahā aṭ-Ṭalab* and from the modern printed text of al-Qālī (Cairo: 1953) but are cited by 'Abbās from the *Khizānat al-Adab* of 'Abd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī (d. 1093/1682), who reproduced them from a manuscript of al-Qālī. 'Abbās suggests in a note *ad versum* (*Diwān Kuthayyir*, 90) that the two lines were perhaps 'dropped' from the modern printing of al-Qālī: *fa-la'alla-hu saqaṭa min al-naskha al-maṭbū'a*.

¹⁴³ See Agh. 9.145; on *turāb al-arḍi* signifying 'surface of the earth,' see Lane's *Lexicon*, 2, 309.

¹⁴⁴ On 'Ubayd Allāh, see "Seven Fuqaha of Medina," E12 [Pellat]; and Nallino, "La littérature arabe des origines à l'époque de la dynastie umayyade," trans. Charles Pellat, (Paris: 1950), 99-100.

Qur'ān (e.g.: Q 101:1, *mā adrāka mā al-qārī'a*, 'what tells you what is the knocker?'¹⁴⁵) here initiates in this poem the theme of 'what the heart knows/learns', which comes to a climax in line 40 with the exclamation 'how wondrous is the heart and its coming to know (*fa-wā-jabā li-l-qalbi kayfa i'tirāfuhu...*)' The epistemological nature of the poet's reckoning with the erotic encounter is -- like the sacred/profane dichotomy -- a central axis of meaning in the poem. That *adrā* carries 'eschatological' connotations is reinforced elsewhere in Kuthayyir's poetry, for example in K 42.8, within the *nasīb*-movement of a panegyric for Bishr b. Marwān: 'By God I did not know, no matter how dear her nearness was to me, what God was doing to my soul through [this] nearness' (*wa-llāhi mā adrī wa-law ḥubba qurbuhā ilā l-nafs madhā llāhu fī l-qurbi fā'ilu*).

In **Line 5**, the poet decries his unkind treatment from the beloved, who is said to have 'made the women hateful to us, and to have withheld her giving' (*wa-mā anṣafat amā l-nisā'a fa-baghghaḍat ilaynā wa-'amā bi-l-nawāli fa-ḍannati*). The stinginess or churlishness of the beloved is derided in terms that are used elsewhere to describe the expectations that attend the patronage relationship. The root *n-w-l*, (present here as *nawāl*, 'her giving') is used throughout Kuthayyir's panegyric poetry to refer to the 'giving' of his patrons, as in K 43:10, where 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān is said to be 'more bountiful in giving', *afḍalu nā'ilan*, than the Nile in flood. Passages such as this, in which the poet pleads for a desired reciprocal form of 'companionship' with the beloved, and complains about his unfair treatment, appear frequently in Kuthayyir's *ghazal*, as we will see especially in K 4, below, often recalling passages in which the poet describes the patronage relationship in his panegyric.

Ḍ-n-n, which is used here to refer to the beloved's 'stinginess' (*ḍannati*), occurs in early poetry as a strongly negative quality, as for example in its use by al-Shanfarā in a poem in the *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, where the poet declares that the house-mother of the Su'lūks was 'not

¹⁴⁵ On the 'rhetorical questions' (*Lehrfragen*) with *adrā* in the Qur'ān, see Neuwirth, *KTS*, 308-310.

niggardly with the contents of her sack' (*wa-mā 'in bi-hā ḍinnun bi-mā fī wi'ā'ihā*).¹⁴⁶ The term also appears prominently in the Qur'ān, as in the depiction of the divulging of the 'unseen' to the Prophet: *wa-mā huwa 'alā l-ghaybi bi-ḍanīnin* 'He is not niggardly about the Invisible,' Q 81:24. *Mā anṣafat*, 'she did not act fairly,' perhaps also has a qur'ānic resonance, as it has been pointed out that the verb *anṣafa*, 'to act fairly,' although frequent in the Qur'ān, '[does] not seem to appear in the so-called pre-Islamic *diwāns*.'¹⁴⁷

Lines 6-9 consist of a 'pilgrimage-oath' sworn by the beloved and delivered here in reported speech (introduced by *ḥalafat jahdan* 'she swore'). The beloved makes a 'lover's vow,' reported in the past, upon 'that to which the Quraysh make sacrifice' (*bi-mā naḥarat lahu qurayshun*), a reference to the practice of *naḥr*, the ritual slaughtering of a camel that stands 'upright but at the same time facing the *qibla*.'¹⁴⁸ The place where the oath is sworn is specified in line 6 by the toponym al-Ma'zamayn, which signifies a place within Mecca, between the 'sacred ritual site' (*al-mash'ar al-ḥarām*) and Mount Arafat.¹⁴⁹ It is then specified that having made the oath, the beloved 'prayed' (*wa-ṣallati*, line 6). The rhetoric of the oath establishes a connection between the bond of the lovers, and the fulfilment of rituals related to the *ḥajj*. The introductory phrase *fa-qad ḥalafat jahdan* 'she swore an oath' has, like the lines that precede it, a qur'ānic resonance: the limiting accusative *jahdan* ('solemnly') occurs five times in the Qur'ān,¹⁵⁰ always in the phrase *'aqsamū bi-llāhi jahda 'aymānihim* ('they have sworn their most solemn oaths by God'). The verb *ḥalafa* is found in Jāhilī verse in the context of the 'lover's vow,' as in Imru' Qays, *ḥalaftu la-hā bi-llāhi ḥalfata fājirin* (I swore to her, by God, the oath of one who is false).¹⁵¹ It is found also in an oath-

¹⁴⁶ *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, ed. Lyall (Oxford: 1921), 204.

¹⁴⁷ See "Inṣāf," EI2 [Arkoun].

¹⁴⁸ "Dhabīḥa," EI2 [Bousquet]; see also Lazarus-Yafeh "The Religious Dialectics of the Ḥaḍjḍj", in *Some Religious Aspects of Islam* (Leiden: 1981), 40-45.

¹⁴⁹ See Yāqūt (1866, VII), 362, which specifies that afternoon prayers were held in this place.

¹⁵⁰ See Q 5:53, 6:109, 16:38, 24:53, 35:42.

¹⁵¹ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 52.25. See also the use of *jahdan* by Abū Dhu'ayb: *wa-qāsamahā bi-llāhi jahdan*: see, in Hell's edition of the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, AD 27 b v 13.

context in a panegyric *qaṣīda* by Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā, where reference is also made to the site of pilgrimage: *fa-aqsamtu jahdan bi-l-manāzili min minan wa-mā suḥiqat fīhi l-maqādīmu wa-l-qamlu* ‘I swear by the campsites of Minā, where the lice and forelocks are shaved (sc. in pilgrimage),’ which passage will be discussed in more detail below.

The language of the reported oath itself is given in lines 7 and 8: ‘I call upon you as long as pilgrims make the *ḥajj*, and a group makes *takbīr* and offers sacrifice at the hill of Ghazāl...’ (*unādīka mā ḥajja l-ḥajju wa-kabbarat bi-fayfā’i Ghazālin rufqatun wa-’ahallati*). The third-form verb *unādī* ‘I call upon,’ occurs again in line 13, where the poet states that he is ‘like one who addresses a... mute stone’ (*ka-annī unādī ṣakhratan... mina l-ṣummi*); the lovers are thus each depicted as ‘calling out’ in relation to the Ka‘ba. There is some confusion in the sources about the place names in 7 and 8: Yāqūt and al-Qālī read Fayfā’ Ghazāl in 7, which would refer to the hill outside of Mecca on the way toward Minā;¹⁵² the *Muntahā* reads Fayfā’ ’Āl, a name I have not been able to identify.

The beloved’s reported pilgrimage-oath is followed, in line 9, by the statement that the beloved is like ‘one who offers a vow, is faithful to it, and dissolves it’ (*ka-nādhiratin nadhran wafat fa-’ahallati*). The reference to the beloved as a *nādhira* (one who swears a vow/makes a warning) has resonance with the frequent qur’ānic designation of the prophet as *nadhīr*, warner, as for example in the prophet’s self-exhortation to ‘warn’ in Q 74:2, *qum fa-ndhir*, ‘stand and warn.’ One finds the phrase *nadhira damī*, ‘to vow my blood’ several times in the Hudhalī *Dīwān*, where it is glossed as having the meaning ‘to swear violence against,’ as in the line by the late Jāhilī Hudhalī poet Ḥabīb b. al-A‘lam: ‘Has ‘Abd Allāh sworn to Sa‘d that he will kill me, if his word is true’ (*’a-’Abdu llāhi yandhuru yā-la-*

¹⁵² Yāqūt, *sub nomine*.

Sa‘din damī in kāna yaşduqu mā yaqūlu).¹⁵³ The breaking of the love-bond in Kuthayyir is figured frequently as the breaking of a solemn covenant.

Lines 10-11 in the *Muntahā* recension provide psychological consolation or resolution by way of the poet’s sententious reflection on his condition. In line 10, the poet states that in every ‘calamity’ (*muşība*), if the ‘soul becomes accustomed’ (*idhā wuṭinnat yawman la-hā l-nafsu*), it (i.e. the soul), ‘is humbled’ (*dhallatī*). The placement of Line 10 presents the most significant difference between the two recensions of the poem. The placement in the *Muntahā*, which we have followed in our translation, would present this line as the poet’s answer to the oath of the beloved, which would make combined sense with line 11 to provide a transition between the poem-opening and the remainder of the poem. al-Qālī places this as the final line of the poem, which would thus close the poem with a strong note of ‘consolation’ and ‘overcoming’ (*takhalluṣ*), as the poet declares the final entrance of his soul (*nafs*) into a state of ‘forgetting’ / ‘consolation’ (*fa-qul nafsu ḥurrin suliyyat fa-tasallatī*). Following ‘Abbās, we place the line after the pilgrimage-oath, as the placement of the line at the end of the poem seems jarring in the context of the poem’s final section, which stresses the ongoing wandering of the poet.

This sense of consolation is strengthened in line 11, where the poet declares that ‘no person experiences of love a first overwhelming instance, nor a blindness that [both] do not clear away.’ (*wa-lam yalqa insānun mina l-ḥubbi may‘atan ta‘ummu wa-lā ‘amyā’a illā tajallatī*). ‘A first overwhelming instance’ (*may‘atan ta‘ummu*) may mean either a first experience of love that remains stable and constant, or else an experience of love that is common to all and universal. *May‘a* is said in the *Lisān al-‘Arab* to mean ‘the first and most lively part [of something]’ (*awwaluhu wa-nshaṭuhu*), especially in reference to youth or

¹⁵³ See *Ash‘ār al-Hudhayliyyīn* (Cairo: 1965), 321, line 1 (*al-A‘lam*); and Lewin, *A Vocabulary of the Hudhailian Poems* (Göteborg: 1978), 422; on the relative dating of the Hudhayl poets, see Miller, “Tribal Poetics” (PhD), 414 f.

sweetness.¹⁵⁴ The term occurs in early poetry most frequently in the phrase *dhū may‘atin*, ‘youthful, capable of a burst of speed’ to describe the poet’s mount, as, for example, in Imru’ Qays, Zuhayr, and ‘Alqamah.¹⁵⁵

Line 12 introduces the figures of the ‘go-betweens’ or ‘gossips’, the *wāshūna*: these meddlers in the relationship of poet and beloved feature in a number of Umayyad *ghazal* poems,¹⁵⁶ notably also in Kuthayyir’s K 4, which we will discuss below. They are referred to using third-person plural masculine forms, and serve as a distorting force that mis-reads and criticizes the poet’s erotic attachment, but also counsils him toward ‘sanity’, advising him to leave off from ‘wandering.’

In **line 13**, the poet declares that after the beloved turned away, it was as if he addressed ‘a mute stone’ (*ṣakhra...min al-ṣummī*) from which the ‘gazelle would slip if it walked upon it’ (*law tamashshā bi-hā l-‘uṣmu zallatī*). The precise valence of the imagery is difficult to explicate, but there seem to be associations again with the *ḥajj* and the Meccan sanctuary. The notion that *ṣakhra* here should be taken as a Ka‘ba-reference is strengthened not only by the context, but also by the evidence provided in an article by Bürgel, who adduces several passages from Umayyad-era poetry that evince a set of associations, although not clearly explained, between the gazelle, the sacred space of Mecca, and erotics.¹⁵⁷ The imagery here, which depicts the gazelle ‘slipping’ on the stone, depicts a mountain peak that proves too steep for the animal, perhaps also drawing on imagery of the hunt.

In the first hemistich of **line 15**, the poet declares that the beloved has ‘made licit a sacred enclosure that the people had not pastured (*abāḥat ḥiman lam yar‘ahu l-nāsu qablahā*). The

¹⁵⁴ See *Lisān al-‘Arab*, 4309, middle column.

¹⁵⁵ See Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 117.12 (Imru’ Qays), 93.3 (Zuhayr), and 195.11 (‘Alqamah).

¹⁵⁶ See Blachère, “Principaux thèmes,” *op cit.*, paragraph 109.

¹⁵⁷ See Bürgel, “The Lady Gazelle and Her Murderous Glances,” *JAL* 20 (1989), 1-11.

ḥimā (protected enclosure) denotes the practice of recognizing ‘an expanse of ground...access to and use of which are declared forbidden by the man or men who have arrogated possession of it to themselves and...[which is] placed under the protection of the tribal deity.’¹⁵⁸ This institution, with its origins in pre-Islamic cultic and communal husbandry practices, continued into Islamic times and is apparently referred to, though not mentioned by name, in the Qur’ānic story of Ṣāliḥ and the ‘she-camel of God’ that is allowed to ‘eat in God’s land’ (*fa-dharūhā ta’kul fī ’arḍi llāhi*, Q 11:64).¹⁵⁹ The *ḥimā* is referred to by several early poets, as in Imru’ Qays’s declaration that two heroes he is lauding have ‘opened/made licit’ the ‘*ḥimā* of stones’ of a rival people (*‘Amrun wa-Kāhilun ’abāḥā ḥimā ḥujrīn fa-aṣbaḥa muslamā*).¹⁶⁰ Kuthayyir here uses the phrase ‘she opened/ made licit an enclosure’ (*abāḥat ḥiman*) metaphorically, to depict the attachment to the beloved. Notably, it is in the Hudhayl poets of the Mukhaḍram period that the metaphorical usage of ‘*ḥimā*’ to denote the erotic or ‘intimate’ feelings of the poet first appears, as in the phrase *ḥimā nafsi* ‘my soul’s enclosure’ by Abū Khirāsh (early Mukhaḍram).¹⁶¹

Lines 16-19 consist of four lines of counter-factual wish, dependent syntactically throughout on the particle *fa-layta* ‘I wish’ at the opening of 16. The poet first declares the wish that his camel (*qulūṣī*) were tied in ‘Azza’s camp by a ‘failing rope’ (*ḥablin ḍa’īfin*), so that she (his camel) would ‘wander off’ (*fa-ḍallati*); given the mournful tone of the passage and usage of terminology borrowed from elegy (*marthīya*), one can perhaps see the reference to the camel tied by failing rope as an allusion to the practice of tying a camel to

¹⁵⁸“Ḥimā,” EI2 [Chelhod]. On the *ḥimā*, see also Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. Stern (New Jersey: 2006), 215 n. 1; Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, (Berlin: 1897), 101-109; and Lokkegaard, *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period* (Copenhagen: 1950), 14-37.

¹⁵⁹ See “Sacred Precincts,” EnQ [Rubin].

¹⁶⁰ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 152.11. See also the references to the *ḥimā* in Ṭarafa (Ahlwardt 69.9), ‘Alqamah (110.15), ‘Antarah (180.18)

¹⁶¹ Abū Khirāsh, poem 10, line 17.

the grave of the dead.¹⁶² In the next line, the poet wishes that ‘her saddle were abandoned among the tribe’ (*wa-ghūdira fī l-ḥayyi l-muqīmīn raḥlu-hā*). The use of the passive form *ghūdira* ‘to be left for dead on the battlefield’ evokes language characteristic of *rithā*’ (elegy), where this term is commonly applied to the deceased.¹⁶³ In the next two lines, the poet offers two images of wished-for physical infirmity: first, he wishes to be like a man with one bad leg ‘hobbled by time’ (*ramā fī-hā al-zamān fa-shallatī*), then like a crippled woman who ‘after stumbling, makes her way’ (*ba‘da l-‘ithāri istaqallatī*). We have asserted in section 2.3.d above that such ‘wish-passages’ can be termed an ‘anti-*raḥīl*’, in that they appear to function in the *ghazal* to some extent as a structural analogue to the ‘travel’ sections of panegyric. This passage, coming as it does just after the ‘consolation’ motif of 10-12, would thus present a transfigured version of the ‘escape’ of the Jāhilī hero into the desert.

The reference to ‘the pig’ (*al-khinzīr*) in **Line 21** is interpreted in the commentary and *akhbār* literature as a reference to ‘Azza’s husband.¹⁶⁴ One should note also that *khinzīr* has strong connotations of impurity, as in the mentions of *laḥmu l-khinzīr* in Q 2:173, 5:3, 6:145, 16:115, and especially 5:60, where *khanāzīr* refers to humans transformed into pigs.

In the second hemistich of **line 24**, *tawālī llāti tu’tī l-minā qad tawallati*, which we have translated ‘she who continuously brings me death has turned away,’ one is faced with the question of whether to read *al-munā* ‘gratifications’ or the metrically and orthographically identical *al-minā* ‘death.’ The Istanbul manuscript of the Muntaha text has vowel markings

¹⁶² See Homerin, “Echoes of a Thirsty Owl: Death and Afterlife in Pre-Islamic Poetry,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 44:3 (1985), 165-184.

¹⁶³ See, for example, Durayd b. al-Ṣimma’s *marthīya*, line 17, in Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, volume 1 (Oxford: 1992), 76. Compare also the famous figurative usage in the opening line of ‘Antarah’s Mu‘allaqa: *hal ghādara l-shu‘arā’u min mutaraddama* (‘have the poets left any trace’: Ahlwardt, 34, 1).

¹⁶⁴ A *khabar* given in the *Aghānī* (Agh 9.29), which will be translated and discussed below, relates a story in which ‘Azza’s spouse compels her to curse Kuthayyir when they met during the *ḥajj*.

that clearly show *al-munā*,¹⁶⁵ and ‘Abbās follows this reading, yielding the meaning ‘she who constantly brings me satisfactions.’ *Al-minā*, ‘she who constantly brings me death’ would also provide good sense. The reference to death in the first hemistich and the resonance of themes of death from the previous wish-section lead me to prefer *al-minā*.

Line 25 reinforces the figuration of the lovers’ bond as an ‘oath’ or ‘compact’, by way of statements that the lovers had once ‘pledged ourselves’ (*fa-lammā tawāfaynā*, 25); had ‘tied the compact of connection between us’ (*‘aqadnā ‘uqdata l-waṣli baynanā*) and ‘sworn the pact’ (*tawāthaqnā*).

Line 30 then re-introduces language familiar from the genre of elegy (*rithā’*). The phrase *fa-lā yab‘adna waṣlun li-‘Azzat* ‘let the connection with ‘Azza not go distant/perish’ evokes the usage of this set-phrase in *rithā’* (elegy), where it is used to invoke the lasting memory of the deceased.¹⁶⁶ Kuthayyir uses the phrase, for example, in his elegy for his patron ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān (K 16), addressed to his patron’s surviving son Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz,¹⁶⁷ Kuthayyir uses the phrase: ‘So let not the bones perish in the grave (*fa-lā tab‘adanna taḥta l-ḍarīḥati ‘a‘zumun*, K 16. line 24). The usage of this formula of lament within the *ghazal* to refer to the ‘connection’ (*waṣl*) with the beloved heightens the degree to which the tonality of *ghazal* can often be read usefully not only as a continuation of the *nasīb* (amatory prelude), but also as a site of intertextuality with the lament (*marthīya*).

Lines 31-33: The poet proclaims that he will remain steadfastly ‘true-hearted’ (*ṣādiq*) and ‘full of praises’ (*muthnin*) toward ‘Azza, and declares that she will remain ‘blameless’ (*lā malūmatan*, 31). As in the reference to the beloved’s ‘stinginess’ in line 5 above, the *ethical* dimension of the relationship to the beloved is stressed here in terms of the expectation of

¹⁶⁵ *Muntahā* (Frankfurt: 1986), 307.

¹⁶⁶ On this phrase in elegy and its possible mis-interpretation, see Montgomery, *Vagaries*, 241 n. 352.

¹⁶⁷ See below, section 3.3.

reciprocity and fair treatment, employing a rhetoric that is close to the rhetoric of patronage. The wording here of line 32 makes this evident: ‘But give generously and recall our affection, as [that of] a companion you once had who went astray’ (*wa-lākin unīlī wa-dhkurī min mawaddatin lanā khullatan kānat ladaykum fa-ḡallatī*). The term *khullah* (companion) and terms derived from *n-w-l* (as in *unīlī* ‘give generously’ and *nawāl* ‘generosity’) are central terms of the patronage relationship, used by the poet in contexts of petition and praise for his patron, as we will see below. The couching of the relationship with the beloved, who is here being pleaded with in second-person feminine imperative address, is frequent in Kuthayyir’s long-form *ghazal*.

It seems that passages such as this, in which the poet pleads for ‘ethical’ treatment from the beloved, have contributed to the characterization of Kuthayyir in secondary scholarship as the proponent of a ‘friendly’ *ghazal* to be distinguished from the more volatile and extreme love of other ‘Udhrīs.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, the theme of ‘forgiveness’ also features frequently in the poet’s construction of an ‘ethical’ persona, as here in line 14, where the poet refers to himself as *ṣufūh*, ‘forgiving.’¹⁶⁹

Line 40 provides a climax to the epistemological rhetoric of ‘coming to know,’ which we have noted already in line 4. The poet declares ‘what a wonder is the heart’s coming to know, and the soul, how when it becomes accustomed, it finds peace’, (*fa-wā‘jabā li-l-qalbi kayfa ‘tirāfuhu wa-li-l-nafsi lammā wuṭṭinat fa-iṭma’annatī*). The poet thus returns, just before the poem’s close, to the sphere of ‘knowing,’ as a resolving counterpoint to the *mā kuntu adrī qabla* ‘Azza (I did not know before ‘Azza) of line 4. Line 10 of the *Muntahā* recension (the final line of al-Qālī’s text) likewise describes the soul’s ‘becoming accustomed’ (*wuṭṭinat*). Thus, in the *Muntahā* version, the occurrence of the same verb-

¹⁶⁸ See, for example, “Kuthayyir,” EI2 [‘Abbās], 552b; cf. “Kuthayyir,” EAL [Seidenstecker]: ‘...his attitude to the female sex is less adoring than defiant and demanding.’

¹⁶⁹ Cf. K 9:14, ‘the rebuker does not blame you’ (*wa-lam yu‘tabu...‘alayki al-ma‘ātibu*).

subject combination to describe the ‘coping’ with erotic loss seems to provide balance and symmetry, whereas the close proximity of the lines in al-Qālī might seem repetitive. The use of *i‘tirāf* ‘recognition’ here to mean a kind of ‘coming to know’ or ‘recognition’ does not seem to appear in the Jāhilī corpus, and is not cited in this meaning in lexicographical literature; al-Qālī for his part,¹⁷⁰ cites the existence of the term *‘ārif* as a synonym of *ṣābir* ‘someone showing *ṣabr*,’ thus glossing *i‘tirāf* as *iṣṭibār* ‘the production of *ṣabr* / fortitude.’

Lines 41-43: The final three lines, consisting of a single comparative sentence dividing across line-breaks into three inter-dependent clauses, presents an encapsulating double-image of the lovers. The subject of the comparison is provided in line 41: ‘I and my wandering sickness for ‘Azza after I and she moved on from what was between us’ (*wa-innī wa-tahyāmī bi-‘Azzat ba‘damā takhallaytu mimmā baynanā wa-tkhallatī*). The predicate of the sentence (the *khavar* of the particle *inna* at the start of line 41), follows in line 42, where the poet compares himself and his sickness to ‘the seeker in the shade of a rain cloud who, when he stops to rest, it [the cloud] moves on’ (*la-ka-l-murtajī ḡilla l-ghimāmati kullamā tabawwa‘a minhā li-l-maqīli ḡmaḥallatī*). The complex image depicts a state of always-returning thirst, memory and longing. The term *tahyāmī* ‘my wandering-sickness’, which is used also elsewhere by Kuthayyir, refers in its primary sense to the affliction that causes camels to suffer violently from fever and thirst.¹⁷¹ The root semantics of *h-y-m* are central to the often-discussed ‘poet verses’ of the Qur’ān, Q 26:224-227, where ‘the poets’, subject to the censure of the prophet, are said to ‘wander in every valley’ (*yahīmūna fī kulli wādīn*, Q 26:225).¹⁷² While the passage in the Qur’ān condemns the poets, apparently for ‘claiming to do that which they do not do,’ it should be noted that in this

¹⁷⁰ Al-Qālī, *Kitāb al-amālī*, 2:110.

¹⁷¹ See especially Homerin, “The Thirsty Owl,” 176, and Montgomery, “Arkhilokhos, al-Nābigha,” 33; see also Lewin, *A Vocabulary*, 459.

¹⁷² On the interpretation of this passage, see, with reference to further literature, Bauer, “The Relevance of Early Arabic Poetry for Qur’ānic Studies including Observations on Kull and On Q 22:27, 26:225, and 52:31,” in *The Qur’ān in Context. Historical and Literary Investigations in the Qur’ān and its Milieu*, ed. Neuwirth et al (Leiden: 2009), 699-732.

passage Kuthayyir positively asserts his own 'wandering-sickness.' The double simile that stretches across the last lines of the poem then concludes with an image of rain, which arrives explicitly in the final word of the poem (*istahallati*, 'she gives rain'). This plays upon a register of symbolic connotations connected to 'rain' in the early poetic tradition, where rain can connote both the 'redemption' of a hero's suffering, as well as death;¹⁷³ but it also achieves a pun on the word *istahallati* 'she offered ritual prayer/sacrifice,' within the pilgrimage-oath in line 8, as well as perhaps a paronomastic double-entendre with the word *istaḥallati*, 'she opened [sacred land],' which is the rhyme word of line 22.

We will delay a general interpretation of the poem until the essay that follows our third commentary, below. But it is worth stating here in summary that the poem is pervaded by thematic content related to pilgrimage, as well as references to prayer, oath-making, and the 'compact' between the lovers.

The second *ghazal* poem by Kuthayyir that we will study is, like K 3, transmitted in two recensions, in the *Muntahā* and the *Kitāb al-Amālī* of al-Qālī. In the case of K 4, however, the two texts are almost completely identical, the only difference being the addition of one line (line 31 here) in the version of al-Qālī.

The poem has also been transmitted in a third manuscript source, a manuscript in the Escorial library that contains the poem, a poem by Qays b. Darīh, and a commentary on the poem. The two poems were edited from the Escorial manuscript and published by Paul Schwarz in 1922, with a translation into German and brief commentary. In his edition of the

¹⁷³ See Stetkevych, *The Zephyrs of Najd: The Poetics of Nostalgia in the Classical Arabic Nasīb* (Chicago: 1993), 178-180, esp. n. 43.

poem, Schwarz suggests that the text, which in his manuscript appears as a single unified poem of 47 lines identical to the recension by al-Qālī, may represent two original poems that have been wrongly merged by the tradition. Schwarz's doubts about the text's integrity rested primarily on the multiple names of the beloved mentioned in the two halves of the poem, and on a certain degree of repetition and thematic conflict he perceived to exist between the first and second half of the text. In our translation and commentary below, we do not follow this suggestion by Schwarz, rather presenting the text as one unified poem, and we will put forward arguments in favor of the integrity of the text in the course of our commentary.

K 4 : *ṭawīl*

1. O, greet Laylā! My departure has been confirmed, and my companions have announced that the return is tomorrow.
2. Layla appeared to him, only to rob him of his forbearance; Umm al-Ṣalt excited your longing, after she was forgotten
3. I wish I could give up her recollection, yet Laylā appears to me on every path
4. If Laylā is mentioned a tear overtakes you, letting the eyes drink again and again
5. Companions have said to me 'What if you ask her?'; and I reply 'Yes, Laylā is the greediest companion.'
6. She holds back the furthest from generosity, and is the quickest to scorn; if asked to give, she is the cruelest one asked
7. I swore by the Lord of the camels ambling toward Minā, that stretch their reins through the desert expanse

8. You see them, moving at one speed with gaps between them, stretching through the evening following the pilgrims' call;
9. They vie with each other in speed, bearing pilgrims from the valley of Nakhlah, from Azwar, and from the wide plain of Ṭafil,
10. carrying the sanctified pilgrims, who humbly face God, calling Him on every road.
11. They ride animals, some of which are submissive and accustomed to heavy travel in the evening, and some of which may perish from the toil;
12. some lift their tails to shield their pregnant wombs, while others are barren and speed in their reins.
13. This is the vow of a man who swears a solemn oath, whose solemn beseeching gives the lie to other speech.
14. The embellishers have lied about what I revealed to them regarding Laylā, nor did I send a message to them.
15. If the embellishers come to you with a lie about me, something they have invented for which they give no proof,
16. do not be too quick, Laylā, to decide if these embellishers bring good counsel, or if it is rather a false attack.
17. If you are well-disposed in your soul toward giving, then give generously, for the best gifts, Laylā, come in abundance;
18. but if you do not wish this, be kind to me still; among characters, I love most those who are kind.
19. If one day you give me affection, it is a payment of a debt incurred long-ago through my generous giving.
20. If, Laylā, you are miserly toward me, still my soul will bind me to one who is miserly.
21. I do not content myself with a small gift from a friend, nor am I satisfied to give only a little.

22. My companion does not tire of me, and when I leave him, he is not one to sell me for cheap.
23. No, my companion is one whose connection endures, who preserves my privacy before anyone who nears
24. I have not received any gift from Laylā; I have asked many times, but she has not been giving
25. Men curse you now, for Laylā's sake, for she has robbed you of your good sense, although she has not given this sense to them
26. They say, 'bid farewell to Layla, do not wander lovesick for a married woman who has cut off ties!'
27. My soul was not comforted by what they commanded, and I did not bind myself to their speech.
28. I recalled the companions of 'Azza, who were like antelopes, with delicate complexions and friendly natures.
29. When I met them, it was as if my mind was mixed with pure drafts of wine
30. They dallied long, until I thought that they were not leaving, and I wished they would stay to sleep alongside me
31. But they showed me a harshness, and defied what I thought and said
32. Gradually, they accomplished their needs in the camp, and, after their long dalliance, they set out to travel
33. When my companion saw that they were setting out, he called out 'O Ḥabtar ibn Salūl!'
34. Then I said, while I hid my regret (for I am a man who feels betrayed by all rebuke):
I wish
35. that I might follow the path of the night-travelling women, who go in the evening on the peaks of Niṣ', or that they might travel my path

36. so that I might satisfy my soul in passion, before I see the vagaries of distance and trouble between us.
37. I regretted what escaped me the day you parted, and it is a shame that they could not see my wailing.
38. My tears flowed as if from a punctured waterskin, into which was poured the run-off of an enormous bucket,
39. Stretched thin by skillless women, who left the skin loose and rough
40. 'Azza, stay -- the lowland has lost its beauty for me after you left it.
41. To see 'Azza's caravans indicate their departure is enough sadness for my eyes
42. They said, she has gone now, so choose between forbearance and weeping; I answered, 'Weeping, it is more curative for my thirst.'
43. With sadness I turned away, and said to my companion, 'Has Laylā slayed me, with no victim in return?'
- 44 'Azza once stayed here, when her people were settled in al-Khayf; now, after her time here, al-Khayf has become wild.
45. Now, after her long stay, a southern wind has replaced her, coming in the evening and raising dust
46. The embellishers have done their worst to us and to you, they have made us falter in every way;
47. but still, now that my beard has grown, to this day I remain, because of Laylā, like the end-point of every path.

Although they do not contain an explicit mention of the departing 'caravans' (*ḡaʿn*) of the beloved, **lines 1-4** can be accounted as an example of the 'morning of departure'

(Trennungsmorgen) motif: the phrase ‘my departure has been set’ (*ajadda raḥīlī*) makes clear that the poem’s opening depicts a scene of separation. As in K 3, there are no toponyms given within the initial lines of the poem, but rather the first place-names in the poem occur in the pilgrimage-oath that follows the opening. These opening lines strongly mark the future-oriented or *ongoing* nature of the poet’s orientation to the beloved, as in the second hemistich of line 2, where the beloved, named as Ummu l-Ṣalt, is said to ‘arouse him after having been forgotten. (*hājat-ka...ba‘da dhuhūli*). This future-orientation is then strengthened by the use of the first-person imperfect present tense verb at the start of line 3: ‘I wish I could give up her recollection, yet Laylā appears to me on every path’ (*‘urīdu li-‘ansā dhikra-hā fa-kannamā tamaththalu liya Laylā bi-kulli sabīl*). The entirety of this line, with a change of only the word in rhyme-position (substituting *marqabi* for *sabīli*) is attributed also to Jamīl Buthaynah in the *Aghānī*, in a *khabar* in which al-Farazdaq quotes the line back to Kuthayyir as proof of Kuthayyir’s ‘*sariqah*’ (plagiarism) from Jamīl. Within the *khabar*, Kuthayyir then quotes back a line of al-Farazdaq’s that is likewise claimed to have been stolen from Jamīl.¹⁷⁴ What seems clear is that this first-person present tense declaration ‘I desire to forget,’ combined with the image of the beloved who ‘appears’ (*tamaththalu*) on every road, is a feature shared between the poets Jamīl and Kuthayyir. The image of the beloved ‘appearing to him on every road’ (*tamaththala lī Laylā bi-kulli sabīli*) is evoked again in this poem’s final line, where the poet states that ‘I remain, because of Laylā, like the end-point of every path’ (*mā ziltu min Laylā...ka-l-maqṣā bi-kulli sabīli*). This image, which, in the extant recension of the poem in al-Qālī and the *Muntahā*, forms a kind of framing conceit for the poem, also recalls the final lines of K 3, where the poem closes with an image of travel.

In his commentary, Schwarz remarks upon the way in which the poet’s self-references shift throughout the text between first- second-, and third-person pronouns (e.g., ‘my departure’ [*raḥīlī*], line 1; ‘rob *him* of forbearance’ [*li-taghlibu ṣabrahū*], line 2). Schwarz offers an interesting reading of this feature – which he identifies with ‘Arabic poetry’ more broadly –

¹⁷⁴ See Agh 9.335; the lines appear in ‘Abbās’s commentary, note *ad versum*.

remarking that this shifting deployment of pronouns results from ‘the observation that in deep excitements of the soul the one affected sometimes feels himself to be completely foreign and judges himself to be something of an outsider.’¹⁷⁵ Schwarz then remarks that such effects cannot be conveyed in German, and therefore chooses to switch all pronouns to the first-person in his translation.¹⁷⁶

In **lines 5 and 6**, the poet rebukes the stinginess of the beloved, here stating that ‘Laylā is the greediest companion,’ *Laylā aḍannu khalīli*. The rebuke of stinginess here is placed almost identically to that in K 3, following the departure-themed opening and preceding the pilgrimage-oath. It should be noted again that the terms in which the ‘stinginess’ or ‘generosity’ of the beloved are described show parallels to the terms used to depict the patronage relationship between poet and mamdūḥ. Most notable are the terms *khalīl/khullah* (companion/companionship), and *nawāl* (generosity), which appear here in lines 5 and 6 respectively, and which we will see appear prominently in Kuthayyir’s panegyric, particularly in the praise poem K 1 for ‘Abd al-Malik, translated in section 3.3 below.

Lines 7-13 consist of a pilgrimage-oath, the longest and most elaborate oath passage in Kuthayyir’s extant corpus. The oath is here reported in the first-person, introduced by the verb *ḥalaftu*, ‘I swore’, line 7. The primary oath-object, as in K 3, is ‘the [camels] ambling toward Minā’ (*wa-l-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*), a reference to the camels carrying pilgrims to Mecca. The description in line 7 of the camels that ‘stretch their reins across the desert’ (*khilāla l-malā yamadna kulla jadīli*), toward Mecca, is expanded in lines 8-12, which describe these pilgrim-bearing camels with language typical of the *raḥīl* ‘journey’ or *waṣf al-nāqa* ‘camel

¹⁷⁵ Schwarz, *Escorial-studien*, 16: Die Beobachtung, dass in tiefen seelischen Erregungen der Betroffene zeitweise sich selbst als voellig Fremden empfindet und wie ein Aussenstehender beurteilt, ist von den Arabern auch fuer die Poesie fruchtbar gemacht worden...’

¹⁷⁶ On shifting pronouns in Arabic poetry, see also van Gelder, “The Abstracted Self in Arabic Poetry,” *JAL* 14 (1983), 22-30.

description' movement of the *qaṣīda*. In line 8 the poet declares 'You see them, moving at one speed with gaps between them, stretching through the evening following the pilgrims' call' (*tarāhā wifāqan baynahunna tafāwutun wa-yamdadna bi-l-ihlāl kulla aṣīli*); one can compare this image to the 'group-*raḥīl*' movement that is particularly frequent in Umayyad panegyric.¹⁷⁷ The camels carrying the pilgrims are then described in line 9 as 'pushing on' (*tawāhaqna*), carrying 'the pilgrims' (*bi-l-ḥujjāj*) across Baṭn al-Nakhla, 'Azwar, and Khabt Ṭafil. These place names refer to areas within the Ḥijāz associated closely with the pilgrimage, connected with the gathering-places of tribes making the *ḥajj*. Baṭn al-Nakhla, for example, refers to the two declivities just to the north of Mecca, 'falling within the area of *iḥrām*', i.e. a place where pilgrims from southern and northern tribes gathered while making the *ḥajj*.¹⁷⁸ *Nakhla* is mentioned in a poem by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyanī, also in the context of gathering pilgrims.¹⁷⁹ 'Azwar, likewise, is a hill near Mecca, 'facing mount Mt. Raḍwā', with associations to the pilgrimage.¹⁸⁰

In line 10, the poet then describes the camels that '[carry] the sanctified pilgrims, who humbly face God, calling Him on every road (*bi-kulli ḥarāmin khāshī'in mutawajjihin ilā llāhi*); the phrasing highlights the parallel between the 'pious' attitude of the pilgrims with the bent and emaciated posture of the journeying camels, which are described as exhausted by their desert journey. In line 12 the camels are described as so emaciated that they 'shield their pregnant wombs' with their tails and have barren wombs; here again we encounter a theme familiar from the repertoire of *raḥīl*. The expanded pilgrimage-oath, with its references to pilgrimage and the environs of Mecca, can be read as an example of

¹⁷⁷ See especially Jacobi, "The Camel-Section of the Panegyric Ode," *JAL* 13 (1982), esp. 14-19.

¹⁷⁸ See 'Abbās's commentary, note *ad versum*, which quotes a description of *Nakhla* at length from Abū Ziyād al-Kilābī. See also, in 'Abbās's edition, the appendix on place names by Shaykh Ḥamdu l-Jāsir, 568-9; and Thilo, *Die Ortsnamen in der altarabischen Poesie* (Wiesbaden: 1958), 75.

¹⁷⁹ Al-Nābigha's poem 23 in Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*; see Montgomery, "Arkhilokhos, al-Nābigha," 34.

¹⁸⁰ Yāqūt, *sub nomine*.

the ‘semantic overflow’ that Michael Sells has described in the early ode, wherein description opens into a kind of ‘effusion’ across generic boundary lines.¹⁸¹

Lines 14-16 depict a scene in which the lover exclaims that he has betrayed by a group who have lied, claiming that he has divulged secrets about the beloved (*la-qad kadhiba l-wāshūnā mā buḥtu ‘andahum bi-Laylā*, line 14). These others are referred to as the ‘embellishers/tellers of falsehoods (*al-wāshūna*).¹⁸² The *wāshūna* here appear as go-betweens who interfere with the relationship of poet to beloved. The *wāshūna* were mentioned in K 3 above, line 12, likewise following the pilgrimage-oath. These figures are indicated throughout the poem (they will appear again in lines 25-27 and near the end of the poem) by the use of masculine third-person plural forms (*la-hum*, line 25; *yaqūlūna*, line 26; *wa-qālū*, line 42), in contrast to the group of female companions around the beloved (her *atrāb*, line 28), who are referred to throughout with feminine third-person plural forms.

The poet thus seems to depict a scene wherein the beloved is surrounded by her female cohort, while the poet is kept from her by the men who attempt to persuade the poet to give up his connection to the beloved. In line 26, the men (‘they,’ in the masculine plural) urge the poet not to pursue a married woman: ‘They say, ‘bid farewell to Layla, do not wander lovesick for a married woman who has cut off ties!’’ (*yaqūlūna waddi‘ ‘anka Laylā wa-lā tahim bi-qāṭi‘ati l-aqrāni dhāti ḥalīli*). In line 42, on the other hand, the *wāshūna* command the poet to ‘choose between forbearance and weeping’ (*wa-qālū na’at fa-khtar mina l-ṣabri wa l-bukā’i*), and the poet responds by saying ‘weeping is more curative for my thirst’ (*fa-qultu l-bukā ashfā idhan li-ghalīli*).

¹⁸¹ See Sells, “Guises of the Ghūl. Dissembling Simile and Semantic Overflow in the Classical Arabic Nasīb,” in *Reorientations/Arabic and Persian Poetry*, ed. S. Stetkevych (Indiana: 1994), 130-165.

¹⁸² *Wāshūna* is the masculine plural active participle of *w-sh-y*, with the basic meaning of ‘to embellish, to paint cloth,’ hence ‘to tell lies’; cf. Qur’ān 2:71 *lā shiyata fihā* (‘without blemish’).

The *wāshūna* seem on the one hand to represent a further development of the figure of the ‘rebuker’ (*al-‘ādhil*) that is common in Jāhili verse, the (mostly female) figure who criticizes the poet for his intemperance and wastefulness.¹⁸³ These figures counsel the poet to give up his intemperate raving and wandering, and to conform to norms of ‘forbearance.’ Jacobi has interpreted the ‘go-betweens’ in Umayyad poetry as representing the forces of social conformity and cohesion, against whom the ‘Udhri poet stages his ‘anti-social’ rebellion.¹⁸⁴ It should also be acknowledged that the poet stages this confrontation, between his love-compact and the *wāshūna*, as one of ‘truth’ against ‘falsehood:’ the *wāshūna* are said to tell lies (*la-qad kadhiba*, line 14), providing a rather direct parallel to the condemned ‘liars’ of the Qur’ān, and putting the poet’s love attachment on the side of ‘truth’ against ‘lies.’ On the other hand, the ‘moral’ associations of the role of the *wāshūna* appear more ambivalently in line 27, where these go-betweens exhort the poet ‘not to wander,’ *lā tahim*. Here, the use of *lā tahim* provides again a parallel to the famous qur’ānic admonition in the ‘poet verses’ (Q 2:224-226) not to be like those ‘stray ones’ (*ghāwūna*) who follow the poets that ‘wander in every valley and say that which they do not do’ (*a-lam tara annahum fī kulli wādin yahīmūn/ wa-annahum yaqūlūna mā lā yaf’alūn*).¹⁸⁵

Lines 17-24, which consist of a sustained address to the beloved Laylā, depict the ethical dimensions of the relationship with the beloved: in this passage, the poet outlines his expectations of fair treatment, reciprocity, and generosity toward the beloved. The relationship is here defined in terms of ‘companionship’ or *khullah* (see the use of *khalīl*, ‘companion’, in lines 21, 22 [bis], and 23). Again, the poet stresses the importance of ‘generously giving’ affection to the companion (line 19: *fa-’in tabdhulī lī...mawaddatan*), as opposed to being ‘greedy’ or niggardly (line 20: *wa-’in tabkhulī*). The ethical coding of this address is expressed concisely in line 18: ‘among characters/behaviors (*akhlāq*), I love

¹⁸³ See Montgomery, *Vagaries*, 233-34.

¹⁸⁴ See Jacobi, “The Udhra: Love and Death.”

¹⁸⁵ See Bauer, “The Relevance of Early Arabic Poetry”; and Neuwirth, *KTS*, 716 f.

most those who are kind' (*'uḥibbu mina l-akhlāqi kulla jamīli*). Here, *al-akhlāq* seems to mean the various character-types or behaviors possible in a companionship-relationship. In lines 21-24, the poet stresses that he '[does] not content myself with a small gift from a companion' (*lastu bi-rāḍin min khalīlī bi-nā'ilin qalīl*); repeats that he does not tire of a companion nor easily give him/her up; then declares that 'my companion is one whose connection endures' (*khalīlī man yadūmu wiṣāluhu*). Again, one finds here a rhetoric of reciprocal generous giving, expressed according to the poles of 'stinginess' versus 'generosity.'

It is between lines 27 and 28 of the poem that Schwarz suggests a break in the transmitted text. In line 28, the name of 'Azza appears for the beloved for the first time. The beloved will be named again as 'Azza twice more in the poem, in lines 40 and 44, while the name Laylā appears again only in 47, in the final line of the poem. Although the second half of the poem alternates between the two names of the beloved, this does not in our view constitute a reason to reject the unity of the text. Schwarz's argumentation for the disunity of the text is based on two primary points: first, the sudden appearance of the name of a second beloved in line 28, and then the strange blending of the two names of beloveds in the poem's second half, suggests disunity. Secondly, the second half of the poem re-stages the 'scene of departure' that has already occurred in the poem's opening half in a way that Schwarz finds somewhat incongruous and contradictory. Schwarz's first point, on the existence of multiple names of the beloved, is certainly not grounds for asserting the text's disunity: the appearance of multiple names for a single beloved is pervasive feature in Umayyad-era and earlier poetry, and did not draw any red flags from Abbasid-era critics.¹⁸⁶ On the recombination of motifs and themes from the poem-opening, this appears to be a

¹⁸⁶ See, for example, Hussein, "One Qaṣīda with Several Chaste Love Affairs in Light of *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* and *al-Aṣma'iyyāt*," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 14:1 (2011), 1-19.

common feature of Kuthayyir's (and other) long-form *ghazal* poetry. On balance, there do not seem to be reasons to reject the unity of the text.

In **Lines 28-32** the poet recalls 'Azza among her female companions, her *atrāb* (line 28), compared to antelopes for their beauty. The poet states that when he met them it was as if his mind was 'mixed with pure drafts of wine' (*ka-'annī mukhālīṭatun 'aqlī salāfu shamūli*, 29), and then states that the *atrāb* 'dallied' (*ta'aṭṭarna*, 30) 'until I thought that they were not leaving, and I wished they would stay to sleep alongside me' (*qultu lasna bawāriḥan rijā'a l-amānī an yaqilna maqīlī*).¹⁸⁷ The scene being depicted, which carries through until line 33, is clearly that of the 'departing caravans' – i.e., the scene of the so-called *ḡa'n*-motif or Trennungsmorgen, which is here resuming the imagery from the poem's opening. In line 32, it is stated that 'Gradually, they accomplished their needs in the camp (*dār*), and, after their long dalliance, they set out to travel.' The feminine plural third-person grammatical forms that recur throughout the final section of the poem to signify the departing group of women (e.g., *lāqaytuhunna*, 'I met *them* (fem.)' line 29; *yaqilna*, 'they (fem.) sleep', line 30; *yarayna*, 'they see', line 37) create a contrast with the third-person masculine forms used to refer, throughout this same section, to the *wāshūna*, the male go-betweens.

If lines 28-32 have depicted the scene of the departing caravans familiar from the poem-opening, then **lines 33-39** re-dramatize the poet's response to this moment of departure. At line 33, a 'companion' (*ṣāḥib*) of the poet, who 'sees clearly the moment of departure' (*fa-lammā ra'ā wa-stayqana l-bayna*), is said to 'call out O Ḥabtara ibn Salūl' (*da'ā da'watan yā Ḥabtara bna Salūli*) – the commentary literature clarifies that his refers to an ancestor of the sub-tribe of the Khuzā'a to which Kuthayyir belonged.¹⁸⁸ The precise valence of the

¹⁸⁷ The last phrase is literally translated 'they may sleep my sleep.' Schwarz, *Escorial-studien*, 13, translates the line '[Heut] blieben sie so lange in ihrem Zelte, daß ich dachte, sie gehen gewiß nicht aus, und die Erwartung meiner Wünsche war, daß sie in der Siesta bei mir weilen würden.'

¹⁸⁸ See Wüstenfeld, *Genealogische Tabellen der Arabischen Stämme* (Göttingen: 1853), 11, 24 (cited by Schwarz, *Escorial-studien*, 16).

reference is difficult to establish, but it is clearly an exclamation of grief at the departing of the women. In line 34 the poet ‘hides his regret and declares his wish’ (*fa-qultu wa-’asrartu l-nadāmata laytanī*), expressed in the next line, that he might ‘follow the path of the night-travelling women, who go in the evening on the peaks of Niṣ’, or that they might travel my path’ (*salaktu sabīla l-rā’ihāti ‘ashīyatan makhārīma niṣ’in aw salakna sabīlī*). This wish-passage, which is more concise than those in the other *ghazal* poems we are studying, shows the poet wishing that he had followed the departing women into the hills to the immediate south-west of Medina, likely on their way toward Mecca: Niṣ’ is identified as a series of small mountains (*silsilat jubaylāt*) between Safrā’ and Yunbū’, thus in the Tihāma just to the west of the road between Medina and Mecca.¹⁸⁹ Bearing in mind the references to pilgrimage throughout the poem, this wish seems to carry sacral connotations, in connection to pilgrims heading toward Mecca.

Lines 40-48 comprise a composite closing section, in which a number of themes that have featured already re-occur: namely, reference to the moment of departure (*binti*, line 40), to the poet’s pouring tears (lines 41 and 42), to the wind sweeping over the site of former attachment (45), and a final reference to the *wāshūna* (46) all precede the image, in the final line of the poem, of Laylā as ‘the [point at the] end of every road’ (*ka-l-maqṣā bi-kulli sabīli*, 47). Within this re-combination of themes, two different names of the beloved appear: ‘Azza is named in 40 and 44, while Laylā appears in 43 and 47. Line 44 contains a final place-name and reference to Mecca, couched in language that strongly evokes the dichotomy of sacred/profane space discussed in K 3 above: ‘Azza once stayed here, when her people were settled in al-Khayf; now, after her time here, al-Khayf has become wild’ (*li-‘Azzatu idh yaḥtallu bi-lkhayfi ahlukā fa-’awḥasha minhā l-khayfu ba’da ḥulūli*). The ‘Khayf’ referred to here is the piedmont of Minā, which is both the ancestral abode of the Hāshimite clans, and a central location of the pilgrimage in Mecca – reference to the Khayf appears, for example, in K 23, Kuthayyir’s earliest panegyric for his patron the Hashimite Shaykh Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, as will be discussed in detail in chapter 3. The reference to the

¹⁸⁹On *Niṣ’*, see the appendix on place-names in ‘Abbās’s edition, 569.

beloved's 'settling' (*ḥulūl*) in this area carries resonances familiar from K 3 above, where the double meaning of *ḥ-l-l* settle/de-sacralize is at issue.

The third *ghazal* poem we will study, K 10, is available in only one recension, in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. Outside of the *Muntahā*, there are fragmentary quotations of the poem in other early sources, with the longest transmitted fragments of the poem (in both the *Khizānah* and *Kitāb al-Aghānī*) reaching only 5 lines in extent.

K 10: *ṭawīl*

1. The hill-side and Kabkab are empty now; now that Umm al-Walīd has departed,
Na'mān has become wild, and the watering holes
2. are abandoned; the area down to the wells is empty, where pasturing animals used to
graze during the day and night.
3. Now among the ruins of Dimna, the swift winds play and tarry.
4. But the cord of affection for 'Azza endures: you are love-sick for 'Azza, in a state of
wonder.
5. You see nothing in the people greater than she - although you see extreme beauty
among the women when you look
6. She has a slender torso and soft back, she is beautiful as she walks, with a proud gait,
in her woven striped garment,
7. She is a free-born woman, she is refined and modest; when it comes to her people,
indeed, her entourage is the most pure and upright.
8. When my companions were in 'Ayla resting for a moment, and Ursula Minor
appeared to decline in the sky, I saw
9. A fire, belonging to 'Azza, that did not go out. We stood gazing far away, gazing at the
fire as if it were a star.

10. My companions were in wonder as the flame was lit– it was a wonder to those seeking warmth at night.
11. When it died out a little at the end of night, Mandalī wood was brought and it was rekindled
12. We stood there as it blazed; in the lowland of the valley, 'Arāk and Tanḍub appeared,
13. While nearer than the fire, in Mukhālij, was the expanse where animals pasture at night and in the morning
14. Then, a swift-moving gust from the desert of Rusays reached us and touched our riding-animals with its sweetness;
15. It was a southerly wind that graced the faces of the riders - its touch was delicious, and its contact made the earth fragrant
16. My passion endures, even if Buṣāq and the Ṣindid highlands now separate us.
17. As if our pilgrims did not meet 'Azza's pilgrims, as if the riders did not meet each other at al-Muḥaṣṣab,
18. I swore an oath to her by the camels that amble toward Minā, speeding in their walk, ridden by the Kalb and Taghlib;
19. by the Lord of the long-necked camels that move swiftly in the evening, passing at sundown, crossing in front of the mountain
20. 'Azza is a care in the soul that they have imparted – that you might find a way toward her, or she might visit and draw near
21. I am blamed because of Umm al-Walīd; her love is a malady within, burning beneath my ribs
22. If Umm al-Walīd gives speech to the gazelles on Mount Riḍwā in the morning, then they draw near to her,
23. they descend from the peaks of Ḍa's and 'Ayla, although the hunter will set upon them with his dogs.
24. She will tempt even an abstemious man who does not know passion; and the most experienced man will meet with despair from Umm al-Walīd
25. 'Azza, I wish that we were two camels, property of a man, left to go alone into the wastes to pasture

26. That we were both mangey, so that whoever saw us would say, 'She is beautiful, but she is a mangey beast, and so is he.'
27. When we come to a watering place, its people would cry out against us but we would not part from each other, even if we are thrown about and receive blows.
28. two beasts belonging to an owner, who would lose us, who would not put us to pasture; we would not be sought.
29. Shepherds would drive us from every hill, forbidding us to be seen or to drink.
30. I wish, by the House of God, that you were a young camel mare, and I were a bold camel, so that then we could run away.

The toponyms given in the *aṭlāl* section in **lines 1-4** locate the poet within the environs of Mecca: according to the commentaries on the line, Kabkab and Na'mān (line 1) refer to the hill that is at one's back when facing Mt. Arafat, and the valley which runs down to the south of Arafat, respectively.¹⁹⁰ The connection is thus made immediately to the complex of rituals surrounding the pilgrimage. The toponyms in the poem are in fact all identified as referring to the environment of the holy city, or between Mecca and Medina, establishing associations to the pilgrimage: the place-name Ayla in line 8 is identified by Ibn Ḥabīb as a 'piedmont' (*shi'b*) of Mount Raḍwā, a mountain in Yunbū'; Makhālij (line 13) refers to a *wādī* at the entrance to the Tihāma west of Medina; al-Rusays (line 14) refers to a *wādī* 'near Medina'; the oath in lines 18-20 of course refer to the sacred plain of Minā in Mecca; and Ḍa's (line 23) is said to also refer to a mountain-side (*safḥ*) of Raḍwā. It is clear then, both from the *aṭlāl* opening and from the toponyms throughout the poem, that the location of the poem is to be viewed in connection to the places of pilgrimage in the Ḥijāz.

Lines 4-5, where it is said that the 'cord of affection for 'Azza endures' (*li-'azzata idh ḥablu l-mawaddati dā'imun*) illustrates clearly that the poet is declaring that the bond with the beloved lasts into the future, while in the second hemistich he declares that he is 'afflicted'

¹⁹⁰ See 'Abbās's edition, note *ad versum*, 157, referring to marginal notes in al-Ḥṣṣahānī and the *Kitāb al-Manāsik*.

matbūl and ‘confounded’ *mu‘jabu* by the beloved. The connotations of *matbūl* are strongly negative, as the word relates etymologically to *tabl*, meaning ‘enmity’ or ‘blood revenge.’¹⁹¹

Lines 8-13 comprise an extended simile across line-breaks, comparing the beloved to a flame or camp-fire that is seen at a distance (*ra‘aytu* [line 8]... *li-‘Azzata nāran mā tabūkhu* [line 9]): the scene depicts a group of pilgrims, among whom is the poet, sighting a flame on another hill in the environs of Mecca, presumably among another group of pilgrims. Line 8 specifies that the speaker and his companions are halted at ‘Ayla, on Mount Raḍwā, in the night ‘[as] Ursula Minor appeared to decline in the sky’ (*wa-qad lāḥa najmu l-farqadi l-mutaṣawwibu*). The ‘fire’ (*nār*) of ‘Azza’s that they see, at which ‘my companions were in wonder’ (*ta‘ajjaba aṣḥābī*, line 10) ‘did not go out’ (*mā tabūkhu*), but is rather continuously re-kindled and fed (*fa-shubbat shabbatan*, line 12; *ustūqidat*, 13). It is an elaborate image for the continuation of the poet’s erotic feelings past the end of contact with the beloved, which again ties this emotional/subjective feeling into the scene of pilgrimage.

In lines 14-17, a ‘southern wind’ (*janūbun*, 14) is said to touch the faces of the riders, and the poet declares that the wind’s ‘contact is sweet’ (*massuhā ladhīdhun*, 15), and ‘its contact made the earth fragrant’ (*wa-masrā-hā mina l-arḍi tayyibu*). This then triggers a renewed exclamation of the endurance of his state of feeling in line 16: ‘My passion endures, even if Buṣāq and the Ṣindid highlands now separate us.’ (*fa-yā ṭūla mā shawqī idhā ḥāla dūnahā buṣāqun wa-min ‘a‘lāmi Ṣindida mankibu*). In the following line, then, the poet qualifies this exclamation with a reference to the pilgrimage ‘As if our pilgrims did not meet ‘Azza’s pilgrims, as if the riders did not meet each other at al-Muḥaṣṣab’ (*ka-‘an lam yuwāfiq ḥajja ‘azzata ḥajjūnā wa-lam yalqa rakban bi-l-muḥaṣṣab ‘arkābu*). Al-Muḥaṣṣab is a site ‘between Mecca and Minā, nearer to Minā’, closely tied to the pilgrimage rites.¹⁹²

This reference to the pilgrims of the poet and the beloved is followed in **lines 18-19** by a pilgrimage-oath, delivered in first-person reported speech (*ḥalaftu*) on ‘the camels ambling

¹⁹¹ See Lane’s *Lexicon*, 2, 296.

¹⁹² See ‘Abbās’s *Diwān*, note *ad versum*, 159.

to Minā' (*al-rāqīṣāt ilā minā*), thus deploying again the oath-object we have seen in the two previous poems. The mention of the tribes of Taghlib and Kalb here, which were both of key significance to the 'southern' tribal confederation of the Quḍā'a that undergirded Umayyad supremacy,¹⁹³ seems to connect the pilgrimage-reference here to broader concerns of inter-tribal loyalty, invoking or at least implying the important alliance-building function of the *hajj*. The further oath upon the 'Lord of long-necked camels moving swiftly at evening' (*wa-rabbi l-jīyādi l-sābiḥāti 'ashīyatan*, 19) contains a further deployment of the *fā'ilāt*-form that appears in *wa-l-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*: in both cases, the term is to be understood as referring to the camels that carry pilgrims toward Mecca.

Lines 22-24 convey an image of the beloved (introduced by *wa-law*, and if) '[who] gives speech to the gazelles on Mount Raḍwā in the morning, then they draw near to her' (*wa-law badhilat ummu l-walīdi ḥadīthahā l-ūṣmin bi-raḍwā aṣbaḥat tataqarribu*). This reference to gazelles (*ūṣm*) is parallel to the reference in K 3 and K 4. In K 3, we have seen the image of the gazelle (*ūṣm*) said to 'fall from the black rock', in a context that, as in K 10 here, strongly implies reference to the Ka'ba. Recalling again the evidence that Bürgel has assembled showing the 'magical and numinous background of the gazelle metaphor in Arabic poetry,'¹⁹⁴ it is worthwhile to recall here that these 'magical and numinous' associations appear here in relation to the site of Mt. Raḍwā near Mecca; as we will see below (section 3.2), it is on Mt. Raḍwā that Kuthayyir's first patron Ibn al-Ḥanafīya was said to have gone into parousia (*raj'a*) after his death.

Lines 25-29 constitute a compound wish-passage extended across line breaks, presenting an image of Kuthayyir and 'Azzah as two camels (*ba'irayn*, 25), which stray from a 'man of sufficiency' to which they once belonged (*li-dhī ghinan*, 25 and 28), suffering from 'mange' (*arr*, 26) and 'scabies' (*jarbā'...wa-ajrabu*, 26), and 'left to go alone into the wastes to pasture' (*nar'ā fī l-khalā'i wa-na'zabu*, 25). The two animals are said in lines 27-29 to go

¹⁹³ See Mabra, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwanid State: the Life of 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān* (New Jersey: 2017), chapter 2, discussed below in section 3.4.

¹⁹⁴ See Bürgel, "The Lady Gazelle" (1989).

from field to field, suffering abuse and blows from the people who inhabit there, 'expelled from every hill by him who pastures there, forbidden by him to be seen drinking there (*yuṭarridunā l-ru'yānu 'an kulli tal'atin wa-yamna'u minnā 'an nurā fīhi nashrabu*, 29). The five-line passage is remarkable for its sustained imagery of the lovers as pursued and abject beasts, and is quoted widely in early sources, including in the *Aghānī*.¹⁹⁵

The wish passage then closes, in the *Muntahā* recension, with a strong reiteration, in which the poet avers that 'I wished, upon the house of God, that you were a young camel mare, and I a bold camel, and that we would escape' (*wadadtu wa-bayti llāhi 'annaka bakratun hijānun wa-'annī muṣ'abun thumma nahrubu*, 30). In this final articulation of the wish, the image seems to have altered from that of sickly wandering animals, to strong and healthy ones. This passage exemplifies what we have called above the 'anti-*raḥīl*' imagery that occurs in Kuthayyir's poems. It should be compared with K 3, lines 16-19, in which the poet declares the wish to be like 'an infirm woman', and then 'like a camel whose rope has gone weak.' Both passages invoke 'escape' and banishment, yet invoke these notions *positively*, as it were, as images of the lovers' escape. Both passages seem to present a reversal of the heroic imagery of *raḥīl*.

¹⁹⁵ Agh 12.107.

2.5 Interpretation: The Pilgrimage-Oath and Pilgrimage References in Kuthayyir's *Ghazal*

In this section, we will offer an interpretation of a key aspect of signification that is shared among these *ghazal* texts, namely the prevalent reference to pilgrimage (*ḥajj*), ritual prayer (*ṣalāh*), and the demarcation of sacred space that is found in these texts. Our discussion will focus on the deployment of the pilgrimage-oath as a poetic feature both within Kuthayyir's corpus and in the work of several of his Ḥijāzī panegyrist-elegiast peers, namely Jamīl, Nuṣayb, and Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī. In order to provide some context for this discussion, we will first discuss the issue of references to pilgrimage in early Arabic poetry, both in the Umayyad period and in earlier poetry more generally.

Somewhat surprisingly, the theme of pilgrimage is something of a *terra incognita* in the study of Jāhili and early Islamic poetry. Despite the obvious centrality of this theme to the history of Arabia in the 6th-8 centuries and beyond, one can point to no major studies drawing on early poetry to trace the evolution of references to this theme.¹⁹⁶ As Nathaniel Miller has recently pointed out, references to the Meccan sanctuary and pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) in pre-Islamic poetry are almost exclusively limited to poets of the late 6th and early 7th centuries connected to the tribes of the Ḥijāz --- in Miller's interpretation, these references thus seem to attest to a local, rather than peninsula-wide, poetic recognition of the *ḥajj*.¹⁹⁷ This observation reinforces the distinctively 'Ḥijāzī' character of the pilgrimage-oath in Kuthayyir's *ghazal*. Among the early references to pilgrimage by Ḥijāzī poets, of which Miller cites some five instances,¹⁹⁸ two are particularly relevant for establishing precedents

¹⁹⁶ For some background, see Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes of Arabia: Some Notes on their Relations," in *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of Professor David Ayalon*, ed. Sharon (Jerusalem and Leiden: 1986), 33-57.

¹⁹⁷ See Miller, "Tribal Poetics" (PhD), 99-108.

¹⁹⁸ Miller, "Tribal Poetics," (PhD), 104-105; see also Montgomery, "Arkhilokhos, al-Nābigha," 35, where five pre-Islamic references to the *ḥajj* (or the *ka'ba*) are cited from al-Shanfarā, al-Nābigha, 'Awf b. al-Aḥwaṣ, and Sā'ida b.

for Kuthayyir's usage, as they contain directly reported oaths upon the *ḥaram* in Mecca. The first two of these references are from the *Mu'allaqa* by Zuhayr b. Abī Sulmā (fl. late 6th /early 7th century). Zuhayr, who was associated by his paternal lineage with the Ḥijāzī tribe of the Muzaynah, makes the following oath: 'And I swore by the house around which men circumambulate, built by Quraysh and by Jurhum' (*fa-'aqsamtu bi-l-bayti allādhī ṭāfā ḥawlahu rijālun banawhu min qurayshin wa-jurhumi*).¹⁹⁹ This oath occurs following a *nasīb* that twice mentions the departing caravans of the beloved (*ḡa'ā'in*, line 7; *ḡa'n*, 14); in the context of Zuhayr's *Mu'allaqa*, which commemorates peace between the warring tribes of 'Abs and Dhubyān (mentioned at line 18), the oath on the Ka'ba seems to serve as a marker of inter-tribal agreement. The second pilgrimage-oath in Zuhayr, which occurs within the *nasīb* of a 41-line poem, is particularly resonant of Kuthayyir's later oaths. Zuhayr declaims: 'And I swore forcefully (*fa-'aqsamtu jahdan*) by the stations of encampment at Minā, and by that which there is shaved—heads and lice [i.e., hair] ...'. (*fa-aqsamtu jahdan bi-l-manāzili min Minan wa-mā suḥiqat fīhi l-maqādimu wa-l-qamlu*).²⁰⁰ Notably, the preceding *nasīb*-passage of the poem containing this oath shows features evocative of so-called 'Udhri themes. The poem opens, for example, with the hemistich 'the heart recovered from Salmā but had almost not found consolation' (*ṣaḥā l-qalbu 'an Salmā wa-qad kāda lā yaslū*); in line 3, then, the poet declares that 'if I came to a need that was accomplished, the need of tomorrow does not expire' (*wa-kuntu idhā-mā ji'tu yawman li-ḥājatin maḍat wa-'ajmat ḥājatu l-ghadi mā takhlū*). The proximity of Zuhayr's oath upon 'the stations of Minā' to this declaration of enduring love in the *nasīb* seems to show some precedent for the appearance of pilgrimage-oaths in erotic contexts in Kuthayyir's poetry.

In both of these poems, Zuhayr introduces the oath with the verb *aqsamtu*, 'I swore.' In each case of Kuthayyir's oaths that we have examined, however, Kuthayyir's oaths are

Ju'ayya. Miller "Tribal Poetics" (PhD), 104 n. 328, adds one reference not adduced by Montgomery, to an oath in a poem by Khidāsh ibn Zuhayr.

¹⁹⁹ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 94, 16.

²⁰⁰ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 89, 6.

introduced by forms of *ḥalafa*, in one case (K 3, line 6) also including the strengthening accusative *jaḥdan* ‘forcefully’, which also appears immediately above in Zuhayr. The verb *aqsama*, which is used by Zuhayr, is, however, used elsewhere by Kuthayyir to introduce oaths, as in panegyric K 1 for ‘Abd al-Malik, which we will translate and discuss below – but the variation in terminology, from *q-s-m* in Zuhayr to *ḥ-l-f* in Kuthayyir, is to be noted. Secondly, it should be noted that in Zuhayr, both of these oaths upon the Ka‘ba appear in relation to, and just following, the amatory material of the *nasīb*. Both oaths, likewise, are reported in first-person (‘I swore’).

These oath-references, as well as several other extant examples,²⁰¹ certainly show that the pilgrimage-references in Umayyad-era Ḥijāzī poetry draw on pre-existing poetic practices, going back at least to the early 7th century.²⁰² But to turn now to the particular application of this practice within Kuthayyir’s corpus, there are a number of striking features that go well beyond the references to pilgrimage found in earlier verse.

The three poems translated above each contain what we have called a pilgrimage-oath: a vow, given in reported speech introduced by the verb *ḥalafa* (‘I swore’ *ḥalaftu*, K 4 and K 10; or ‘she swore’ *ḥalafat*, K 3), sworn between poet and beloved, naming as its initial oath-object the ‘camels ambling toward Minā’ (*al-rāqiṣāt ilā Minā*), and then going on, variously in the three texts, to name sites of ritual and aspects of the pilgrimage rites. The oaths carry forward the *dhikr* of the poem-openings, putting further stress on the *enduring* aspect of the lovers’ bond through the performed present-tense of the oath; they also root the rhetoric of the poems in a language of communal ritual, giving a hymnic and ritual tone to the texts.

²⁰¹Cf. especially the elaborate oath upon the place of pilgrimage and ‘the sacrificial animals’ (*al-hadāyā*) by ‘Awf ibn al-Aḥwaṣ (fl. c. 570 CE), *Mufaḍḍalīyāt*, 35, lines 4-5.

²⁰² On the dating of Zuhayr’s poetry, see “Zuhayr,” E12 [Bettini].

Beyond the oaths themselves, we have also seen that the poems make recurrent allusions to pilgrimage and sacred space. This is prevalent in K 3, for example, where the poet consistently uses the metaphor of ‘settled/descralized’ (*h-l-l*) land to convey the after-effects of his relation to the beloved. Line 37 expresses this metaphoric concisely: ‘By God then, by God, no companion has alighted (*halla*) where she alighted (*haythu hallati*),’ as does line 22, where the poet makes reference to the ‘lands of ours she has made licit’ (*’a’rāḍinā mā istaḥallati*). Reference to sacred space is clearly functioning here on a metaphoric level. The complex of prayer and the discourse of ‘sin,’ also figure into this metaphoric level. The complex of prayer and the discourse of ‘sin,’ also figure into this metaphoric level, explicitly in the poem’s opening, where the poet exhorts himself to ‘pray where she prayed’ so that ‘God will erase his sins’ (lines 2 and 3), and more obliquely, perhaps, in the poet’s address to the ‘mute’ stone (line 13). As our commentary on the poem should have made clear, semantic registers familiar from prophetic discourse and prayer (e.g., the use of *adrī* in line 4, and the ‘calling out to the stone’ *ka’annī ’unādī al-ṣakhra*, in line 13) reinforce the impression, most apparent in the oaths, that the depiction of the erotic ‘drama’ carries overtones related to eschatology and prophetic rhetoric. Reference to pilgrimage often reinforces this tone in strongly suggestive ways as, for example, at the end of K 10, where the poet concludes with a comparison of himself to the *budn*, the camel whose ritual sacrifice is commemorated as part of the *ḥajj*. These rhetorical parallels between the *dhikr* of *ghazal* and the dynamics of prophecy and pilgrimage will be explored further below in section 2.6, where we will suggest a reading of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* as a kind of ‘para-performance’ to the representation of qur’ānic ‘forsaken’ prophetic figures such as Abraham and Jonah. In this section, we wish to focus more narrowly on the pilgrimage-oaths as they appear within these texts, both as a ‘literary device’ that heightens the signification of the poem, and as a nexus of social and collective meaning that helps us to situate and understand the performance context of the poems.

2.5.a The Pilgrimage as Setting in Hijāzī Poetry

On the one hand, the oath passages, and the allusions to pilgrimage in Kuthayyir’s *ghazal*, might lead us to assume concrete connections between the circumstances of the *ḥajj* and a

performance-occasion for the poetry, i.e., to ascribe an original context for the poems directly in connection to the institution of pilgrimage. This is an impression that one might also be inclined to draw from the representation of Umayyad-era *ghazal* in the *akhbār* literature, where such performance occasions are often reported. Indeed, references to the *hajj* in Ḥijāzī poetry of this period, particularly in the work of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a,²⁰³ is one of the corpus’s most remarkable features, and has often led scholars to draw a picture of the Umayyad-era *hajj* as a kind of hotbed of dalliance and love-poetry, wherein the gathering of tribes led to amorous adventures commemorated in the Ḥijāzī poetic texts.²⁰⁴ It has also been suggested, however, that ‘Umar’s depictions of pilgrimage should be approached rather as elements of ‘imaginative setting’ that is, elements that are primarily of symbolic and fictional resonance in his poetry, rather than as depictions of concrete settings for real-world erotic adventures.²⁰⁵

In Kuthayyir’s case, the impression that pilgrimage references represent a concrete element of his *ghazal* performance is strengthened by a reading of the *akhbār* material surrounding the poet’s work. One such *khbar*, which we have alluded to briefly above, is transmitted in the Aghānī in connection to a quotation of K 3:²⁰⁶

My uncle told me that Faḍl al-Yazīdī told him on the authority of Ishāq al-Mawṣilī, on the authority of his Sheikh Abū Naṣr, on the authority of al-Haytham b. ‘Adī, that ‘Abd al-Malik asked Kuthayyir for the most marvelous story he had about ‘Azza, and he said:

²⁰³ See especially, in ‘Umar’s *Dīwān*, ed. Schwarz, poems 147, 157, 214, 215, 238, 251, 263, 293.

²⁰⁴ See, for example, Jayyusi, “Umayyad Poetry,” in *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature. Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, ed. Beeston et al (Cambridge: 1983), 387-432.

²⁰⁵ See “‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a,” E12 [Montgomery].

²⁰⁶ Agh 9.29.

I went on the Ḥajj one year, and Azza’s spouse took her on the Ḥajj also. Not one of us knew his companion. When we were out along the road, her spouse ordered her to go sell some butter that had a good taste to the people of her company. So she began to go through the tents one by one until she entered into mine, not knowing that it was mine. I was whittling some arrows. When I caught sight of her, I continued whittling as I watched her, until I began to whittle my own bones, and I could not feel it, [even] as my blood ran. When that showed, she entered upon me and seized my hand, and started to wipe away the blood with her garment. I had in my possession a skin of butter, so I enjoined her to swear she would take it [*ḥalaftu la-ta’akhudhdhannahu*], so she took it and brought the butter to her spouse. When he saw the blood, he asked her for the story and she concealed it [from him], until he enjoined her with an oath to tell the truth, and she told the truth. He beat her and enjoined her to curse me to my face. She stood before me, with him, and said to me ‘O son of an fornicatress [*yā bna l-zāniya*],’ and she was crying. Then they departed, and that was when I said.... *The pig charges her with cursing me* [quotation from K 3²⁰⁷]

The story given here provides anecdotal information to fill out a number of details that we can find in the text of K 3. The two lovers are depicted as separately undertaking the pilgrimage. ‘Azza’s cursing of the poet picks up on line 21 of the poem, where the spouse of the beloved, referred to disparagingly as ‘the pig’ is said to ‘charge her with cursing me’ (*yukallifuhā l-khinzīru shatmī*). The inclusion in the anecdote of two ‘oaths,’ both times signified by *ḥalafa*, also picks up on the inclusion of this speech act in the text of the poem (*fa-qad ḥalafat*, K 3 line 6). The reference in the *khavar* to ‘Azza’s spouse beating her does not pick up on an immediate reference in K 3, but rather draws perhaps on language from another of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poems, K 9, where in line 28 the poet seems to refer to ‘Azza’s spouse beating her: ‘If he sees me appear, he comes between us with a staff, and

²⁰⁷ The contents of this quotation from K 3 in the *Aghānī* are discussed above, 2.3, end of section.

how beautiful is the one he beats.' (*idhā mā ra'ānī bārīzan ḥāla dūnahā bi-makhbaṭatin yā ḥusna man huwa ḍāribu*). The details of the account thus seem to arise out of an effort to explain the texts of Kuthayyir's *ghazal*.

This *khbar*-frame, setting the lovers among camps of pilgrims in the environs of Mecca, incorporates Kuthayyir's pervasive references to pilgrimage within a narrative exegesis of the poem. Typically of the *akhbār*-frame of *ghazal* texts, this concretizing reading would entail that the pilgrimage be viewed as the 'real' setting of the poems. Yet we should remember as well, that even within the context of the *akhbār* frame, this story is being *told to* 'Abd al-Malik by the poet to illustrate a 'beautiful love story': the fictionality of this frame-story thus seems built into the report itself, so to speak, in the version we read in the *Aghānī*.

Bearing in mind the frame of Umayyad patronage, we will attempt here to offer an interpretation of the pilgrimage-thematics of Kuthayyir's poetry that goes beyond the 'external' connection, so to speak – i.e., the *ḥajj* as *setting* --- and to address the significance of the incorporation of pilgrimage references into the erotic theme within a historical context of Marwānid court poetry.

We have seen that in each of the three poems above, the pilgrimage-oath follows more or less immediately on the poem's opening section, in which the departure of the beloved is depicted through the opening motifs (the *aṭlāl* and *za'n* movements), and the persona of the poet is portrayed in a state of *ongoing* bereavement. The pilgrimage-oaths that then occur in the poems serve to heighten, but also to alter, this state of present- and future-looking grief, through a direct and performative means: the speech act of the oath, which, while delivered in past reported speech (*ḥalaftu*, 'I swore..' or *ḥalafat jahdan* 'she swore'), nonetheless involve in performance the poet's direct recital of the oath and the naming of the oath-objects (*wa l-rāqiṣāṭ ilā minā...*). By locating the 'bond' or 'ahd' of the poet and the

beloved in relation to the Ka‘ba and intoning a *ḥilf* that ties (or once tied) the lovers together, the poet seems to evoke a broader sense of communal involvement or stake in the erotic connection. The poetic performance of a *ḥilf* is a key element of the signification of these poems, drawing on the central and polyvalent institution of the *ḥilf*, a notion of fundamental significance in early Islamic society.²⁰⁸ To put this another way, the ‘pilgrimage-oaths’ in these poems seem to encode the *personal* drama of the poet’s erotic attachment with a kind of communal significance related both to a broader social collective, and to ritual. To select only one particularly strong example of this from a poem by Kuthayyir we have not yet discussed, at the end of the *ghazal* poem K 6, line 28, the poet declares ‘upon me is the blood of the *budn*’, merging himself with the image of the animal that is sacrificed as part of the *ḥajj* rite. Here, it is clear that pilgrimage imagery functions not as mere ‘setting’ but as a powerful ‘fiction’, or rather metaphors for the state of the poet: the poet depicts himself not as performing or witnessing the act of sacrifice, but as merging, so to speak, with the sacrificial animal in a charged emblematic image.

This dimension of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal*, if taken seriously as an element of the signification of these texts, entails a linking of the poet’s performed subjectivity --- his ardor, erotic attachment, suffering, and reckoning --- to the sacred space of the Ḥijāz. The question should be asked whether this signifying dimension is limited to Kuthayyir’s poetry, or whether it can be seen elsewhere in Umayyad *ghazal*. Although there is not space here to explore the metaphoric development of pilgrimage imagery in depth in the works of other poets, a look at the extant texts by other Ḥijāzī panegyrist-elegiasts shows that pilgrimage-oaths functioned prominently more broadly in this corpus.

²⁰⁸ On the centrality of the institution of *ḥilf* in the period, see Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy* (Edinburgh: 2009), 29-39; and Landau-Tasserou, “The Status of Allies in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Arabian Society,” *Islamic Law and Society* 13:1 (2006), 6-32.

Lovers' vows upon the place of pilgrimage, with nearly identical wording to the oaths found in Kuthayyir, appear in several fragmentary poems attributed to Kuthayyir's reputed poetic master, Jamīl b. Ma'mar. In fact, this feature was highlighted by Gabrieli in a short but valuable article on the stylistic similarities between the poetry of Jamīl and Kuthayyir, as one of the key stylistic and verbal elements that links the extant work of the two poets.²⁰⁹ In addition to several references to the *hajj* in Jamīl's extant poems, there are two direct 'pilgrimage-oaths' upon the 'camels ambling to Minā' (*al-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*) attributed to Jamīl.²¹⁰ The first instance is a single-line fragment by Jamīl preserved by Yāqūt that consists of an oath on 'the camels ambling toward Minā (*al-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*).²¹¹ The second fragment, which is transmitted in the *Aghānī*, likewise contains a pilgrimage oath: 'I swore by the Lord of the amblers to Minā, they had crossed the valley of Dafīn'²¹² This latter fragment belongs to a longer poem in the 'Udhri mode, of which a nine-line section, transmitted also by al-Qālī, shows the poet pleading and complaining that his 'oath' (*yamīn*) has not been honored by the beloved Buthayna.²¹³ Not only can we note from the reference to pilgrimage in Jamīl that these oaths are phrased precisely like Kuthayyir's, but we should note also, particularly in reference to Gabrieli's fragment 130, that the reference to the pilgrimage seems to be integrated into a rhetoric couched in the 'Udhri mode.

Looking beyond the work of Jamīl, to panegyrist-elegiasts whose extant work also contains panegyric poems, we find further pilgrimage-oaths. In the work of Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, within a poem of praise that contains strong *ghazal* elements, Abū Ṣakhr makes the following oath:

²⁰⁹ See Gabrieli, "Rapporti tra poeta e rāwī: echi di Ġamīl in Kuṭayyir 'Azzah," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 93:3/4 (1939), 163-168.

²¹⁰ The other references consist of a mention of the *ṭawāf* and *sa'y* rites (Gabrieli, fragment 79), a comparison to the 'sacrificial victim' (*budn*, frag. App. 3), and a mention of the valleys *dafīn* and *hajūn* (frag. 138).

²¹¹ Gabrieli, frag. 56.

²¹² Gabrieli, frag. 130, line 14.

²¹³ Gabrieli, *Raccolta*, 166.

19. I swear (*fa-'uqsimu*), never will a poem from me be lacking that will be recited for him, so long as a croaking raven cries in the air

20. And as long as riders land at the Khayf of Minā (*wa-mā nazala l-rukbānu bi-l-khayfi min Minan*) and so long as stars go up in the darkness²¹⁴

Abū Ṣakhr's oath, introduced by the verb *'uqsimu*, 'I swear,'²¹⁵ ties the sincerity and value of his praise directly to reference to the area of Minā, where pilgrims gather, within the sacred precinct in Mecca. In a *ghazal* text by Abū Ṣakhr, we find a more elaborate oath in the final four lines of the poem:²¹⁶

22. I swore solemnly by God, by the Torah, by the light, and the House [sc. Ka'ba], and by the corners of the Haram

23. and by the Lord of the Riders on bridled and hollow-eyed [mounts], curved and lean, and by the Gospel and the Pen

24. and by Mount Sinai and the Far Mosque and its visitors - after all of that is there any oath for those who swear? -

25. that I have found twice the love-pain in Laylā that an old woman finds after obtaining grey hair and old age.

This passage records an oath, delivered in the reported past tense, introduced by *ḥalaftu*. The objects of the oath are both biblical (*al-tawrāti, al-injīl*) and qur'ānic, and include but are not limited to the sacred *ḥaram*. It is a remarkable instance in which (post-) biblical

²¹⁴ Abū Ṣakhr, VIII, lines 19-21; see Dmitriev, *Poetische Werk*, 206-207.

²¹⁵ Cf. Kuthayyir's use of *'uqsimu* 'I swear' (K 1, line 66), also in a panegyric context.

²¹⁶ Abū Ṣakhr, XV 22-25; Dmitriev, *Poetische Werk*, 256-259.

‘sacred geography’ is harnessed in order to amplify the declaration of erotic attachment. As in Kuthayyir’s *ghazal*, this oath asserts and performs a broader communal/ritual reality by way of the personal/erotic. This oath expands the domain of the sacred to include reference to the Torah and Mt. Sinai, and to ‘the pen’ as an emblem of sacred writing;²¹⁷ as we will argue further below, such a rhetoric would be well-suited to an elite Umayyad environment, where biblical allusion was central as precedent to the performance of authority.²¹⁸

To quote a final example of a pilgrimage-oath in the work of the Ḥijāzī panegyrist-elegiasts of this period, we cite a text by Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ that is preserved in the article on the poet in the *Aghānī*, and is attributed to a context of praise for Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik (ruled 105-125/724-743):

1. I swore by those of Quraysh who made pilgrimage to His house and who led to it a sacrificial animal on which were collars (*ḥalaftu bi-man ḥajjat qurayshu li-baytihi wa-ahdat lahu budnan ‘alayhā l-qalā’idu*)
2. my absence has been long from you, and at the extreme of my age I am avid for satisfaction from you
3. and yet my illness has lasted so long (*wa qad ṭāla suqmī*), and the returning women-guards have made so many compacts with me
4. I lie in bed and they ceaselessly speak to me with guardianship and advice: ‘how long will will you stay?’

²¹⁷ Cf. Q 68:1, *wa l-qalami wa-mā yaṣturūna*, ‘by the pen and by what they write.’

²¹⁸ See especially Rubin, “Prophets and Caliphs: The Biblical Foundations of the Umayyad Authority,” in *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Berg (Leiden: 2003), 73-99.

5. When I put reins to the camels, they travel at my will to you, and the poems make obeisance to me²¹⁹

The fragment is 13-lines in total as preserved in the *Aghānī*; after this passage, the text contains a physical description of the 'love-sick' poet whose skin is 'cold to touch' (*wā-ammā massu jildī fa-bāridu*, line 9), then follows a transition introducing the poet's panegyric address to the patron (*ilayka*, line 11). We note that the oath upon 'those of Quraysh who made pilgrimage to His house' (line 1) connects the pilgrimage theme to the state of longing (line 2) and illness (line 3) intoned by the poet – i.e., the pilgrimage reference is directly tied to the performance of the erotic. Furthermore, this nexus of themes and imagery is integrated directly into the poet's address to and praise of the patron, that is, into his work as a panegyrist. Crucially, we note here the mention of the poet's 'illness', termed *suqm* (illness, malady): the development of this theme will be the focus of our essay that concludes this chapter.

At this point, it should be added that, in addition to the three instances of pilgrimage-oaths by Kuthayyir we have studied above in *ghazal* texts, pilgrimage-oaths appear as well in at least two of Kuthayyir's preserved panegyric poems. A pilgrimage oath of four lines, introduced by *halaftu*, 'I swore', occurs in a poem addressed by Kuthayyir to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (ruled 98-101/717-720), within a twenty-line *ghazal-nasīb* movement that opens the praise poem.²²⁰ Additionally, Kuthayyir's fragmentarily preserved praise poetry for his earlier patron 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān (d. 84/704) likewise contains a pilgrimage-oath upon 'the camels ambling to Minā' (*al-rāqiṣāt ilā minā*), K 53, delivered for this patron.

²¹⁹ See Rizzitano, "Alcuni Frammenti Poetici," *Rivista degli studi orientali* 22:1/4 (1947), 27, frag. 38.

²²⁰ K 11, lines 17-20, translated and discussed below, chapter 3.

Taken together, this evidence shows that the pilgrimage-oath, and reference to the Meccan *ḥaram*, seems to have formed a central dimension of the poetics employed by these Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets, both within *ghazal* poetry, as we have seen in Kuthayyir's texts, and in their panegyric poetry as well. What conclusions might we draw from this observation, and what might it tell us about the art and role of the Ḥijāzī poet? We will address the question of reference to the Ḥijāz in panegyric poetry more directly in chapter 3, but some preliminary observations about the theme of pilgrimage can be put forward here.

2.5.b The Significance of Pilgrimage-Reference in Marwānid Poetry

The interpretation of pilgrimage references in early poetry is related to the difficult question of what the early *ḥajj* 'means' in the context of the early Umayyad articulation of power, that is, how it functioned as an element of the projection and exercise of Umayyad authority. Given the lack of contemporary sources that might allow us to understand how the *ḥajj* was performed and understood for the early community,²²¹ the references to the *ḥajj* in Umayyad-era love poetry and panegyric should be an important source for our approach to this issue. As it is clear that leadership of, and affiliation to, the pilgrimage was a central way in which Islamic authority and legitimacy was projected and maintained,²²² the Ḥijāzī poet's performance of a 'ritualized erotics' for a Marwānid audience may have been a way of affirming and glorifying the broader 'ritual order' of society, in which the Umayyad elite played a key part.²²³ In this sense, the Ḥijāzī poet's integration of the *ḥajj*-

²²¹ On this point, see Zadeh, "The Early Hajj, 7th–8th Centuries," in *The Hajj: Pilgrimage in Islam*, ed. Toorawa and Tagliacozzo (Cambridge: 2015), 42-64.

²²² See Campo, "Authority, Ritual, and Spatial Order in Islam: The Pilgrimage to Mecca," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 5:1 (1991), 65-91.

²²³ For a theoretical parallel to this 'affirming of the ritual order' through poetry, see the discussion of the perpetuation of the early modern monarchy of Morocco through poetry and ritual in Combs-Schilling, *Sacred Performance. Islam, Sexuality, and Sacrifice* (New York: 1989).

rituals within the performance of the erotic might be seen by its Marwānid patrons as having the attractive feature of shoring up the patron's prestige and legitimacy.

This does not entail any lack of personal identification or 'subjectivity' within the poems. Images such as the poet's address to the Ka'ba as if to a lover (K 3, line 13), or his self-image as merging with the *budn*, the sacrificed camel, certainly cannot be understood as simply instrumental for the aggrandizement of an elite audience. These images seem rather to provide figurations of a subjective and personal response to the rituals of the *ḥajj*, by way of a poetic rendering of the affective, sacred landscape of the Ḥijāz. As Marion Katz has incisively shown,²²⁴ the earliest literary traditions about the *ḥajj* (namely, elements of the *ḥadīth* corpus) portray a range of striking attitudes toward the *ḥajj*: namely, beliefs in 'ritual efficacy', or the idea that one's major and minor sins (*ṣaghā'ir* and *kabā'ir*) are eliminated if one performs the *ḥajj* rites. Although condemned by many later theologians, such notions coexist in the earliest source material alongside more 'austere' or 'top-down' readings of the pilgrimage rites, i.e. with evidence of the *ḥajj* as the faithful execution of divine command, mediated and administered by worldly authorities. As Katz's study strongly implies, the nature of our sources makes it impossible for other modes of belief (such as the belief in 'ritual efficacy') to be proven or dis-proven in relation to the early periods. Yet the metaphoric deployment of imagery from the *ḥajj* within the erotic drama of Kuthayyir's poetry --- as in his declaration that 'God will erase your sins if you pray where she prayed' (K 3, 3) --- should be taken into account here, in the sense that it represents a poetic refraction of ritual's 'personal' meaning within early Islam.

Kuthayyir's pilgrimage-*ghazals*, which we have studied in this section, represent a transformation of the preceding practice of pilgrimage-reference that is evident in some extant Ḥijāzī pre-Islamic verse, as in the verses by Zuhayr cited above. The merging in Kuthayyir's texts of the domains of *communal* ritual and the *personal* erotic within a

²²⁴ Katz, "The Ḥajj and the Study of Islamic Ritual," *Studia Islamica*, 98/99 (2004), 95-129.

distinctly Ḥijāzī *ghazal* register, marks Kuthayyir's work as a poet, and can be understood usefully, we claim, in the context of Marwānid patronage. The poet transmutes personal erotic expression into an object of communal response by merging it with ritual concerns; but this performance of identification with the communal order also leaves ample space for a sustained individualized performance of subjectivity, which is one of the most prevalent features of the poetry.

2.6 Illness of Distance: the poetics of *Suqm*

Having argued that Kuthayyir's pilgrimage-*ghazal* displays a kind of 'ritualized erotics' with a prominent element of reference to the *ḥajj*, we will discuss in this section a second element of Kuthayyir's *ghazal* thematics that is in many ways complimentary to this 'ritualized' depiction of the erotic. In this section, we will discuss the way in which the poet's persona is depicted as suffering from 'illness' or 'malady' (primarily designated as *suqm*). In Kuthayyir's *ghazal*, as we have seen, attachment and longing are depicted as enduring elements that afflict the poet's 'self' in the present and continue into the future. One frequently recurring aspect of this depiction of the poet's suffering self, is its description as suffering from 'love-sickness,' i.e. the poet's figuration of his attachment to the beloved as a kind of illness or ailment that causes him to be, or be like, one suffering from a physical disease. The depiction of erotic attachment through a metaphoric of 'illness' and corporeal decay is in fact a familiar theme of the early Arabic *nasīb*, and is a pervasive thematic element in much early poetry. However, one notes that whereas the poet of the Jāhiliyya primarily associates erotic attachment with illness in order to dramatize his own 'overcoming' of this condition, the *ghazal* poet appears to revel in his own enduring 'illness.' This apparent reversal of pre-Islamic *fakhr* (self-praise) into early Islamic and Umayyad-era reveling in illness has been taken as a central marker of the 'gloomy' and disaffected tonality of the 'Udhri *ghazal*, and put forward among the elements that strongly distinguish the new *ghazal* from its Jāhili predecessors.²²⁵

Within Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetry, one is struck by the frequent usage of a particular term to mark this state of 'love-sickness': *saqīm*, 'ill', is one of the most frequent, and most

²²⁵ On *ghazal*'s 'morbidity', see especially Jacobi, "Love and Death" (2004).

resonant, terms used by the poet to qualify his condition.²²⁶ In this section, we wish to look more closely at how Kuthayyir's depiction of this state of 'love-sickness' departs from precedents within the Jāhilī corpus. In the course of this study of Kuthayyir's poetic deployment of '*suqm*,' we will suggest that the thematic/semantic evolution evident in this deployment can be helpfully illuminated if we examine the inter-textuality between the usage of *saqīm* in Kuthayyir's corpus and the usage of this word in the Qur'ān, where it is used to describe the 'forelorn' prophets Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and Yūnus (Jonah). In order to provide some clarity about Kuthayyir's usage of the term, we will first translate and provide a commentary upon one further *ghazal* poem by Kuthayyir, K 6, in which reference to the poet's *suqm* is particularly frequent.

The text of the poem translated here follows the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*:²²⁷

K 6: ṭawīl

1. Traces belonging to 'Azza, remaining from the days of Dhū l-Ghiṣn, aroused my memory in the roughlands of Rawḍatayn.
2. My weeping was spurred on by Rawḍat 'Aljām, and Rawḍāt Shawṭā, whose connection to me goes back so far
3. The abode there has become wild, although once someone generous to me dwelled there
4. So now I roam, outside the spring-encampments of the abode that I once knew, and outside of the women's settlement

²²⁶ Within Kuthayyir's texts in the *Muntahā*, *s-q-m* appears five times in poem K 6, twice in K 2 (lines 7-8), and once each in K 7 (line 37) and K 8 (line 23).

²²⁷ In addition to its recension in the *Muntahā*, K 6 is quoted widely in early sources of Kuthayyir's poetry, including sixteen lines of the poem quoted in the *Aghānī*, Agh 12.186, where the text is introduced as having been recited by Kuthayyir 'when 'Azza departed for Egypt.'

5. I asked Ḥakīm where distance had taken her, and he gave me no answer I could love
6. The people of ‘Azza made their departure in the morning; they left, and only Wāsiṭ
now remains
7. O distance! God do not bless the distance; a compact of distance is shameful for the
lover.
8. By my life, if the heart has sought an illness of distance, then I am ill
9. Even if you see me show strength today, beneath that, I swear, I am wounded
10. She did not depart freely, but was moved away by accursed time, which harms those
who do good.
11. How sad it is when Wāsiṭ departs, along with the people for whom I babble and
thirst
12. The mature men say to me, ‘Woe to you, Kathīr, truly, she thirsts for someone other
than you
13. You appear, but the figure to which you are equal in eternity²²⁸ lies sick among the
attendent women
14. Every ailing wind, and every breeze in the empty hills, reminds me of her
15. The fleeting years pass, but in the lowland of Shabbā the ruins do not vanish
16. Ḍamrī girl, I seek no revenge for your sins of enmity -- for I would then be your
oppressor
17. I am full of longing - if her connection to me returned, I would be so gracious to my
Lord
18. If lightning flashes in a cloud toward Buwayba, your eyes do not cease shedding
tears for her
19. But I see no storm-cloud drawing off toward Egypt in the distance, except that I sit
down to storm-watch
20. A lowly man who turns away from passion may suffer pain from love – and a noble
man can give way to passion

²²⁸ On the meaning of this line, which involves two usages of the root *sh-kh-ṣ* (‘person/figure’; ‘to appear’), see the commentary below.

21. My companion said: 'What if you see her in the morning at Shabbā, and she meets you with silence?'
22. I said to him: the affection between us is not unseemly - purity is long-standing between us
23. Even if I turn from her harshly, still I hold to the compact between us
24. Between you and me, time has split apart our fate, which runs its cursed course
25. Your heart is sound and healthy in this religion, yet mine is ill with its passion for you
26. I carry within me a polluted poison from you; but you are healthy within from how I treated you
27. By your life, you did not treat my affection justly; but toward you, 'Azza, I will show forbearance
28. The blood of the *budn*²²⁹ is upon me, as her love has decayed through distance and time's passage
29. I swear that, after you, I have replaced you with no companion; there is no one that shares your place in my heart

Lines 1-4 of the poem establish the scene of the *aṭlāl*. In line 3, the 'abode' *dār* is described as 'wild' *waḥshun* now that it has been abandoned by the beloved, who was once 'generous' *karīm*. In line 4, the poet refers to himself as 'wandering' *ahīmu* within these ruins. The usage of the root *h-y-m* evokes the much-discussed usage of this term in the Qur'ān, Q 26:224-226, in which 'the poets' are condemned as those who 'go astray' and 'wander in every valley' (*fī kulli wādīn yahūmu*) and 'claim that which they do not do.' Kuthayyir's usage of the term here seems to embrace this category of 'wandering' poet; see also the image at the close of K 3, where the poet affirms his own 'wandering-sickness' (*tuhyāmī*, K 3, line 41), which he compares to the 'shade of a raincloud (*zilla l-ghimāmati*, line 42).'

²²⁹ The *budn* is the camel sacrificed during the ritual of the *hajj*; on which, see the commentary below.

In **line 3**, the statement that the abode (*dār*) is now ‘wild’ (*waḥshun*) despite the fact that ‘once someone generous to me dwelled there’ (*ghayra an qad yaḥilluhā wa-yaghni bi-hā shakhṣun ‘alayya karīmu*), is somewhat ambiguous. On the most immediate level, it means that after the departure of the beloved, the poet feels alone but is cared for. Yet *shakhṣ*, which we have translated here as ‘someone,’ has the more precise meaning of ‘the bodily or material, as opposed to inner, form or substance of a man’, and is often used to refer to sufferers from illness.²³⁰ There is some indication already then, that the thematics of ‘illness’ feature in the poem.

In **lines 5 and 6**, the poet asks a companion --- named as Ḥakīm, and reported in the commentary tradition to be al-Sā’ib b. Ḥakīm, Kuthayyir’s *rāwī* --- ‘where has the distance taken her’ (*ayna ṣārat bi-hā l-nawā*); he receives the answer that ‘they have left in the morning’ (*a-jaddū...fa-bānū*, line 6). The opening of the poem consists of a combination of the so-called Trennungsmorgen (*za‘n*) and *aṭlāl* motifs, clearly setting up the thematics of the poem in terms of the beloved’s departure and ‘distance.’ Already in this opening, the theme of ‘distance’ (*al-nawā*, line 5) appears linked to physical suffering and illness.

In **lines 7 and 8** the poetics of illness now enter the poem explicitly. In line 7, the poet declares ‘O distance! God do not bless the distance; a compact of distance is shameful for the lover’ (*fa-mā li-l-nawā lā bāraka llāhu fī l-nawā wa-‘ahdu l-nawā ‘inda l-muḥibbin dhamīmu*). Here, distance itself, *al-nawā*, is wished to be ‘not blessed’ by God, and ‘the compact of distance’ (*‘ahdu l-nawā*) is said to be ‘shameful,’ *dhamīm*, to the lover. The poet is figuring the state of ‘distance’ as a kind of forsakenness, an exclusion from covenant, entailing an exclusion from that which is ‘blessed’. In the next line, then, the poet introduces his state of ‘illness’: ‘By my life, if the heart has sought an illness of distance, then I am ill’ (*la-‘amrī la-’in kāna l-fu’ādu mina l-nawā baghiya saqaman ’innī ’idhan la-saqīmu*). The statement ‘if my heart has sought an illness of distance’ is somewhat difficult

²³⁰ See Lane’s *Lexicon*, 4, 1517.

to interpret, as the meaning of ‘sought/desired’, *baghiya*, seems to imply that the poet is *voluntarily* entering the state of illness, which would not necessarily follow from the situation of the abandoned poet generally. Yet the point is clear: whatever exactly is entailed by the poet’s ‘illness’ (and we will investigate this further below), the state of *suqm* (illness) clearly is depicted as the direct consequence of the state of *nawā*, distance, into which the beloved has gone, or been taken. The emphatic phrasing of the poet’s *self*-declaration as *saqīm* (*innī...la-saqīmu*) should be held in mind, as it will be particularly relevant for our consideration of the relevant qur’ānic parallel.

In **lines 9-12**, the poet further bemoans the state of the beloved’s absence, stating that even if he shows outward courage (*jalāda*, line 9), underneath this he is pained. He bemoans that the beloved did not go by her own will (*ṭaw’an*, line 10), but that rather the force of ‘accursed time’ took her away (*zamānun... mash’ūmu*, line 10). In line 12, he again uses the term ‘to wander’ *tahīmu* to describe his condition, again reinforcing the affirmative use of this term that is condemned in the ‘poet verses’ of the Qur’ān.

In **line 13**, the poet declares himself *saqīm* for a second time, this time describing himself as ‘sick among the attendant women’ (*bayna l-‘ā’idāti saqīmu*). This image is followed in line 14 by the poet declaring that he is ‘reminded’ of the beloved by ‘every ailing wind, and every breeze in the empty hills’ (*yudhakkirunī kullu rīhin marīḍatin la-hā bi-l-tilā’i l-qāwīyāti nasīmu*). The sense of the first hemistich, ‘you appear, but the figure to which you are equal in eternity’ (*a-tashkhaṣu wa-l-shakhṣu allādhī anta ‘ādilun bi-hi l-khaldu*) relies on a double-meaning of the root *sh-kh-ṣ*: here, *tashkhaṣu* means ‘to appear’, while *al-shakhṣ* refers to the ‘corporeal or bodily’ form of a man, as opposed to his immaterial self (see Lane’s *Lexicon*, 11, 1527). The resulting meaning of the line emphasizes the mortality and temporality of the ailing fever-victim.

In the following **lines, 16-20**, the poet addresses ‘Azza directly (addressed as *Ibnata l-Ḍamrī*, ‘the Ḍamri girl’, line 16), declaring that ‘I do not seek revenge’ (*lastu...bi-nāqimin*) for ‘sins of enmity’ (*dhunūba l-‘idā*), for then ‘I would be your oppressor’ (*‘innī ‘idhan la-ḡalūmu*). He then describes himself weeping, catching sight of a lightning-giving rain cloud (*‘idhā baraaqat...saḥābatun*) as he looks out toward al-Buwayba, which is the name given to the passage (in the Sinai) between the Ḥijāz and Egypt. This lightning-watching scene falls into a tradition of usages of this motif to ‘express longing for a distant beloved,’ which have been brought together and discussed by A.A. Hussein²³¹: it can be aptly compared, for example, to a lightning-watching scene in poem by al-Nābigha al-Dhubaynī in which the poet longs for a vanished beloved, Su‘dā, and watches lightning gleaming on the Tihāma coast of the Red Sea, while he is on top of the hill of Nakhla, near Mecca.²³²

Lines 21-24 depict an imagined conversation between poet and beloved, prompted by the poet being asked by a companion (*wa-qāla khalīlī*, line 21) what he would say if he met her (*mā li-hā ‘idh laqayta-hā*). The poet replies (*fa-qultu la-hu*, line 22) that ‘the affection between us is not unseemly - purity is long-standing between us’ (*‘inna l-mawaddata baynanā ‘alā ḡhayri fuḡshin wa-l-ṣafā’u qadīmu*). The poet then declares in line 23 that ‘even if he turns away from her in silence’, he will ‘hold to the compact between us’ (*‘alā l-‘ahdi fī-mā baynanā la-muqīmu*). Then, in 24, ‘time’ (*zamānun*) is again said to have ‘split apart our fate’ (*farraqa l-dahra bayna-nā*). At this point, in lines 25-26, the poet declares his *suqm* for a third time: ‘O, your heart is sound and healthy in this religion, yet mine is ill with its passion for you’ (*‘a-fī l-dīni hādhā ‘inna qalbaki sālimun ṣaḥīḡhun wa-qalbī min hawāki saqīmu*). The following line reinforces this contrast between the ‘healthy’ beloved, who has moved on from the ‘bond’ with the poet, and the ‘unhealthy’ (*saqīm*) poet, who is said to have ‘within me a polluted poison from you’ (*wa-‘innī bi-jawfī minki dā’an mukhāmaran*). It is particularly clear in the phrasing of line 25 that this illness, the result of ‘time’ and of ‘distance,’ amounts to a kind of ‘uncleanness’ or state of ritual impurity, contrasted with the

²³¹ See Hussein, *Lightning-Scene*, 37-94.

²³² al-Nābigha, *Dīwān*, poem 2; see Hussein, *Lightning-Scene*, 57.

'health' of the beloved 'in this religion' (*fī l-dīnī hādhā*). The poet, in his abandoned state, is figured as enduring in a state of impurity that is explicitly framed in terms of 'religion' *dīn*: this 'illness' seems to be yet another way of figuring a *ritual* dimension to the poet's erotic loss.

Lines 27-29, which close the poem, follow this portrayal of a state of 'ritual impurity' with a reference, in line 28, to ritual sacrifice. First, in line 27, the poet declares that although his affection has 'not been reciprocated' (*mā anṣafatnī fī mawaddatī*), nonetheless he is 'steadfast' (*ḥalīm*). It is perhaps surprising that this term of strength is introduced, following all of the imagery of sickness and vulnerability that has preceded. Then, in line 28, the poet declares that 'the blood of the *budn* is upon me, as her love has decayed through distance and time's passage' (*'alayya dimā'u l-budni in kāna ḥubbuhā 'alā l-na'yi aw ṭūla l-zamāni yarīmu*). The *budn* is the camel that is sacrificed as part of the *ḥajj* ritual.²³³ In the final line of the text follows a condensed oath, presumably upon the pilgrimage site: 'I swear that, after you, I have replaced you with no companion; there is no one that shares your place in my heart' (*wa-uqsimu mā stabadaltu ba'daki khullatan wa-lā laki 'indi fī l-fu'ādu qasīmu*). The introduction of the blood of the sacrificed animal should be read in connection to the depiction of the poet as spiritually 'sick' throughout the poem. This reinforces the assessment of the evidence collected in section 2.4 above, which shows the degree to which a kind of 'ritual efficacy' and the atonement for sin is connected in Kuthayyir's poetry to erotics and to the mourning of a transient intimacy. But even if the final lines of the *Muntahā* recension provide a strong 'purgative' effect, how might we interpret the poet's recurrent assertion of his own maladay, his *suqm*?

The poet's usage of *saqīm*, as well as his use of words from the root *h-y-m* 'to wander', both appear to show the poet taking terms that potentially have strongly negative connotations, and adopting these terms to depict elements of the poet's persona. In order to interpret this

²³³ See "Dhabīḥa," E12 [Bousquet].

semantic ‘reversal’, if such it be, we will first attempt to contextualize Kuthayyir’s deployment of *saqīm* in relation to preceding poetic portrayals of illness in the Jāhilī corpus. While we would stress again our caution about making general assessments about the tonality and themes of the Jāhilī corpus, and in particular our reservations about deciphered ‘worldviews’ underlying this corpus, one can nonetheless state that this corpus frequently features an intensely negative portrayal of infirmity and sickness. Nadia Jamil’s work in particular has stressed the ways in which the semantic field of ‘illness’ within the *nasīb* is linked to forces of ‘separation’ (*bayn*) that eat away at the communal body, prompting the poet’s heroic struggle for ‘manliness’ (*murūwa*). Jamil thus discerns a ‘worldview’ in which “the conception of al-Dahr, broadly, as the ultimate mover of ‘doubt’ (*rayb*) and ‘change’ (*tabaddul*); as a source of greater ‘sickness’ that undermines the moral and physical integrity of communities, brings recurrent ‘separation’ (*bayn*), and drains the resources that sustain them.”²³⁴ Whether or not one wishes to affirm the underlying systematizing tendencies of this interpretation,²³⁵ the evidence gathered and explicated by Jamil establishes that the figuration of communal rupture as ‘illness’ is close to the heart of the motivation of much Jāhilī verse.

‘Illness’ and love-sickness thus appears in the pre-Islamic poetic corpus quite frequently, as an obstacle to be overcome. Ṭarafa (d. perhaps c. 7th century), for example, within an eighteen-line poem/fragment in which he bemoans his attachment to a beloved and the coming of death, exclaims: ‘May your love not be a fatal illness...’ (*lā yakun ḥubbuki dā’an qātilan...*).²³⁶ The jussive mode of the verb emphasizes the degree to which the poet actively defies the creeping illness or ‘lovesickness.’

²³⁴ Jamil, *Ethics and Poetry*, 93.

²³⁵ Jamil reads the thematics of *nasīb* quite systematically, as it were, as expressive of a discernible Jāhilī worldview, as in *Ethics and Poetry*, 145: ‘The further ramification of this, in complement to earlier indications, is that ‘sickness’ and ‘healing’ – adherence to the ethic, or its neglect; the consequences of action; punishment and reward – are perceived to extend beyond the worldly sphere, and ultimately to relate to divine sanction.’

²³⁶ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 60.6.

In a number of instances within the Jāhilī corpus, the root *s-q-m* is used to denote the poet's 'lovesickness.' For example, in another poem by Ṭarafa, we read 'How often, if I fell sick, (*a-lā rubba yawmin law saqimtu*) as the noble women of my tribe and Mālik would tend to me.'²³⁷ Likewise, in a poem by Imru' Qays, the poet's dejection at the years passing since the beloved's departure is said to cause *suqm*: 'With them I recalled the entire tribe, and she excited the last pangs of sickness (*fa-hayyajat 'aqābīla suqmin*), and griefs, in my mind.'²³⁸ In al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī, the look cast by the beloved at parting is compared to the look cast by a sick man, a *saqīm*: 'She looked to you with a need that was not fulfilled, with the look of the sick man to his attendants' (*naẓarat ilayka bi-ḥājatin lam taqḍihā naẓara l-saqīmi ilā wujūhi l-ʿuwwadī*).²³⁹ Here it is the beloved, whose 'need is not [to be] fulfilled' (*bi-ḥājatin lam taqḍihā*), who is compared to a sick man looking upon those who attend his sick bed.

These passages show *s-q-m* being used (metaphorically) to depict the condition of the bereft poet. His grief (or the grief of the beloved) is depicted as a chronic 'illness.' In each of these texts, one could further argue that the notion of physical/emotional ailment is being evoked deliberately in order to draw contrast with the heroic and 'manly' attitude adopted elsewhere by the poets.

In addition to these instances of *s-q-m* in *nasīb* contexts, however, there is one further example of the root's occurrence in an early poem that is particularly interesting and illustrative of the semantics and poetic connotations of the term. The term *saqām* (malady) occurs in the *Muʿallaqa* of Labīd b. Rabīʿa, who is reported to have died at the start of the

²³⁷ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 67.1

²³⁸ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 160.14: *dhakartu bi-hā l-ḥayya l-jamīʿa fa-hayyajat 'aqābīla suqmin min ḍamīrin wa-ʿashjāni*.

²³⁹ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 10.13.

reign of Mu‘āwiya (i.e., c. 40/660-1). This poem is considered to be the latest of the *Mu‘allaqāt* poems in Tibrīzī’s collection²⁴⁰ and thus either Mukhaḍram or late Jāhilī. The term occurs within the oryx passage of the poem, in which the poet famously depicts the torments that face a wandering she-oryx (lines 36-52). The torments undergone by the hunted oryx are sketched in parallel to those undergone by the poet’s camel and thus, as numerous commentators have pointed out, the passage establishes a kind of parallel between the sufferings of the poet and those of the animal, largely by way of a play on the semantic register of the *nasīb*.²⁴¹ At one point, the she-oryx (the *waḥshīyah*) is said to hear the approach of her human hunter, her arch enemy:

47. She heard the rustle of a man from a place she could not see. It filled her with fear – for mankind is her malady

wa-tasamma‘at rizza l-‘anīsi fa-rā‘a-hā ‘an ḡahri ḡhaybin wa-l-‘anīsu saqāmuhā

Here, the hunter, bearing doom and death to the oryx, is termed her ‘malady’, her *saqām*. The hunter, as ‘malady’ (*saqām*), appears as an emblem of the forces of infirmity and failure that must be overcome through the heroic ‘overcoming’ of the erotics of the *nasīb*. For our purposes, what is most crucial here is that in the semantics of *saqām* we see a clear and overwhelming negativity: just as it might be absurd for the oryx to revel in or seek out her hunter, so would it be against the spirit of the poem for its author to speak of reveling in his *saqām*.

²⁴⁰ See Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, volume I, 164.

²⁴¹ See especially the interpretation of the passage in this light in Jamil, *Ethics and Poetry*, 135 and 162 n. 68.

Illness then, in the Jāhilī material we have just examined, while it is used as part of the poet's self-representation, does not appear to be tinged with any positive quality. Yet we have seen that in Kuthayyir's poem, although some allusion is made to the curative potential of the caravans, the poet does not truly claim to be cleansed of his state of 'impurity': rather, in K 6 above, and in several other poems, he declares his lingering *suqm*, as in K 8, line 23, where the poet addresses himself as one 'with a wandering and ill soul (*wa-anta ghawīyu l-nafsi qidman saqīmuḥā*). Furthermore, in several striking 'wish passages' within Kuthayyir's *ghazals*, he declares his desire to remain 'infirm' and 'weak,' as in K 10, lines 25-28, where for example the poet wishes that he and 'Azza were two mangle beasts driven from field to field (*a-laytanā yā 'Azzata... jarbā'an tu'dī wa-'ajrabu*).

How might we contextualize this appearance of a 'lovesick' persona in Kuthayyir's poetry? Does this confirm the image of the 'negative' and 'gloomy' 'Udhri poet motivated by disaffection and alienation?

Without claiming to offer a unitary solution to the question of the poet's motivation for this thematics, we wish to offer a suggestion about one particularly useful way of interpreting this 'lovesick' persona, by way of intertextuality with the Qur'ān.

While the theme of 'sickness' is widespread in the Qur'ān,²⁴² most often appearing in the sense of the 'sickness of the heart' (*marad*) attributed to the non-believers, the root *s-q-m* occurs only twice in the Qur'ān, both times in Q 37 (*Sūrat al-Ṣaffāt*), within narrative passages depicting the lives of earlier prophets.²⁴³

²⁴² See "Illness and Health," EncQ [Hamid Abu Zayd].

²⁴³ Q 37:88 and 37:145.

Q 37 is one of the earlier middle-Meccan sūras: 182 verses in total, displaying the tripartite structure characteristic of the middle-Meccan period, with a first part containing introductory oaths, eschatology, and polemics (verses 1-74), followed by a central series of prophet-narratives (75-148), and a conclusion that returns to polemic and paraenesis (149-182).²⁴⁴ As has been frequently pointed out, the middle-Meccan sūra structure, which is resonant with the the three-part liturgical service focussing on a scriptural reading in the neighboring religious cultures of Late Antiquity, is particularly well suited to aural performance.²⁴⁵ At what would be the peak of this performance, that is, within the ‘central prophetic narrative’²⁴⁶ of the sūra, the word *saqīm* appears twice. It occurs first within the narration of the prophet Abraham’s confrontation with the idols of his father and people, in Q 37:83-93, which has been identified as one of the earliest Abrahamic pericopes in the Qur’ān:

Indeed Abraham was among the followers

He came to his Lord with a sound heart

And he said to his father and his people, what do you worship?

Is it a falsehood, gods other than God that you desire?

What is your thought of the Lord of the Worlds?

Then he gave a look to the stars

And he said, ‘I am saqīm’

So they turned away from him, departing

Then he turned against their gods and said, ‘Do you not eat?’

²⁴⁴ See Neuwirth, *Der Koran Frühmittelmekkanische Suren. Ein Handkommentar. Band 2-1* (Berlin: 2017), 147-216.

²⁴⁵ See Neuwirth, *KTS*, chapter 5.

²⁴⁶ Neuwirth, *Handkommentar*, 206.

‘Why do you not speak?’

So he turned against them and struck a blow with his right hand.

This particularly important and memorable passage of narrative is followed by a second narrative depicting the “Aqīdah”, that is, detailing Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son.²⁴⁷ But it is the passage just cited, and in particular, the fascinating detail of Abraham’s declaration ‘I am sick’ (*‘innī saqīmu*) that we wish to probe further. This reference to Abraham’s ‘look to the stars’ and declaration ‘I am sick’ (verses 87 and 88) has remained quite obscure, as there seems to be no clear precedent for Abraham’s declaration of his ‘sickness’ in biblical or post-biblical literature.²⁴⁸ One is struck immediately by how Abraham’s declaration ‘I am sick’ stands out as a moment of fraught and dramatic introversion amid his crisis, producing a kind of curious dramatic pause within the drama of collective salvation and the establishment of covenant. A contrast is drawn between the heart of Abraham who is at first of a ‘sound heart’ (*bi-qalbin salīmin*, 37:84), but who then, when he encounters the falseness of his relatives’ worship, becomes, in his own eyes, *saqīm* (37:89). The declaration seems at once to dramatically represent the prophet’s awareness of his own difference from his people, and to express his willingness to suffer on behalf of that difference. The prophet at the moment of this declaration can be said to be ‘outside of covenant’, alienated from his people and ‘forsaken.’ This state of *suqm*, of self-perceived illness, is truly a liminal state: Abraham is suspended between the sacred and the profane, just prior to his aggressive boundary-crossing against the idols (*rāgha ilā ālihatihum*, 37:91).

²⁴⁷On the association of Abraham with the covenant, based in Q 2:124-5 and 33:7, see also “Abraham,” EncyQ [R. Firestone], 6-8.

²⁴⁸ Some early commentators, including Ibn Ishāq, viewed Abraham’s sickness as a ‘ruse’ used to cause others to flee, so that he could destroy the idols without interference. See the commentary on the passage in Neuwirth, *Handkommentar*, 190. For a recent suggestion that Abraham’s ‘*suqm*,’ may originate in a ‘Sabaic’ astrological legend, see G. Strohmeier, “Harran – die Stadt des Sin in islamischer Zeit”, in *Babylon. Wissenskultur in Orient und Okzident*, ed. Cancik-Kirschbaum et al (Berlin: 2011), 305-315, cited in Neuwirth’s commentary.

It is striking that this same semantic domain of *salīm* and *saqīm* is at play in Kuthayyir's poetry as well. In Kuthayyir's text we have seen a self-declaration of illness that closely parallels the qur'ānic text, in K 6, line 8: 'By my life, if the heart has sought illness of distance, then I am ill' (*la-'amrī la-'in kāna l-fu'ādu mina l-nawā baghiya saqaman innī idhan la-saqīmu*). The phrase *innī...la-saqīmu* resonates with the qur'ānic passage unmistakably. Later in the poem, in line 25, for example, where the poet declares himself '*saqīm*' in contrast to the beloved who is '*salīm*', this too seems to be a fairly direct evocation of the passage in Q 37.

The second usage of *s-q-m* in the sūra, while somewhat less suggestive of the *ghazal* scene, further deepens the qur'ānic resonance of the term. The term occurs again within prophet-narrative, this time in the relation of the story of Yūnus (Jonah) and the whale. The Qur'ān narrates that Yūnus, after not boarding the ark during the flood (*al-fulk al-mashhūn*, 37:140), was swallowed by 'the fish' (*al-ḥūt*, 142). Yūnus's fate is then told at Q 37:143-145:

Were it not that he was among those who gave praise

He would have lingered in its belly until the day they were resurrected

Then we threw him into the wilderness and he was *saqīm*

The description of the suffering Yūnus, spit out by the whale, as *saqīm*, although it lacks the explicit 'introspective' quality of the previous occurrence, nonetheless is evocative, in showing the prophet suffering, forelorn, yet ultimately triumphing because he was 'among those who give praise' (*mina l-musabbiḥīn*, 37:143). The usage here of *saqīm* reinforces the notion that the 'illness' denoted by *suqm* is something akin to a state of desolation and suffering for the sake of truth or covenant.

This depiction of forsaken prophets suffering the alienation of their people while upholding a primordial covenant with God should be viewed as a parallel to the *ghazal* poet's performance of his 'lovesick' persona --- at the very least, it shows a contemporary precedent for a positive 'performance' of illness that is ethically acceptable (i.e., within the performed prophet-narrative embedded in the *sūra*). In this sense, the image of the prophet Abraham 'looking into the stars', and then declaring himself as 'sick,' stands as a typological parallel to the *ghazal* poet.

We might then see the 'lovesick persona' as a kind of para-performance to certain elements of prophetic depiction in the Qur'ān. In support of this interpretation, one can adduce also the poet's frequent usage of pilgrimage-oaths, the pervasive references to ritual, and an epistemological/eschatological rhetoric of the soul.

Indeed, if we consider again what we have asserted above to be a plausible performance-context for these poems – that is, a Marwānid elite/court environment – it would seem that this certainly leaves open the possibility of interpreting Kuthayyir's *ghazal* as in part a kind of prophetic para-performance drawing on qur'ānic/biblical themes. The projection of affiliation to sources of biblical and prophetic authority was of course a central element of Umayyad ideological and aesthetic projections, and features very prominently in the court panegyrics for Marwānid leaders by the Syro-Iraqi panegyrists such as al-Akḥṭal, al-Farazdaq, Jarīr, and others.²⁴⁹ In addition to the ample poetic evidence, material and inscriptional evidence continues to show strikingly how the Marwānids appealed to precedents of biblical authority in a wide range of forms of display and aesthetic ideological

²⁴⁹ See Rubin, "Prophets and Caliphs: The Biblical Foundations of the Umayyad Authority," in *Method and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Berg (Leiden: 2003), 73-99; Marsham, *Rituals*, 122-125; and, for a striking example by Jarīr, Agha and Khalidi, "Poetry and Identity in the Umayyad Age," *Al-Abḥath* 50:5 (2002-3), 55-119.

projection.²⁵⁰ The performance of such a *saqīm* personality, containing also such elements as pilgrimage-oaths, direct references to the place-names of the Ḥijāz, and reference to the acts of ritual, might have plausibly been set as a kind of para-performance that drew both on Jāhilī poetic precedents and on (post)-biblical imagery, combining them in what could be called a ‘ritualized *ghazal* erotics.’ Given that these texts emerge from the same decades in which the *sūra* was emerging as a prominent and flourishing new genre of verbal performance, it is not surprising that these texts should be imbued with intertextual elements drawn from qur’ānic recital.

Taken together, the elements of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poetry that we have just discussed – namely, his pervasive references within erotic contexts to rituals and the demarcated sacred space of the Ḥijāz, alongside his evocation of prophetic parallels through the deployment of a ‘love-sick’ persona that echoes the tone and verbal repertoire of narrative passages of the Qur’ān – show that his *ghazal* poetics is highly concerned with a depiction of the ‘sacred Ḥijāz’ and its associated rituals. By foregrounding the sacred landscape of the Ḥijāz in his poetry, and embedding the depiction of personal erotic expression within this landscape of ritual signifiers (i.e., the Ka’ba, or the *ḥimā*, ‘sacred enclosure’), Kuthayyir strongly affirms the sacredness of the Ḥijāz before a Marwānid audience that was greatly concerned to project its own prestigious connections to this territory and its ritual institutions. As we have argued, this ‘ritual erotics’ at work in Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poetry can be seen to merge with concerns relevant to the historical context of Marwānid patronage. In Chapter Three, we will turn to a study of Kuthayyir’s work as a panegyric poet, in order to see in more detail the ways in which this ‘ritual erotic’ poetics is at work also in his praise poetry for Marwānid patrons.

²⁵⁰ A representative (late) Marwānid example is an inscription at Quṣayr ‘Amra, recently discovered and published by Imbert, which requests God’s blessings for the *amīr* ‘as you have blessed Dāwūd and Ibrāhīm’; see Imbert, “Le prince al-Walīd et son bain: itinéraires épigraphiques à Quṣayr ‘Amra,” *Bulletin des Etudes Orientales* 64 (2015), 321-363, 341, figure 9.

KUTHAYYIR'S PANEGYRIC

3.1 Introduction: Kuthayyir's Career as a Panegyrist

In the previous chapter, we have examined Kuthayyir's major *ghazal* poetry, with a particular emphasis on how the 'ritual erotics' of this poetry might be interpreted in relation to the historical context of Umayyad patronage. In this chapter, we will set out to provide a comprehensive account of Kuthayyir's career as a panegyric poet. In our discussion of Kuthayyir's poetry, the term 'panegyric' will refer in specific to Kuthayyir's praise poetry (*madīḥ*); although Kuthayyir also composed invective (*hijā'*)²⁵¹, elegies for the dead (*rithā'*),²⁵² and other 'occasional' verse treating matters such as genealogical disputes,²⁵³ it is his praise poetry that forms by far the most significant element of Kuthayyir's non-*ghazal* poetry.

Although most famous as a *ghazal* poet, Kuthayyir achieved a high reputation among early critics for his praise poetry. In the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, the collection of critical opinions about Kuthayyir that follows the poet's genealogy at the start of the article dedicated to him includes several high assessments of Kuthayyir's achievements as a praise poet. It is reported that when Abū 'Ubayd was asked 'who is the most poetic of the people' (*man*

²⁵¹ In addition to K 23, a poem discussed below that contains some invective, see also K 76 and K 77, invectives against the Banū Ḍamra, 'Azza's tribe; see also Agh 9.7, reporting an exchange of invective with the poet al-Ḥazīn al-Diyālī.

²⁵² See K 21 and K 22, which are elegies (*marāthī*) for Kuthayyir's friend Khandaq al-Asadī; Agh 12.123-136 contains an independent article in the *Aghānī* dedicated to Kuthayyir's relationship to Khandaq and the occasions, during the pilgrimage, of these two poems. For reasons of space these two elegies are not discussed in this dissertation.

²⁵³ See K 26 and 27, which relate to a genealogical dispute over the contested 'Northern' lineage of the Khuzā'ah; for a report of this dispute having occurred in 'Abd al-Malik's presence, see Agh 9.11.

ash‘aru l-nāsi), he answered, ‘Kuthayyir...he is more poetic than Jarīr, al-Farazdaq, al-Rā‘ī [sc. *al-Numayrī*], and all of the poets, for none has achieved what Kuthayyir achieved in the praise of kings’ (*huwa ash‘aru min jarīrin wa-l-farazdaqī wa-l-rā‘ī wa-‘āmmatihim (ya‘nī l-shu‘arā’a) wa-lam yudrik aḥadun fī madīḥi l-mulūki mā adraka Kuthayyiru*).²⁵⁴ According to the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sallām, Kuthayyir ranked in the second level of ‘the poets of [the period of] Islam,’ alongside Dhū al-Rumma.²⁵⁵ In the *Aghānī*, a further statement is attributed to Ibn Sallām that depicts Kuthayyir’s talents in *madīḥ*:

Ibn Sallām said: I heard that Ibn Abī Ḥafṣa was very pleased with [Kuthayyir’s] method (*madhhab*) of *madīḥ*, and he said: he went to the very furthest extreme in *madīḥ*, for [contained] in it, along with the excellence of his poetry, was eloquence and splendor.

*Qāla bnu Sallām: wa-sami‘tu bna abī ḥafṣata yu‘jibuhu madhhabuhu fī l-madīḥi jiddan wa-yaqūlu kāna yastaqṣī l-madīḥa wa-kāna fī-hi ma‘a jūdati shi‘ri-hi khaṭalun wa-‘ujbun.*²⁵⁶

Yet despite such recognition of Kuthayyir’s importance as a praise poet, and despite the existence of a significant corpus of extant panegyric poetry that can be reliably attributed to Kuthayyir,²⁵⁷ there has been very little scholarly attention paid to Kuthayyir’s poetry other than his *ghazal*. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, whose edition of Kuthayyir’s poetry and its introduction comprise the most significant modern scholarly contribution to the study of Kuthayyir’s poetry, provides little description or comment on the poet’s panegyric poetry

²⁵⁴Agh 9.5.

²⁵⁵Ibn Sallām, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu‘arā’*, 402.

²⁵⁶Agh 9.6.

²⁵⁷Even if we include only texts of panegyrics for identifiable Umayyad patrons in ‘Abbās’s edition of the *Dīwān*, there are remains of some 40 panegyric poems extant, yielding some 750 lines of verse.

in his article on the poet in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, writing only that ‘his eulogies, though not so warm, are lengthy and symmetrical,’ followed by a brief description of the tone of his praise poetry.²⁵⁸ Blachère, who in *HLA* classes Kuthayyir among the ‘panegyrist-elegiasts’ of the Ḥijāz, provides only a very brief description of Kuthayyir’s praise poetry, stating in summary that according to ‘the texts in our possession,’ Kuthayyir’s praise poetry ‘covered the usual themes’ (*Le genre laudatif, dans les textes en notre possession, porte sur les thèmes habituels*).²⁵⁹ Wahb Rummiyah, in *The Poem of Praise to the End of the Umayyad Period* [*Qaṣīdat l-madhḥ ḥattā nihāyat al-‘aṣr al-umawī*], classes Kuthayyir among the ‘middle class’ of Umayyad poets, who practiced a form of panegyric that balanced ‘innovation’ and ‘revival,’ and comments on the degree to which the poet integrates some elements of *ghazal* into his praise poems; but in the course of his discussion, which is predominantly concerned with the highly general issue of classing poets according to their degree of ‘innovation’, only two relatively short extracts from Kuthayyir’s poetry are quoted, and there is no discussion at all of the range or variety of Kuthayyir’s panegyric.²⁶⁰ *Die Umayyadenkalifen im Spiegel ihrer zeitgenössischen Dichter*, a useful study by Rajaa Nadler that has so far not received sufficient notice in studies of Umayyad poetry and history, does provide a range of quotations from Kuthayyir’s praise poems for the Marwānids, and discusses his relationships with two of his patrons.²⁶¹ But there has been no attempt so far to provide a detailed reading of Kuthayyir’s most significant panegyric poetry, nor to examine possible connections between the poet’s career as a panegyrist and his other poetic output. It would seem that the influence of the early critical tradition’s strong association of Kuthayyir with the ‘Udhri *ghazal* has encouraged this relative neglect of Kuthayyir’s significant achievements as a panegyrist.

²⁵⁸ “Kuthayyir b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān,” *EI2* [‘Abbās], 552.

²⁵⁹ Blachère, *HLA*, 613.

²⁶⁰ See Rummiyah, *Qaṣīdat al-madhḥ ḥattā nihāyat al-‘aṣr al-umawī: bayn al-uṣūl wa al-iḥyā’ wa al-tajdīd* (Damascus: 1981), 545-550.

²⁶¹ Nadler, *Die Umayyadenkalifen im Spiegel ihrer zeitgenössischen Dichter* (published PhD diss., Friedrich-Alexander University, Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1990); on Kuthayyir, see esp. 140-143, 211-215.

Kuthayyir's panegyric career can be divided into three primary periods of activity:

- (1) Between approximately 63-68/683-687, Kuthayyir produced panegyric poetry in the circle of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, better known as Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, the Hashimite *shaykh*, who was a significant participant in the turbulent contestations over legitimacy known as the Second Fitna or Second Civil War (60-72/680-692).
- (2) From 68-86/687-705, Kuthayyir produced panegyric for the sons of Marwān b. 'Abd al-Ḥakam: first for the caliph 'Abd al-Malik (ruled 65-86/685-705), and then for his brother, the *walī al-'ahd* (crown prince/ caliph in waiting) and governor of Egypt, 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān (d. 85/704).
- (3) After a period of approximately twelve years in which he produced no extant praise poetry for Umayyad patrons, Kuthayyir reappears as a panegyrist during the caliphate of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz ('Umar II), who ruled 99-101/717-720. The final evidence for Kuthayyir as a panegyrist is attested in praise poetry for Yazīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (ruled 101-105/720-724).

This chapter will seek to elucidate the dynamics of each phase of Kuthayyir's career as a panegyrist. In discussing consecutively these phases of his career, we will attempt to explore the nature of Kuthayyir's connections to his most significant patrons, and will provide translations, with commentary, of Kuthayyir's most significant panegyric texts. This should allow us ultimately to draw some more general conclusions about Kuthayyir's work as a panegyrist and poet.

3.2 Panegyric in the Contested Ḥijāz: Kuthayyir and Ibn al-Ḥanafīya

Kuthayyir's career as a panegyrist began during the period known as the Second Civil War or Second Fitna, between 60/680 and 72/692. During this period, a crisis grounded in conflicting claims to legitimate succession to the caliphate enveloped the Islamic polity. Both of Kuthayyir's two earliest patrons – the Hashimite shaykh Mūhammad b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (known as Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, d. 81/700-701), and the caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (ruled 66-86/685-705) – were involved as central participants in these conflicts. Because of this, our study of Kuthayyir's panegyric career will begin by providing some detail about the background of these conflicts in the Ḥijāz,²⁶² in order to shed light on the nature of Kuthayyir's connection to his first patron, Ibn al-Ḥanafīya.

Before looking more closely at the events of the Second Fitna in the Ḥijāz and Kuthayyir's place within it, a word must be said about the nature of the evidence for this earliest period of Kuthayyir's activity. Whereas in other sections of this study, we are able to provide translations and commentaries on full poems by Kuthayyir, and then to put forward literary interpretations based on the presented texts, the earliest period of Kuthayyir's career must be studied through evidence that is of a different kind. Namely, for the period prior to Kuthayyir's attachment to the Marwanid caliphs, we must rely primarily on the body of literary *akhbār* transmitted about the poet, and on several fragmentary poetic texts transmitted within them. Only one of these preserved poetic texts is of sufficient extent to allow a detailed commentary (K 23, 9 lines). Our analysis below will have to draw primarily on the anecdotal narrative accounts (*akhbār*) related to Kuthayyir's attachment to the Shī'ite leader Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, as well as on other early narrative material that mention the poet, in order to reconstruct his early career. Drawing on this evidence, we will seek in this

²⁶² The most detailed and reliable narrative of the Second Fitna remains Rotter, *Die Umayyaden und der zweite Bürgerkrieg 680–92* (Wiesbaden: 1982), from which derive the basic historical facts of the account given here.

section to provide an account of the historical background against which Kuthayyir emerged as a poet, and to set this in context with the work of other Ḥijāzī ‘panegyrist-elegiasts’ who, like Kuthayyir, emerged during the Second Fitna, were famous for their contributions to the *ghazal* genre, and became attached to Umayyad patronage after the Second Fitna.

Although the origins and some details of the Second Fitna are quite complex and occasionally controversial, a basic outline of the events in the Ḥijāz can be drawn²⁶³: in Rajab 60/680, at the death of the caliph Mu‘āwiya, elements of the Ḥijāzī elite, mostly in Medina, refused to swear the oath of allegiance (the *bay‘a*) to Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya. Among those who refused to recognize Yazīd were two sons of close companions of the Prophet, both of whom were residing in Medina: ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Zubayr, and al-Ḥusayn b ‘Alī.

In Muḥarram 61/ October 680, forces led by al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī set out from Kūfa and were routed at Karbalā’ by forces sent from Syria by Yazīd. As elements of society in Medina openly rebelled against Yazīd’s claims, the Umayyad families of Medina were put under siege in the estate of the governor Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, and many were expelled from the city.

It was at around this time, most likely late in 680, that ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Zubayr, under threats from Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, fled Medina for Mecca, where he enrolled supporters and agitated against the caliphal claims of Yazīd and the Umayyads. At around this same time, Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, the *mamdūh* of Kuthayyir’s earliest poems, who, like his brother al-Ḥusayn, had also refused the *bay‘a* to Yazīd, also arrived in Mecca.

²⁶³ For a recent stimulating treatment of the causes of the Second Fitna, pointing out a number of still-unsolved issues in chronology and fact, see Shaddel, “‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr and the Mahdī: Between Propaganda and Historical Memory in the Second Civil War,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 80 (2017), 1-19.

After several failed attempts to secure the loyalty of the Medinans, Yazīd eventually sent two military expeditions into the Ḥijāz to subdue the holy cities, leading to the Battle of the Ḥarra, a gruesome confrontation that took place outside of Medina in Dhū al-Ḥijja 63/August 683, in which the ‘Syrian’ army bitterly defeated the Medinans, sacked the town (according to some reports), and forced a number of prominent figures to swear the *bay‘a* to Yazīd.²⁶⁴ The forces sent from Syria next headed to Mecca, later in 64/683-4, and set the city under siege, attempting to extract its loyalty to Yazīd. As this siege of Mecca was underway, and as the Ka‘ba itself was bombarded and set on fire, news of Yazīd’s death arrived. At this point Ibn al-Zubayr, who had begun to call himself the ‘refuge-seeker in the house,’ *al-‘ā’idh fī l-bayt*, now declared himself caliph and *amīr al-mu‘minīn* in Mecca.

Over the next nine years, until his death in the second Umayyad siege of Mecca in 73/692, Ibn al-Zubayr controlled Mecca and claimed dominion over much of the Islamic area as caliph, leading the annual pilgrimage every year during this near-decade, and commanding the loyalty for a time of supporters in Iraq, Syria, southern Arabia, and Egypt. But Ibn al-Zubayr was frustrated by the refusal of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya to swear allegiance to him. It was during this period that Kuthayyir first appears as a panegyrist, producing invective poetry against Ibn al-Zubayr, in support of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya.

Unlike his brothers al-Ḥusayn and al-Ḥasan, Ibn al-Ḥanafīya does not seem to have been involved in any direct campaign on behalf of ‘Alid caliphal claims; rather, he is reported to have refused to declare his support for a caliphal candidate until a candidate could be found that would unify all sides, thus in a sense helping the Umayyad cause *de facto*.²⁶⁵

Ibn al-Zubayr was frustrated to find that Ibn al-Ḥanafīya was unwilling to swear the *bay‘a*

²⁶⁴See especially Kister, “The Battle of the Harra: some socio-economic aspects”, in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: 1977), 33–49; and Rotter, *Zweite Bürgerkrieg*, 37-40.

²⁶⁵ See Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, V, 91-117; “Ibn al-Ḥanafīya,” E12 [Buhl].

to him as *amīr al-mu'minīn*. Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, who along with Ibn 'Abbās was the most prominent representative of the Hashimite clan in Mecca, stood awkwardly in the way of Ibn al-Zubayr's claims to legitimacy as caliph. The rivalry between the two men, which is reflected in the poetry of Kuthayyir from this period, seems to have been quite personal and deeply rooted, as their fathers had fought bitterly on opposing sides of the Battle of Ṣiffīn in 37/657.

This antipathy became more intense when, in Rabī' I 66 / October 685, an uprising in Kūfa led by the Shī'ite rebel al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd al-Thaqafī wrested the city from Zubayrid control. The Thaqafī al-Mukhtār portrayed his cause as a proxy rebellion on behalf of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya. Ibn al-Zubayr's antagonism toward Ibn al-Ḥanafīya led him to imprison the Hashimite shaykh, and to set him and his followers under a 'blockade' (*hiṣār*) within the piedmont (*al-shi'b* or *al-khayf*) of Minā, the ancestral abode of the Hashimites. It is during this period of the 680s, apparently during the period of Mukhtār's revolt and the blockade of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya's supporters, that evidence first appears of a movement claiming Ibn al-Ḥanafīya to be the *mahdī* (messianic redeemer) and the *waṣī* (successor and heir/legatee) of his father 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib --- it is as an adherent and representative of this early Shī'ite sectarian movement, referred to as al-Kaysāniya or al-Khashabiya,²⁶⁶ that the *akhbār* sources identify Kuthayyir during this period.

The early accounts of Kuthayyir's life – most prominently, the sources transmitted in the article dedicated to him in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī* – contain a number of depictions of the poet's attachment to the movement of the Kaysāniya, portraying the poet as having espoused certain 'unorthodox' dogmas related to messianic belief in Ibn al-Ḥanafīya as 'the *mahdī*' (messianic redeemer), as well as several other doctrines associated with the movement. Namely, a number of *akhbār* transmitted in the *Aghānī* attribute to Kuthayyir belief in 'return' or parousia after death (*raj'a*) and in the transmigration of souls

²⁶⁶ See Anthony, "Kaysāniya," in *Elran*; and al-Qāḍī, *Al-Kaysāniyya fi l-tārīkh wa-l-adab* (Beirut: 1974), *passim*.

(*tanāsukh*).²⁶⁷

The anecdotes that attribute such beliefs to Kuthayyir seem to be related only indirectly to the study of the corpus of Kuthayyir's poetry, as his later panegyric for Umayyad patrons and his *ghazal* poetry connect to such issues of Kuthayyir's supposed dogmatic positions only very indirectly, if at all. Iḥsān 'Abbās chose to downplay the importance of Kuthayyir's attachment to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya and the Kaysānīya, referring to this early period of Kuthayyir's activity as a 'fleeting attachment,' and implying in his introduction to the *Dīwān*, if not asserting directly, that the reports about Kuthayyir's Shī'ite extremism should be considered the likely products of later heresiographical writers.²⁶⁸ Indeed, much of the material related to Kuthayyir's attachment to the Kaysānīya, which takes the form of picturesque stories illustrating his 'unorthodox' or 'radical' views, as for example, a report wherein the poet claims to meet the souls of previous generations in young children, can hardly be considered reliable historical source material.²⁶⁹ Such reports should be accounted as historically suspect given the degree to which they reflect later developments in dogmatics and heresiography, and do not seem to contribute meaningfully to the interpretation of Kuthayyir's career as a poet. Yet several of the reports on Kuthayyir's attachment to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, his first patron, contain poetry that is consistent stylistically with the bulk of his extant poetry, and which is attributed to him reliably by early sources; these *akhbār* provide significant information about Kuthayyir's early work as a panegyrist during the Second Fitna. We will examine the evidence of Kuthayyir's earliest panegyrics here, both as background for the diachronic development of Kuthayyir's work as a praise poet but also, and, most crucially, to provide some context for understanding the role of Ḥijāzī poets in the conflicts of this period.

²⁶⁷ See Agh 9.17-18. The degree to which Kuthayyir's poetry evinces authentic evidence of the beliefs surrounding Ibn al-Ḥanafīya during and just after his lifetime, is given incisive and critical treatment by al-Qādī, *al-Kaysānīya*, 312-322, who generally affirms the early dating of Kuthayyir's 'Kaysānī' poetry.

²⁶⁸ "Kuthayyir b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān," EI2 ['Abbās]; *Dīwān Kuthayyir*, introduction, 19-23.

²⁶⁹ See, for example, Agh 9.17-18.

One poetic text from the early period stands out in particular: K 23, a poem that relates to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya's confinement in Mecca by Ibn al-Zubayr. This incident, and this poetic fragment, have been discussed in a recent article by Sean Anthony, whose reconstruction of the circumstances reflected in the text would confirm its attribution to Kuthayyir.²⁷⁰

This early example of Kuthayyir's panegyric poetry contains invective against Ibn al-Zubayr and praise for Ibn al-Ḥanafīya; according to the *khbar* in which it is transmitted, which goes back to al-Madā'inī (d. 228/843), and which is given by al-Iṣbahānī in the article on Kuthayyir in the *Aghānī*,²⁷¹ it was delivered during the time when Ibn al-Ḥanafīya was suffering confinement in Mecca at the hands of Ibn al-Zubayr. According to the report, Ibn al-Zubayr was oppressing the Banū Hāshim, committing aggressions against them, and slandering them on the minbar (*yughrī bi-him ... wa-yakhṭubu bi-him 'alā l-manābirī*). He then imprisoned Ibn al-Ḥanafīya in 'Ārim Prison, together with those among the Banū Hāshim who were in his entourage (*sā'ira man kāna bi-ḥaḍratihī min banī Hāshim*). Ibn al-Zubayr, who, the report continues, 'had heard a report that Abū 'Abdallāh al-Jadalī [al-Mukhtār's deputy in Kūfa] and the rest of the faction (*shī'a*) of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya had sworn to fight and defeat him,' was about to set fire to the prison that held the Banū Hāshim, when Abū 'Abdallāh al-Jadalī arrived to prevent the fire, rescue the Banū Hāshim, and 'release Ibn al-Ḥanafīya from the entourage (*jiwār*)²⁷² of Ibn al-Zubayr from that day forward' (*wa-akhraja bna l-Ḥanafīyati 'an jiwāri bni l-Zubayri mundh yawma'idh*). The *khbar* then provides a text of Kuthayyir's poem, introduced by the comment: 'Muḥammad b. 'Abbās al-Yazīdī recited to us, saying, Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb recited [a poem by] Kuthayyir [in which

²⁷⁰ See Anthony, "The Meccan Prison of 'Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr and the Imprisonment of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya," in *The Heritage of Arabo-Islamic Learning: Essays Presented to Wadad Kadi*, eds. Pomerantz and Shahin (Leiden: 2016), 3-30.

²⁷¹ The account occurs at Agh 9.15.

²⁷² *Jiwār* here suggests that Ibn al-Zubayr has made Ibn al-Ḥanafīya part of his entourage of followers, making him socially and politically dependent on him.

he] mentions Ibn al-Ḥanafīya when he was imprisoned by Ibn al-Zubayr in a prison called ‘Ārim Prison’ (*‘anshadanā Muḥammadu bnu Ḥabībīn la-Kuthayyiru yadhkuru bna l-Ḥanafīya wa-qad ḥabisa-hu bnu l-Zubayru fī sijnin yuqālu la-hū sijnu ‘Ārim*).

In his study of the reports about the imprisonment of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, Anthony concluded, basing his interpretation ultimately on an alternative version of these events given in al-Mas‘ūdī’s *Murūj al-Dhahab* and the *Akhhbār Makka* of al-Fākihī (fl. 3rd/9th century), that this poem was delivered by Kuthayyir not during the imprisonment of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya himself, but rather during the imprisonment of his son al-Ḥasan some months later, when Ibn al-Ḥanafīya was residing at the Shi‘b in Mecca under blockade (*ḥiṣār*) by Ibn al-Zubayr.²⁷³ The precise identity of the person imprisoned does not greatly affect the interpretation of the text for our purposes. Whether the imprisoned *mamdūḥ* was Ibn al-Ḥanafīya or his son al-Ḥasan, our concern in reading the text will be primarily with the way in which Kuthayyir’s panegyric for Ibn al-Ḥanafīya sheds light on the function and context of poetry in the contested Ḥijāz in this period, offering background for the study of his future career as a panegyrist.

K 23²⁷⁴

1. Be cursed, by the eyes of Khubayb, Thābit, and Ḥamsa, [who are] like dark-eyed birds of prey
2. You tell whoever meets you that you are a seeker of refuge (*‘ā’idhun*), but the aggrieved seeker of refuge is in the Prison of ‘Ārim

²⁷³ See Anthony, “Meccan Prison,” 10-22.

²⁷⁴ The text is given here as it is given in ‘Abbās’s edition. The poem is quoted widely in a number of early sources (see ‘Abbās’s *Dīwān Kuthayyir, takhrīj al-qaṣīda*, 226). Lines 2-8 are preserved as continuous texts in Yāqūt: 3-586 and Agh 9.15, while lines 1 and 9 are transmitted in *Tāj al-‘arūs, sub radice ḥ-d-*, and the *Ḥamāsa* of al-Buḥturī, 224, respectively.

3. Whoever sees this shaykh at the piedmont (*khayf*) near Mina, from among the people knows that he is not unjust
4. The namesake/legatee²⁷⁵ of the chosen prophet, and his cousin, the looser of shackles, and the judge of crimes
5. He refused to sell right-guidedness for error, and, in his piety toward God, fears no censure of a blamer
6. By God's grace, we recite his book, abiding at the lower slope of this mountain, the slope of the sacred ones (*ḥulūlan bi-hādhā l-khayfi khayfi l-maḥārami*)
7. Where the dove lives safe from fear, and the enemy like the friend is at peace
8. No worldly fineness endures for its possessor, and no severity of testing is a final blow
9. So do not grieve from hardship, for gladdenings will dispel the great misfortunes (*fawārija talwī bi-l-khuṭūbi l-ʿazāʿimi*)

The short poem or fragment– it is not clear, here and in Kuthayyir's other early 'Kaysānī' poems, whether the text might be an extract from a longer poem – combines invective (*hijāʿ*) against Ibn al-Zubayr with praise for the Hashimite shaykh. Ibn al-Zubayr's claims are mocked, while Ibn al-Ḥanafīya appears as a figure with an aura of sanctity, dwelling in a sacred space (al-Minā) that is inviolate, i.e., in which the forbidding of violence within the *ḥaram* is upheld. Crucial here is the way in which the poet contravenes against the association with sacred space that was central to Ibn al-Zubayr's claims of legitimacy, turning on its head and 're-appropriating' Ibn al-Zubayr's famous claim to be 'the one who takes refuge in the house (*al-ʿāʾidh fī l-bayt*).

²⁷⁵ The reading *samī l-nabī* 'namesake of the prophet' is transmitted in a number of early versions, including in the *Murūj al-Dhahab*, Yāqūt, and the *Aghānī*. *Waṣī al-nabī*, 'legatee of the prophet,' which is transmitted equally widely in early sources including al-Balādhurī, *al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*, and *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, is preferred by both 'Abbās and al-Qāḍī. See 'Abbās's *Dīwān Kuthayyir, takhrīj al-qaṣīda*, 226; and al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysānīya*, 315.

In **line 1**, Kuthayyir introduces the poem with invective against the three sons of Ibn al-Zubayr.

It is on the interpretation of **line 3** that Anthony largely bases his interpretation that the situation of the poem relates to the imprisonment of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya's son, as the line seems to refer to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya as currently abiding in the *khayf* (piedmont) of Minā. The *khayf*, located within the *ḥaram* and a common meeting place of pilgrims, was the ancestral abode of the Hashimites, and the dwelling place for Ibn al-Ḥanafīya and his followers. Reference to the *khayf* in Mecca features also, as we have seen, in Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetry, as for example in K 4, line 44, discussed above: '[belonging] to 'Azza when her people dwelled in the Khayf, and the Khayf has now become wild after [the time of] their settlement' (*li-'Azzata idh yaḥtallu bi-l-khayfī ahluhā fa-'awḥasha minhā l-khayfu ba'da ḥulūli*). It should be remarked that in both texts, the 'settlement' of this area is referred to with the same word, *ḥulūl*, evoking, as we have argued above, a play on the double meaning of *ḥ-l-l* as settlement/de-sacralization.

In **line 4**, the poet refers to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, as the 'legatee/namesake' of the prophet, introducing the language of Hashimite/'Alid succession and the patrilineal passing down of authority. A separate poetic text attributed to the early period, but also attributed to the later Kaysānī poet al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (d. 179/795),²⁷⁶ shows Kuthayyir vaunting the idea that the three sons of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīya) possessed a special claim to legitimate religious leadership. It is notable that here, in the earliest text we can reliably attribute to Kuthayyir, we see only an abbreviated mention of this: Ibn al-Ḥanafīya is the 'legatee' (*waṣī*) or 'namesake' (*samī*) of the 'chosen prophet' (*al-nabī al-muṣṭafā*) but there is no reference to him as the *mahdī*. The second reference, to the 'cousin' (*ibn 'ammihī*) of the prophet is to Ibn 'Abbās, who, with Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, led the Banū Hāshim and was an antagonist of Ibn al-Zubayr. Ibn 'Abbās is also reported to have

²⁷⁶ On al-Sayyid, see "Al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī," EI2 [al-Qāḍī]; and al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysānīya fī l-tarīkh wa l-adab*, 322-56.

been confined by Ibn al-Zubayr during this period.

In **line 5**, it is declared that the shaykh ‘does not sell right-guidedness for error’ (*lā yashrā hudan bi-ḍalālatin*): the commercial metaphor in the polemical usage of the term *shirāʿ*, to ‘sell’ right-guidedness for error, should be compared with the notions of the throwing off of covenant that were prominent in contemporary Khārijite salvific rhetoric.²⁷⁷

Lines 6 and 7 present the most memorable image of the poem. In line 6, Kuthayyir depicts the Banū Hāshim in Minā, reciting God’s ‘book’ (*kitāb*) and dwelling in ‘the *khayf* of the sacred ones’ (*khayf al-maḥārimi*). The verbal demarcation of sacred space seems to function here to set one collective antagonistically against another: dwelling in the ‘*khayf al-maḥārimi*,’ the Banū Hāshim are contrasted with the false claim of custodianship over sacred space made by the Zubayrid leader. In line 7, this image is made even stronger: the enforcement of the inviolate nature of this sacred space, the idea that it cannot be trespassed and no violence is allowed within it, is given poetic image: ‘where the dove is safe from fear and the enemy like the friend is at peace’ (*bi-ḥaythu l-ḥamāmu ʾāminu l-rawʿi sākinun wa-ḥaythu l-ʿadūwu ka-l-ṣadīqi l-musālimu*). The figure of the *ḥamām* ‘dove,’ while its precise significance in connection to the *ḥaram* is difficult to explicate, evokes imagery of the *nasīb*-repertoire in order to depict the state of ‘peace’ within the sacred space. One can note that in the famous poem of apology by al-Nābigha al-Dhubaynī (fl. late 6th-early 7th century) for his erstwhile patron al-Nuʿmān of al-Ḥīra, a mention of the *ḥamām* belonging to the beloved immediately precedes the poet’s reference to Mecca and the Kaʿba in an oath before the patron.²⁷⁸ The significance of the *ḥamām*, particularly in Umayyad *ghazal* poetry, has been noted by Jacobi, who comments the following on a reference to the bird in a poem attributed to Abū Dhūʿayb al-Hudhalī: “The motif of the dove whose plaintive voice excites the lover is frequent in Umayyad love-poetry, but exceedingly rare

²⁷⁷ See Marsham, *Rituals*, 100-101.

²⁷⁸ See Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 5, 34; the reference to the *ḥaram* follows in lines 36-38 of the poem.

in verses of the *jāhilyya*;²⁷⁹ Jacobi further argues that the *ḥamām* figure in Umayyad *ghazal* marks the way in which the Umayyad-era *ghazal* poet “projects his feelings into his surroundings,” as against what she represents as the Jāhilī poet’s naïve-objective view of nature. The *ḥamām* appears several times in Kuthayyir’s poetry, as in the *nasīb* of a later panegyric (K 11) for ‘Umar II (ruled 98-101/717-720), where the *ḥamām* appears in a *nasīb*-context that is set among pilgrims at Minā; in K 11, the bird calls out in longing, and is answered by the impassioned voice of an ‘evening-phantom’ (K 11.7: *wa-mā saja‘at min baṭni wādīn ḥamāmatun yujāwibuhā ṣā’itu l-‘ashīyi ṭarūbu* ‘and what of the dove who cries out from the bottom of the *wādī*, answered by an excited night-crier’). There are similar references to the bird in the *ghazal* poetry of Jamīl b. Ma‘mar: ‘O the dove of the thicket cries for its lost companion... (*‘a-yabkī ḥamāmu l-ayki min faqdi ‘ilfihi*).²⁸⁰ This usage carries forward a conceit well-attested in the Jāhilī corpus, in which the image of the crying ‘*ḥamām* of the thicket’ is evoked to represent the poet’s emotional disturbance.²⁸¹

Lines 8 and 9 turn from the lauding of the Hashimite and his retinue to a consoling of the *mamdūḥ* for the pains he is suffering. The consolation is articulated, in line 8, in terms that evoke language of the throwing off or renunciation of passing ‘worldly’ affairs, since both hardships and splendid things are fleeting: ‘no worldly fineness endures for its possessor, and no severity of testing is a final blow’ (*fa-mā wariqi l-dunyā bi-bāqin li-‘ahli-hi wa-lā shiddu l-balwā bi-ḍarbatin lāzimi*). Here too is a theme that occurs also in Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* and later panegyrics: the notion that the *dunyā* provides only passing attractions or suffering, will recur particularly strongly in K 58, a fragment of a praise poem for ‘Umar

²⁷⁹ Jacobi, “Time and Reality in Nasīb and Ghazal,” *JAL* 16 (1985), 7.

²⁸⁰ Jamīl 58.5 [= Gabrieli, “Ġamīl al-‘Udhri: Studio Critico e Raccolta Dei Frammeni,” *Rivista degli studi orientali* 17 (1937/1939), 133-172, poem LVIII, line 5].

²⁸¹ On the *ḥamām* in the Jāhilī *nasīb*, see Arazi and Mashalla, *Six Poets*, 391, sub *ḥ-m-m*, which attests some twelve occurrences within *nasīb* contexts, among which see especially ‘Antara 41.19, ‘O the crying of a dove in the thicket’ (*‘a-fa-min bukā’i ḥamāmatin fī aykatin...*) and al-Nābigha 7.16, ‘If the ash-colored dove sings it reminds me’ (*idhā taghannā l-ḥamāmu l-wurqu dhakkaranī*).

II.²⁸² The term *balwā* ‘testing’ in the same line, particularly in the context of the Second Fitna, is a term that is used frequently in panegyric to denote the ‘testing’ undergone by claimants for the caliphate in their conflicts with their adversaries: see K 1, line 36, for example, where Kuthayyir uses it to describe ‘Abd al-Malik’s triumph over Ibn al-Zubayr: ‘they tested him and gave him the leadership’ (*balawhu fa-’aṭawhu l-maqādata...*).

There is one further testimony that is of significance in interpreting this early period of Kuthayyir’s career as a panegyrist. There are accounts of Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya, during the period when he and the Banū Hāshim were ensconced in Mecca during Ibn al-Zubayr’s occupation, receiving a letter (*kitāb*) from ‘Abd al-Malik inviting him to Syria. This account, which is given in al-Mas‘ūdī, al-Balādhurī, and in Ibn Sa‘d, includes mention of Kuthayyir as part of the shaykh’s entourage. The account in Ibn Sa‘d (5:107) of Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya’s first trip to Syria, which occurred in 68/687²⁸³, contains a reference to Kuthayyir:²⁸⁴

Abū al-Ṭufayl said: a letter came from ‘Abd al-Malik b Marwān, as well as a messenger, who entered the Shi‘b and read out to Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya the letter. He read the letter, and it contained more graciousness than if ‘Abd al-Malik had written to his brothers or a son. In it was this: It has reached me that Ibn al-Zubayr has confined you and cut off generosity to you, and made little of your rights until you should swear the *bay‘a* to him. I have considered you and your religion, and you are more correct in what you do than he is. This is al-Shām, so alight in it where you wish, and we will welcome you, show you generosity, and acknowledge your rights. So Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya said to his companions: let us go out to this man. He said this and he went out, and with

²⁸² See section 3.5, below.

²⁸³ On this event, see al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysāniya*, 106-107.

²⁸⁴ See also the version of Kuthayyir’s venture to Syria with Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya as it appears, without the fifth line of verse by Kuthayyir, in Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1:523.

him was Kuthayyir ‘Azza, who recited the poem:

1. You are the Imam of truth and we are not deceived
2. You are he with whom we are satisfied and whom we seek
3. You are the son of the best of the people after the Prophet
4. O son of ‘Alī, go forth, like ‘Alī
5. Until you alight in the land of Kalb and Balī

The account goes on to detail Ibn al-Ḥanafīya’s trip at this point to Syria, and ‘Abd al-Malik’s series of ingratiating offers of payment and hospitality. This event, the Hāshimite entourage with Kuthayyir in tow visiting ‘Abd al-Malik in Syria, allows us to see these two participants in the Second Fitna interacting, with Kuthayyir, the favored poet of the Hashimites in Mecca, serving as a kind of conduit of prestige, so to speak, between the two leaders. As the mouth-piece for the cause of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, the Ḥijāzī poet would likely have appeared as an attractive potential spokesman to ‘Abd al-Malik, who certainly was looking to shore up his legitimacy at this moment.²⁸⁵ Connections to the Hashimites presented an avenue by which the Marwānids could achieve this. Indeed, Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, even before becoming connected to ‘Abd al-Malik in this direct and material way, had shown a ‘neutrality’ regarding claims to the caliphate that was very useful to the Umayyads: we read in Balādhurī for example that he declared the accusations of the Medinans against Yazīd to be false, and Ibn al-Ḥanafīya is in fact reported to have been rewarded for this by Yazīd.²⁸⁶ Although Ibn al-Ḥanafīya would not swear the *bay‘a* to ‘Abd al-Malik officially until a visit to Damascus in 78/697, one sees that relations between the Marwānids and the ‘Alids of the Ḥijāz, were by no means purely antagonistic, but rather involved attempts to co-opt and

²⁸⁵ On the degree to which ‘Abd al-Malik’s claims to legitimacy as caliph in this period were tenuous, as he competed with Ibn al-Zubayr’s potentially equally ‘rightful’ claims, see Robinson, *‘Abd al-Malik*, (Oxford: 2005), esp. chapter 2.

²⁸⁶See Sharon, *Black Banners from the East: the Establishment of the Abbasid State* (Jerusalem: 1983), 112.

ingratiante.²⁸⁷

Kuthayyir's transition from the sphere of generosity (the *nawāl*) around the Hashimite shaykh into the circle around the caliph during this period thus seems to be a sign of the mutual power network shared between the Umayyads and the 'Alids of the Ḥijāz. On first sight this may be surprising, given the well-known and serious hostilities between the Umayyads and 'Alids that fueled, to some extent, both the First and Second Civil Wars: the battle of Ṣiffīn in 37/657 had pitted the Sufyānid Umayyad Mu'āwīya against 'Alī in contest over claims to the caliphate, and, only a few years before Kuthayyir's appearance as a poet, in 61/680, al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī was slain at Karbalā' by forces sent by the Sufyānid caliph Yazīd. But if we look briefly at other Umayyad-Ḥijāzī patronage relationships in this period, we see that the 'Alids maintained closer ties to the Umayyads, and especially to the Marwānids, than is often acknowledged.

An interesting example of 'Alid-Umayyad contact related also to the patronage of poetry is available in the life of the first cousin of Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya, and close trusted advisor of the caliph 'Alī, 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 80/699).²⁸⁸ 'Abd Allāh was among the intimate circle of advisors around 'Alī during his caliphate, and, along with al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, helped wash 'Alī's body at his funeral. During the First Fitna, at the same time that relations between the sons of 'Alī and Mu'āwīya grew into bitter conflict, 'Abd Allāh accepted lavish payment from Mu'āwīya, said to have been as much as a million dirhams, incurring the jealousy of other Qurashites in Medina.²⁸⁹ With this money, which was later

²⁸⁷ For a stimulating collection of evidence showing that relationships between the Umayyads and the Ḥijāzī elites were often more ambiguous and potentially friendly than assumed, see Hawting, "The Umayyads and the Ḥijāz," *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 2 (1972), 39–46.

²⁸⁸ On the life of 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far, with citations to sources, see Madelung, "The "Hāshimīyyāt" of al-Kumayt and Hāshimī Shi'ism," *Studia Islamica* 70 (1989), 5–26, from which the description of 'Abd Allāh given here derives; see also Rhodokanakis, *Der Diwan des Ubaid-Allāh Ibn Kais ar-Rukajjāt* (Vienna 1902), *Einleitung*, 36 f.

²⁸⁹ See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 88.

increased even more by Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya, ‘Abd Allāh became a generous patron of poetry, musicians, and signers in Medina. It is reported by al-Balādhurī that when asked why he gave so much money to ‘Abd Allāh, Yazīd answered: ‘He will distribute his money. Thus my gift to him is my gift to the people of Medina.’²⁹⁰ ‘Abd Allāh became a famous *maecenas* who cultivated the burgeoning culture of poetry and song-performance in Medina at the time. Yet despite the great deal of material support he received from the Umayyads, ‘Abd Allāh was not entirely deferential to their authority: it is reported that ‘Abd ‘Allāh refused to give the hand of his daughter Umm Kulthūm, granddaughter of the prophet, to Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, unless his cousin al-Ḥasan also agreed to this, a condition that he knew would not be met.

Unlike his cousin Ibn al-Ḥanaḫfiya, ‘Abd Allāh swore the *bay‘a* to Ibn al-Zubayr during the Second Fitna, after al-Ḥusayn’s killing at Karbalā’. As a result, the prominent Hashimite’s fortunes declined during the caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik. Yet despite this, ‘Abd Allāh was able to intercede with the caliph on behalf of one the most favoured and accomplished poets that he patronized: Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt. Ibn Qays, a Meccan Qurashite *ghazal* poet who, during the Second Fitna, was the leading panegyrist for the Zubayrid cause, was given entry into ‘Abd al-Malik’s *nawāl* due to ‘Abd Allāh’s intercession after the end of the Fitna.²⁹¹ Ibn Qays, like Kuthayyir, later became attached to the circle of patronage around the caliph’s brother ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān, who ruled as the governor of Egypt from 66-85/685-705. The poems by Ibn Qays in praise of ‘Abd Allāh, of which three are extant in his *dīwān*, praise the Hashimite for his Qurashite/Hashimite genealogy and his great generosity, but show none of the particular sacral or messianic tones we have observed in Kuthayyir’s poetry for Ibn al-Ḥanaḫfiya.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 289. Translated by Madelung in “The Hāshimiyāt,” 19.

²⁹¹ See Rhodokanakis, *Diwan*, 38.

²⁹² Blachère remarks on the surprising degree to which Ibn Qays’s poems for the ‘Alid patron lack religious sentiment, remarking on IQ 12 that the poem ‘does not depart much from the figure of the magnificent and superb Bedouin sayyid’: Blachère, *HLA*, 585.

But the parallel paths of these two poets is remarkable in itself, for what it shows of the elasticity of relationships between poets and the contestants for power and authority in this period. The two poets, who were both best known to posterity as *ghazal* poets, produced panegyrics on opposite sides of the conflict that pitted Ibn al-Zubayr against the Umayyads; both of them also, through channels of influence between the Hashimites of the Ḥijāz and the Marwānids, ended up as important panegyrists of the Umayyads in the post-Fitna environment. Looking beyond the lives of these two poets, numerous other examples exist of poets from the Ḥijāz being directly involved in the contests over legitimacy in the Ḥijāz, and then performing their allegiance powerfully for the Umayyads during the Marwānid period. In the same Meccan prison, the *Sijn ‘Ārim*, in which Ibn al-Ḥanafiya is said to have been confined, Ibn al-Zubayr also locked away the poet Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī. According to a *khbar* reporting the incident that is given in the *Aghānī*,²⁹³ Ibn al-Zubayr imprisoned the *ghazal* poet of Hudhayl due to his unyielding loyalty to the Umayyads (in fact called his ‘passion’ *hawā* for them, Agh 24.110). The account in the *Aghānī* of the confrontation between the two men includes a speech by Abū Ṣakhr, in which he openly lauds the generosity and brave qualities of the Umayyads in the presence of Ibn al-Zubayr, a speech rendered in rhyming prose in the *Aghānī* and offering an encapsulation of many of the themes of Umayyad panegyric – namely, the speech focusses on the Umayyads’ tremendous liberality with their resources, their noble birth, and their ‘closeness to the prophet’ (*qurbatun min rasūli llāhi*, 24.110), their descent from the greatest heroes of Quraysh. The *khbar* then informs that the poet was put in captivity in *Sijn ‘Ārim* for a year. After the end of the Second Fitna and the assertion of Umayyad control over the Ḥijāz, Abū Ṣakhr became a panegyrist for both ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān and ‘Abd al-Malik, and celebrated their restored control over the Ḥijāz in an extant panegyric.²⁹⁴

²⁹³ Agh 24.110-112.

²⁹⁴ On Abū Ṣakhr’s life, see also the brief account in Dmitriev, *Das poetische Werk*, 28-29; the panegyric referred to is Abū Ṣakhr’s poem 10, translated by Dmitriev at 218-225.

We should conclude from such examples of poets playing a key role in the contestations over legitimacy in the Ḥijāz during the Second Fitna – and such examples could certainly be multiplied²⁹⁵ – that the role played by poetry was not of a secondary or ancillary importance in the projection of contesting claims on authority. Rather, as we will see asserted explicitly in Kuthayyir’s major panegyric poems for the Marwānid line – to which we turn presently – the power of the Ḥijāzī poet in the post-fitna environment was quite substantial.

²⁹⁵ To give one last relevant example, when al-Mukhtār retook Kufa, he imprisoned several poets, including Surāqah al-Bāriqī and al-A’shā of Hamdan; see “Surāqah al-Bāriqī,” E12 [Husain].

3.3 Panegyrics of Marwānid Supremacy: Kuthayyir and ‘Abd al-Malik

We have examined above an account, given in the version provided by Ibn Sa‘d, which reports that Kutahyyir accompanied Ibn al-Ḥanaḥfiya’s expedition to Syria in 68/687 at the invitation of ‘Abd al-Malik. A further report, given widely in a number of early sources, also attests to the poet’s attachment to ‘Abd al-Malik while Ibn al-Zubayr was still in control of the Ḥijāz, before ‘Abd al-Malik set out to confront the Zubayrids at the battle of Maskin, which occurred in the Fall of 71/691.

The *khbar* reports that just as he was about to set out on the expedition to retake the Ḥijāz from the Zubayrids, ‘Abd al-Malik was beckoned to stay by a female companion; according to the *khbar*, the caliph recited on this occasion two lines by Kuthayyir. The version in the *al-Akḥbār al-Muwaffaqiyyāt* of al-Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/870), is as follows:²⁹⁶ ‘when ‘Abd al-Malik gathered to leave to (fight against) Muṣ‘ab [ibn al-Zubayr], ‘Ātika bint Yazīd forbade him, but he refused her (*nahat-hu ... fa-’abā ‘alayyhā*)... but when she saw his seriousness about leaving, she wept. Then ‘Abd al-Malik cited from the poetry of Kuthayyir:’

[K 29, lines 10-12]

1. If he desires to make war, his determination is not dissuaded by a beautiful woman decorated by pearl jewelry
2. Who tried to forbid him (to go), but when she saw that her forbidding had not hindered him, she wept and her servants wept for her distress
3. Despite his love, her forbidding did not dissuade him, on the morning that her tear

²⁹⁶ See al-Zubayr, *Akḥbār al-muwaffaqiyyāt*, 439. The *khbar* is also given in *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5:37 and *al-Kāmil fi l-tarīkh*, 4:324.

ducts shed wild tears

The embedding of these lines of poetry into this picturesque narrative *khobar* certainly cannot be taken as a historical recounting of the caliph's speech as he prepared to set out against al-Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr. Nonetheless the passage, which constructs a picturesque situation in which the caliph derives *nuṣḥ* 'counsel' or 'advice' from the panegyrist's work, attests to the exegetical tradition's assumption that the Ḥijāzī poet was with 'Abd al-Malik before he marched through the Jazīra to fight al-Muṣ'ab at the Battle of Maskin in the Fall (October) of 72/691.

Yet while the *akhbār* are useful in confirming the outlines of the poet's career, interpretation of Kuthayyir's work as a panegyrist for 'Abd al-Malik in this period does not have to rely primarily on reports in the *akhbār* literature, nor solely on the texts of poems preserved as fragments within these reports. Kuthayyir's extant poetry contains texts from nine separate praise poems for this patron (K 1, K 29-37). Eight of these nine poems (K 29-37) are preserved only in a fragmentary state in later works: the texts of these poems, which yield a total of 112 lines of verse, must be pieced together from fragments usually of only one or two lines in length, with no single fragment among these poems longer than nine lines (K 31, lines 21-29). Fortunately, however, there is one extensive poem of praise by Kuthayyir for 'Abd al-Malik that is preserved, apparently in full, in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. K 1 is 78-line panegyric poem for 'Abd al-Malik. The poem, which we will present now in a translation and commentary, commemorates and celebrates the re-taking of the Ḥijāz by forces dispatched by 'Abd al-Malik.

K 1 is the chief example of Kuthayyir's early Marwanid panegyric, and perhaps unique as a major victory ode for a Marwānid patron by a poet from the Ḥijāz. Our commentary on the text will be interposed where we have perceived breaks between sections of the poem. The poem, which could be termed a 'battle ode' or 'victory ode' divides as follows:

- (1) Lines 1-13 comprise a *nasīb* or 'amatory prelude,' in which the poet depicts the abandoned site of the beloved in terms strongly reminiscent of his *ghazal* poetry.
- (2) Lines 14-23 comprise a *raḥīl* or 'journey section' featuring a group of turbaned riders, connected to the *mamdūḥ* through an explicit linking device (*sa-ta'tīka*, 'they will reach you,' line 15)
- (3) Lines 24-35 comprise a distinctive praise section (*madīḥ*), in which the coterie of 'lords' (*bahālīl*, line 27) around the *mamdūḥ* are described in sensuous and quasi-sacral terms.
- (4) Lines 36-60, the central 'battle ode' portion of the text, describe the 'pouring' (*adabba*, line 36) of the patron's 'squadrons' (*maqānīb*) over the Ḥijāz, as they overrun and subdue it, including vivid depictions of battle.
- (5) Lines 61-64 comprise *fakhr* in which the poet boasts of the 'magical' qualities of his verse, comparing himself to a snake-charmer.
- (6) Finally, lines 65-78 offer a climactic section of praise (*madīḥ*), in which the *mamdūḥ* is praised in terms that recapitulate and bring to a head much of the foregoing themes and material.

The central theme or purpose, so to speak, of this panegyric, is to laud and celebrate the supremacy of the patron, 'Abd al-Malik, in connection to his establishment of control over the poet's home territory, within the Ḥijāz. Although the latest datable historical event referred to explicitly in the poem is the Battle of Marj Rāhiṭ (64/May 684), the content of the poem appears to date its delivery to after 67/687, as it celebrates the subduing of areas of Western Arabia that came under Umayyad control at this period.

In our commentary, and in the interpretation that follows it, a focus of our approach will be the ways in which the erotic themes and language of the *nasīb* resonate throughout the later sections of the ode, and the ways in which a thematics of erotic 'longing' and companionship inflects the praise of the caliph, thus pervading the panegyric act of the

poem.

K 1

(*tawīl*)

1. My two friends, since Umm al-Ḥakīm has departed and abandoned her booths for tents of ‘Udhayb
2. Then, after she has gone, give me drink of no water from Tihāma, even if the Spring showers have turned it into a torrent.
3. You used to adorn al-Bilāṭ [with your presence], but, on the evening you departed, it parted with its beauty and adornment.
4. Those who were satisfied when you were present in the land, were given that morning bitter water to drink and complained of its unwholesomeness
5. For she has become far away, divulging to you what she feels, and the land would not complain to you when she dwelled there
6. If he wishes, settlements now empty that once belonged to ‘Azza or love poems he has declaimed make him weep
7. For, O ‘Azza, could the soul of the one that you have killed ever become free of care, without desire?
8. Whatever else I may forget, I will never forget how she brought back her camels in the morning at Shabbā, and departed.

9. In the early part of time's course a delicate grace enveloped us, and we lived for a time safe from her departure
10. She was like the female companion of a male camel - when he turns away to one side and turns away his face from her
11. So I will not forget her, and I will not cease to ask the soft white gazelles about her when they appear
12. Whether I will come to experience with Umm al-Ḥakīm a time of joy that the birds tell me of, or has this time drawn near
13. I say, whenever the birds pass by in the distance - be patient, one day you may win her

The four lines that open the poem employ the topos of the *aṭlāl*, serving to locate the poet at the site that has been abandoned by the beloved. The toponym *‘udhayb* in **line 1**, which specifies the site to which the beloved has departed, refers to a water-course running through flat land south of Yanbū‘ al-Baḥr, on the Tihāma coast;²⁹⁷ it is thus located in the area between Mecca and Medina, heading down to the Red Sea coast, which corresponds with the ‘main area of abode’ of Kuthayyir’s tribe, the Khuzā‘a.²⁹⁸ In **line 2**, the exclamation *lā tasqiyānī* ‘give me no drink of water’ shows the poet refusing to drink the curative waters, enduring instead in his ‘love-sick’ condition; we thus have already a signalling that the *nasīb* is here oriented not toward ‘moving on’ but rather toward *persisting* in the state of bereavement. The ‘future-oriented’ quality that has been much remarked on in *ghazal* poetry is strongly present in the *nasīb*-movements of Kuthayyir’s panegyric poetry, where

²⁹⁷ See Thilo, *Die Ortsnamen in der altarabischen Poesie* (Wiesbaden: 1958), 12. The toponym occurs famously as a vantage point from the Red Sea Coast toward Egypt in the final storm-watching scene from Imru’ Qays’s *Mu‘allaqa*, at line 73 of the poem: see Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, volume 2 (Oxford: 1996), 83.

²⁹⁸ See “Khuzā‘a,” EI2 [Kister], 77.

it is likewise marked by the use of imperfect tense verbs and a strongly 'introspective' mood.²⁹⁹

In **line 3**, the address of the poet shifts into a second person plural: 'you used to adorn al-Bilāṭ' (*wa-kuntum tazīnūna l-Bilāṭa*).³⁰⁰ Al-Bilāṭ was a wide, open paved area next to the central mosque in Medina, a famous element of the city's mosque complex within the *ḥaram*. According to a number of early accounts, the Bilāṭ (the name of which derived ultimately from Greek *palaestra*) was constructed by Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, when he was governor of Medina under Mu'āwiya, during which time he led and financed major building works, most prominent among which was the construction of the *bilāṭ* itself.³⁰¹ The mention of this site within the *nasīb* thus juxtaposes the evocation (*dhikr*) of the abandoned camp with reference to Marwānid patronage of, and affiliation to, the Ḥijāz. The phrase 'you used to adorn al-Bilāṭ' (*wa-kuntum tazīnūna l-bilāṭa*) seems to refer to both the vanished beloved and to Marwānid presence in and patronage of the Ḥijāz. It is worth recalling that, as this poem was being declaimed most likely in the late 680's or early 690's, Umayyad presence in Medina was the source of ongoing and bitter conflict. As mentioned above, following the refusal of Medinan *anṣār* and *mawālī* to swear the *bay'ā* to Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya at the outset of the succession crisis, the Umayyad families were expelled from Medina and the estate of the Marwānids, the Dār Marwān, was besieged; this was then followed, later in the same year, by the bloody Battle of the Ḥarra, in which the rebellious Medinans were

²⁹⁹ In addition to the poem discussed presently, see also for example, among Kuthayyir's fragmentarily preserved poems for 'Abd al-Malik, K 30 and 32, which evince highly 'introspective' *ghazal* thematics.

³⁰⁰ The reading *al-bilāṭ* is transmitted in the *Muntahā* and *Kitāb Asās al-Balāgha* by al-Zamakhsharī; see Zamakhsharī *sub radice b-l-ṭ*. Yāqūt and Fayrūzabādī (Riyad: 1969) read *bilād*; *bilāṭ* seems clearly a better reading, as 'Abbās decides. It is the *lectio difficilior* and also avoids repetition of the word *bilād*, which appears in the following line.

³⁰¹ See Munt, *The Holy City of Medina* (Cambridge: 2014), 103-104.

vanquished by the ‘Syrian’ army.³⁰² It is to be noted that Marwān and his family, including the *mamdūh* ‘Abd al-Malik, had been resident in Medina, and it was only at this time that they fled to Syria, during the period of Yazīd’s embattled caliphate.

The mention in the *nasīb* of Umayyad affiliation to the Ḥijāz might thus be read as a striking example of how the *aṭlāl*-topos can be used to refer to particular (and contested) contemporary events. The reference here to Medina, and to al-Bilāṭ in particular, is not, in fact, unique to this poem. There are ‘nostalgic’ references to the topography of Medina, for example, in the poetry of the Marwānid-era poet Abū Qaṭīfa, himself from a collateral branch of the Umayyad family, who was among those expelled from Medina during the Second Fitna.³⁰³ According to Hilary Kilpatrick, the poetry attributed to Abū Qaṭīfa, in the article that opens the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, consists primarily of a ‘nostalgic recollection of familiar landmarks in Medina.’³⁰⁴ Specifically, mention of the Bilāṭ features prominently in his preserved poetry, as when he declares: ‘I wish I knew - is al-Bilāṭ as it once was, and the place of prayer by the ravine palaces (*layta shi‘rī hal al-Balāṭu ka-‘ahdī wa-l-muṣallā ilā quṣūri l-‘aqīqī*).³⁰⁵ The nostalgic naming of landmarks within the Ḥijāz features prominently in the *nasīb* movements of a number of post-Fitna panegyrics, and is employed to powerful effect here by Kuthayyir.

Lines 4 and 5 employ a parallel verbal structure (*wa-qad ‘aṣbaḥa*, line 4; *wa-qad aṣbaḥat*, line 5) to juxtapose the bereaved poet and the departed beloved, who has become ‘distant’ (*shattā*) yet who still ‘discloses what she knows’ (*tabuththuka mā bi-hā*, line 5).

³⁰² See Kister, “The Battle of the Harra: some socio-economic aspects,” in *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem: 1977), 33–49; Rotter, *Zweite Bürgerkrieg*, 37–40; Hawting, “The Umayyads and the Hijāz,” 42.

³⁰³ On Abū Qaṭīfa, see Agh 1.24–46.

³⁰⁴ See Kilpatrick, *Making the Great Book of Songs* (London and New York: 2003), 70.

³⁰⁵ Agh 1.27. Abū Qaṭīfa mentions *al-Bilāṭ* also in three other poems: 1.26, 1.27, 1.30.

Lines 7-13, end the *nasīb* movement in a way that is oriented toward the future and is markedly ‘introspective.’ In verbal register and imagery they reflect closely the independent *ghazal* poems. The chief way in which affinity is shown with the *ghazal*, as opposed to the Jāhilī *nasīb*, is through the tenses of the verbs. The question in **line 7**, ‘could the soul of the one that you have killed ever become free of care, without desire’ (*hal yuṣbiḥan yā ‘Azzu man qad qatal-ti-hi mina l-hammi khalūwan nafsuhū lā hawan la-hā*), picks up on the use of *aṣbaḥa* in lines 4 and 5, but shifts the time-perspective into a suspended present signified by the imperfect verbal tense – although the departure of the beloved in line 5 is indicated through a usage of the perfect verb (‘she *has become* far away, but divulging’), the poet’s rhetorical question is now oriented to the future: *hal yuṣbiḥan*.

The phrase in **line 8** ‘whatever I forget, I shall not forget’ (*wa-mā ‘ansa mi-l-‘ashyā’i lā ‘ansā*) again shows the *ghazal* poet’s characteristic usage of an imperfect verb to declare that, in the future, he ‘shall not’ forget. The wording itself evokes strongly the characteristic phrasing found in the *ghazal* poetry of Jamīl Buthayna: in a *ghazal* poem by Jamīl we find a nearly identical phrase: ‘whatever I forget, I shall not forget’ (*wa-mā ansa mi-l-ashyā’i lā ‘ansa qawla-hā*).³⁰⁶ One can compare also, in Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poetry, K 4.3: ‘I desire to forget her recollection but it is as though Layla appears to me at every path’ (*‘urīdu li-‘ansā dhikra-hā fa-ka-‘anna-mā tamaththalu lī laylā bi-kulli sabīli*) which, as we have seen, is very close to a line also attributed to Jamīl. We can see here an example of how the characteristic style attributed to the ‘Udhri *ghazal* is present, quite strongly, in the opening of the panegyric.

In **line 9** the poet returns to recalling the union with the beloved *in the past*, ‘at the earliest time’ (*fī awwali l-dahri*), and then compares the lovers to two camels, the male turning away only to return when his mate calls out to him in longing (*ḥannati la-hu f-ir‘awā la-hā*, 10). This image of the past is then punctuated with a return to the future-oriented present

³⁰⁶ *Dīwān Jamīl*, ed. Naṣṣār, 38, line 3.

in line 11: 'So I will not forget her, and I will not cease to ask the soft white gazelles about her when they appear' (*fa-lastu bi-nāsīhā wa-lastu bi-tārikin 'idhā a'raḍa l-'udmu l-jawāzī su'ālahā*). The use of *lastu* is quasi-exhortative ('I will not'), punctuating the nostalgia of the *nasīb* with a declaration of enduring attachment.

This forward-looking *ghazal* mood culminates in line 13, where, in the second hemistich, the poet declares 'be patient, one day you may win her' (*la'allaka yamwan fa-ntazar 'an tanālahā*). There is thus even a hopeful coloring at the end of the *nasīb*, as the poet moves on to the next section of the poem.

14. For if she is in Egypt, in a place of settlement, living in the protection of those who live in its sand dunes
15. Camels with sunken eyes, worn thin by riding, take you there among the riders, keeping pace on a camel with a silver ring in its nose, whose straps I have tied tight
16. Riding these [sc. sunken-eyed camels] are turbaned men, who directed their companionship to her, until she severs her connection
17. Whenever I fear the distance that has come between our abodes, I join my ties with her by means of the forelocks of swift camels
18. Upon an ancient route the center of which gleams, down which the reddish white camels speedily amble, and grow tired
19. And many is the camel with bare and injured hooves that I have safeguarded with my shoe, and I have not fastened its thongs
20. It is right that I should protect them with the kind of shoes that I have fashioned for

them; the like of what they have is due to them if I could protect them.

21. When she trips over a difficult part of the road, other exhausted camels push her on,
just as worn out as she

22. If a young camel [of the herd] strays away from her, she makes the groan of the
mother gazelle calling to her young one

23. I recalled that the soul has not recovered from you, and has not accomplished its
intention born of its love for Umayya

Lines 14-23 consist of a 'group rider' journey section, in which a journey is depicted toward the patron made by a group of riders across the desert.³⁰⁷ Here, *sa'-ta'ti-ka* in line 15 indicates explicitly that the journey is toward the addressee of the poem, the *mamdūh*. The transitional element here is thus the most explicit kind, or what Jacobi called "a *takhalluṣ* in the proper sense, motivating the poet's change of subject or providing a link between different themes,"³⁰⁸ thus representing a full narrative linking of the scene of the *nasīb* to the *madih*. As such, the passage fits with Jacobi's depiction of the Umayyad-era panegyric as typically more suited to a narrative reading of the *raḥīl*-section, as against the strongly 'descriptive' elements of the Jāhili *raḥīl*. Rather than focus on issues related to the generic or formal evolution of the *qaṣīda*, our discussion of *raḥīl*-passages in Kuthayyir's panegyric poems will attempt to elucidate the ways that the 'camel section' amplifies the

³⁰⁷ The study of such *raḥīl* passages has been central to discussions of the diachronic evolution of the *qaṣīda* form in the Umayyad period, when the structure of the panegyric ode became somewhat ossified. In sketching the diachronic development of the panegyric, Jacobi developed a typology of 'transitional motifs' (Verbindungsmotive) and linking formulae, drawing her conclusions primarily from the work of the Syro-Irāqī court poets Jarīr, al-Akhṭal, and al-Farazdaq. See Jacobi, "The Camel-Section of the Panegyric Ode", *JAL* 13 (1982), 1-22; Papoutsakis, *Desert Travel*, 21-49; and the critical discussion in Nadia Jamil, *Ethics and Poetry in Sixth-Century Arabia*, 32 f.

³⁰⁸ Jacobi, "The Origins of the Qasida Form," in *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa*, eds. Sperl and Shackle (Leiden: 1996), 25.

particular effect of the *nasīb* and connects to later praise sections of the poem - i.e., the ways in which erotic themes and reference to the praise-act can be discerned in the ‘camel section,’ often through forms of polysemy or semantic overlap.

The language of **Line 16** somewhat ambiguously combines elements of *raḥīl*-themes with reference to the love relationship of the *nasīb*: when the riders are depicted as having ‘directed their companionship to her’ (*wajjahū ṣaḥābata-hum ilayyhā*), the referent of the object pronoun *-hā* is somewhat ambiguous: it refers primarily to the nose-ringed camel (*mubrāh*) in line 16, but, particularly in performance, it would also pick up on the reference to the beloved of the *nasīb*. If one stresses the importance of the aural performance of the poem as primary for interpreting the panegyric’s force, such ‘semantic overlap’³⁰⁹ between thematic sections of the text become more important. The impression that such a polysemy ought to be felt is then affirmed in line 17, where the poet asserts that he ‘joins his ties with her’ whenever he ‘fear[s] the distance between their abodes.’ The signification of the erotic loss (and potential re-gaining) in the *nasīb* follows into the *raḥīl*. In lines 18-21, the poet offers boasts about the endurance of the camels through the difficult journey. Then again, in line 22, there is an element that recalls the *nasīb*: the camel is described as groaning ‘like the mother gazelle calling to her young one’, an image that recalls the appearance of such bereaved animals in *nasīb*.

At the end of this *raḥīl* passage, in **line 23**, there is a further, and more explicit, linking of the journey description back to the *nasīb*. We have seen in the *nasīb* that reference to the beloved is closely juxtaposed with reference to the Umayyad line, particularly in the address in second-person plural forms in lines 3-4. Here, in line 23, coming at the end of this *raḥīl* movement, there is a direct linking of the poet’s struggle for ‘consolation’ to the Umayyad patrons: the poet declares ‘I recalled that the soul has not recovered from you, and has not accomplished its intention born of the love of Umayya’ (*tadhakkartu ’anna l-*

³⁰⁹ See Sells, “Guises of Ghūl” (1994).

nafsa lam tasli 'ankum wa-lam taqdi min ḥabbī 'umayyata bāla-hā). This line encapsulates a sense that seems to have accumulated by this point throughout the *nasīb* and *raḥīl*: unquenched desire, which perseveres into the present, has been evoked in the *nasīb*, followed by a section of journeying that carries forward and builds on the semantic and thematic range of the *nasīb* – in line 23, this sequence culminates in a collective address to the Umayyad patrons. This direct verbal linkage of the Umayyad addressee to the beloved is a feature that appears also in several other of Kuthayyir's fragmentarily preserved Marwānid panegyrics, as in K 41 for 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān, line 3: 'leave then Salmā if your seeking her has failed, and recall your two friends among the Sons of al-Ḥakam' (*da' 'anka Salmā 'idh fāta maṭlabu-hā wa-dhkur khalīlayyaka min Banī l-Ḥakam*), where the 'sons of Ḥakam' is a reference to the Marwānid family. Such passages rhetorically linking the beloved and the *mamdūḥ* are not rare in panegyric; in Kuthayyir's work, we would read such passages as showing that the erotic scene of the *nasīb* should not be taken as even nominally separate from the panegyric act of the poem, but rather that the erotic theme is integrated in the act of praise. This point is reinforced also by the resonance of the place-names in the *nasīb*, which can be understood in terms of contemporary contestation over control of the Ḥijāz, but which also show the poet harnessing the dramatically achieved subjective bereavement of the *nasīb* in order to aggrandize the Umayyads as contestants in these conflicts.

Having made this connection, the poem now turns to address and describe the *mamdūḥ* within his retinue of accompanying 'lords' (*bahālīl*).

24. And how, while you are in Dhū Dawrān could you cross the distance to meet her
departures and journeys on the banks of the Baradā

25. In bands of men, among whom she alighted at the plain of Rāhiṭ and in the highlands
around Tubnā, its meadow and hills

26. (They are) As if the gleaming white slave girls in their houses were wild white oryx does in an empty open space at Rumāḥ
27. They hold assemblies at evening and in the day; they are lords whose generosity is desired by those who petition
28. In the night it is as though they were the lamps of a monk at Mawzan, who dampens the wicks with oil
29. They saunter there across the length of ‘Abqarīya rugs which brush the hems of their garments or touch their sandals
30. They are the people of the reclining thrones, royal favorites on the right and the left
31. They greet him as their lord, through whom the Lord returns to ‘Abd Shams their greatness and beauty
32. The rings of hair on the sides of his head are loosened and drenched, and dark musk from Darayn runs through it
33. He grasped the Caliphate with his two hands, when other men had desired to seize it
34. They did not give it up willingly out of love, but with the Mashrafī blade he took it for himself
35. He is the man who rewards with goodwill those who rightfully deserve it, and who ties thongs to the shoes of the one who comes seeking reward
36. They tested him, and then gave to him the leadership, after he had filled the land, both its flatlands and mountains

This passage, in which the coterie of ‘lords’ (*bahālīl*) who surround the *mamdūh* is described in sensuous terms, yet terms which also seem to carry sacral connotations, is not easily classed according to the basic taxonomy of the parts of the Arabic panegyric ode. It is a praise section, wherein the imagery, including the image of the ‘white slave girls...like wild oryx does’ in line 26 (*ka-’anna l-qiyāna l-ghurra waṣṭa buyūtihim ni’ājun*) carries forward the erotic atmosphere of the *nasīb*, but staging this sensual-paradisaical scene at the site of the Umayyad *mamdūh*. One can compare this passage with the scenes of luxury at court in the work of the professional itinerant panegyrist al-A‘shā (d. circa 3/625), whose sensuous descriptions of life among elite coterie also combine description of luxury with eschatological overtones.³¹⁰ Kuthayyir’s comparison of the ‘lords’ to the ‘lamps of a monk’ (*ka-’annahum qaṣran maṣābīhu rāhibin*) likewise evokes precedents of the early Arabic *nasīb*, where the burning lamps of monks comprise a familiar image in similes depicting the beloved or other phenomena, as in the storm-watching scene in Imru’ Qays’s *Mu‘allaqa*, where the storm is compared to ‘the lamps of a hermit (*rāhib*) who has been generous with oil on the twisted wicks.’³¹¹

The shift in place and reference at the opening of line 24 is not easily parsed: the difficulty inheres in the meaning and syntax of *talqā bi-ka l-nawā* in line 24, which, if taken to mean ‘cross the distance to meet’, will take as its object *taz‘āna-hā fa-ḥtimāla-hā*, ‘her departures and journeys.’ ‘Departures and journeys’ then is followed by the appositive *aṣārīma* ‘bands of men’ in the accusative case at the beginning of the next line. The beloved is thus in Syria, alighting from among a ‘band’ or ‘squadron’ (a *ṣarm*, line 25), while the poet is portrayed as still in the Ḥijāz (at Dawrān). It seems, then, that again the beloved, who is mentioned as alighting at Marj Rāhiṭ, is being juxtaposed metonymically with the Umayyad *mamdūh*. In Muḥarram 65 / mid-August 684, it was at this plain that the supporters of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, led by the Kalb and their *sayyid* Ḥassān b. Mālik al-Baḥdal, defeated the Qays under

³¹⁰ See Kennedy, *The Wine Song in Classical Arabic Poetry* (Oxford: 1997).

³¹¹ Imru’ Qays, *Mu‘allaqa*, line 39. See Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, volume 2, 69. See also Fowden, “The Lamp and the Wine Flask: Early Muslim Interest in Christian Monasticism,” in *Islamic Crosspollinations*, ed. Montgomery et al (Cambridge: 2007), 1-28.

Ḍaḥḥāk b Qays al-Fihri, who supported the caliphal claims of Ibn al-Zubayr.³¹² As we have noted above, Marwān and his family, including ‘Abd al-Malik, had left the Ḥijāz after the purging of Umayyads from Medina in the early 60’s/680’s: it thus seems justified to see this departure of the beloved, alighting then at Marj Rāhiṭ, as closely paralleling the trajectory of the Marwānid family itself.

The description of the Umayyad patron and his coterie of ‘lords’ (*bahālīl*) that follows in lines 26-31 describes these in terms that blend a kind of sensuous language associated with the erotics of the *nasīb*, with a language rich in connotations of the sacral. First the ‘gleaming white slave-girls in their houses’ are compared to ‘wild white ewes’ (26). In the next line they are said to hold ‘assemblies at night and by day’ (*andīyāt bi-l-‘ashīyi wa-bi-l-ḍuḥā*), while their ‘generosity is desired by those who petition’ (*yarjū l-rāghibūna nawālahā*). The impression that the mentioning of the terms demarcating the times of day (*al-‘ashī and al-ḍuḥā*) carry sacral connotations related to vigils and times of prayer³¹³ is strengthened in the next line, when the lords are compared to ‘the lamps of a monk at Mawzan’ (line 38). Then, in lines 28-29, these sacral connotations are heightened yet more, as the lords are described as walking upon sumptuous tapestries (*‘abqariya*, 29), and then grouping to the left and right of the caliph. There is an eschatological/ other-worldly framing here, recalling the arranging of souls onto the left and right in the hereafter. The description gives an impression not only of impressive material well-being and luxury, but also of a kind of redemptive aura that evokes images of other-worldliness.³¹⁴

³¹² See “Marj Rāhiṭ,” in *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity* [Heffron].

³¹³ On these terms, see Rubin, “Morning and Evening Prayers in Early Islam,” *JSAI* 10 (1987), 40-67.

³¹⁴ On the *nasīb* scene in the *qaṣīda* as a ‘reversal’ of eschatological and paradisaical imagery in the Qur’ān, see Neuwirth, *KTS*, 429-431.

In **line 31**, those surrounding the *mamdūḥ* ‘greet him’ *yuḥayy’iūna*, and he is then praised for having returned to ‘Abd Shams their ‘glory’ (*‘izz*) and ‘beauty’ (*jamāl*); the *mamdūḥ* is then briefly physically described as having ‘drenched’ locks of black hair.

In **lines 33-36** comes the first explicit mentioning of the Second Fitna and the mobilizing of armed force under Marwānid control to establish control over the contested Ḥijāz, which will be the central theme of the expansive battle-section (lines 37-60) that dominates the second half of the poem. The statement in line 33 that ‘he grasped the Caliphate with his two hands, when other men had desired to seize it’ (*‘aḥāṭat yadā-hu bi-l-khilāfatin ba‘da-mā ‘arāda rijālun ‘ākharūna ghtiyāla-hā*), followed in 34 by the amplifying assertion that they ‘did not give it up willingly out of love’ (*fa-mā tarakū-hā ‘anwatan ‘an mawaddatin*), begins the depiction of the *mamdūḥ* as the steadfast lord of war, successful leader of the violent campaign to seize the caliphate. It also, in providing a verbal echo of the language of ‘love’ and affection (*mawadda*) provides yet more resonance with the erotics that open the poem.

Line 36 then provides the transition into the 24-line ‘battle-section’ that will follow, describing the flooding of squadrons reconquering the Ḥijāz for the caliph. Introducing this section, the poet declares ‘they tested him (*balawhu*) and gave him the leadership, after he filled the land, both its flatlands and mountains...’ One can note that the term *balā’*, which we have encountered also in Kuthayyir’s earliest panegyric for the imprisoned Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, is apparently deployed to laud the strength and fortitude of contestants in the Second Fitna. Such references to the ‘testing’ of the caliph perhaps draw on the qur’ānic references to the ‘testing’ of leadership, as in Q 37:106 (‘indeed this is the clear testing’, *inna huwa al-balā’u l-mubīn*), in the depiction of the ‘testing’ of the prophet Abraham when asked to sacrifice his son.

This is followed by a description of the ‘squadrons’ (*maqāniba*, in line 37 following,

dependent syntactically on 'he filled' *'adabba* in line 36) that are let loose by the caliph on the contested lands he is fighting to regain.

37. With squadrons of horsemen that constantly cast shadows upon them, until they wearied of the daily battle
38. [squadrons that were] running over ravines in Rawḥā' time and time again, over the peaks of Raḍwā, in its meadows and deserts.
39. They took mid-day drink at al-Bazwa while the army stopped, from the buckets of camels that work the well, and pour out all they contain to the last dregs
40. And there they came toward the Thirā valley ,passing through the Mabādi' [water-courses] , in the glare of the high sun, then came to Thu'āl
41. contending in their halters of noble riding animals through the deserts of Burza, with noble camels that raise their necks in the ropes
42. They leave for dead the offspring of Wāliqī and Nāṣiḥi, so that the hyena takes him to feed her children
43. Atop every stallion, mountain-tall in the morning sun, as powerful as a rain-storm; atop every steed fast as a locust whose frame has been made lean by running
44. The horses at 'Anāt and Sinn Sumayra, where the camel-herders cannot restrain their thirst
45. If it is exclaimed 'Ho! God's cavalry!,' you are satisfied with how they ride in the hands of the 'Urdunī

46. If a gleaming squadron bristling with spears appears and shows you their swords drawn and quivering
47. You let loose war in the form of the sons of nobility, so that they aim for its shade, walking like lionesses tending cubs
48. As if they were lions of Ḥalya lurking in their lairs to protect the horses from what approached
49. When they take off their breast-plates, they are wearing woven mail, both short and trailing ones
50. You saw death coming to drink, raising its head, so do not be a path for it to follow; empty its course
51. And many is the war in which the enemies set up its watering troughs and the ropes attached to the watering camels turned the water wheels
52. You arrived to drink there against the leaders and you crushed them, with the perils of a death that drank dry their buckets
53. And with spears that filled the troughs of your glory and protected you in an attack that made the wet-nurses nursing their lambs urinate
54. And a flashing squadron marched on clad in Saluki breast plates, above (their heads) a flash of swords that the eye could hardly bear
55. You aimed for them and when you reached them, you struck them with a Busri broadsword on the backs of their heads
56. And when any calamity comes across your path, Abū l-Walīd, you shoot its arrows

back at it with all the required bravery

57. You climbed and so you reached the greatest height, for only he who climbs receives
all the highest things

58. You charged and your hand grasped every glory, while (other) hands upreaching
did not reach what they charged for

59. Upon the breast of Ibn Abī al-Āṣ is polished armour, fine woven by its craftsmen and
given a handsome train

60. To wear even the clasps of this garment would wear out the weak person of the
tribe, and the proud chieftain would bend under its weight

This central section of the poem marks the poem as a 'battle ode': it depicts the 'squadrons' (*maqāniba*, **line 36**) let loose by the warring caliph, overrunning the Ḥijāzī homeland or abode of the poet, who is paying homage. The cluster of toponyms in **lines 38-41** all refer to areas in the highlands west of Medina down to the Red Sea Coast, precisely in the same region of the Tihāma where the *nasīb* movement is also located.³¹⁵ Rawḥā' (line 38) refers to a town, still known by this name, just west of Medina on the route toward Mecca, where pilgrims gather. The naming of Raḍwā mountain in the same line refers, as we have seen, to the mountain west of Medina. Kuthayyir's earlier patron Ibn al-Ḥanafīya was claimed, apparently soon after his death, to be in *parousia* on this mountain, and there is a poem fragment, ascribed to both Kuthayyir and al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī, that would attribute that belief directly to Kuthayyir.³¹⁶ But even if we accept the attribution of that text to Kuthayyir, it is not clear that we could assume such beliefs to have appeared by the time of

³¹⁵ See the appendix on place names in 'Abbās's edition of the *Dīwān*, 559.

³¹⁶ See al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysānīya*, 315-316. For the fragment, see 'Abbās's edition of the *Dīwān*, 521.

this poem's declamation, when Ibn al-Ḥanafiya (d. 81/701) was almost certainly still alive. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the mountain is given pride of place here in Kuthayyir's naming of Ḥijāzī sites overrun by the Marwanids --- and it is apparently evoked to heighten the degree of homage paid to 'Abd al-Malik.

The name Bazwā' in **39** is associated with the abode of the Banū Ḍamra b. Bakr, the sub-tribe of the Kināna to which Kuthayyir's beloved, 'Azza, is said to have belonged.³¹⁷ It is named in the poem as the place where the forces of 'Abd al-Malik are 'stopping for mid-day drink' (*yuqayyilna*). One can view this as the culmination of the naming of the sites in the subdued Ḥijāz, with the squadrons under the caliph's control now drinking from the wells of Kuthayyir's beloved. The place names all seem to link the reconquest of the Ḥijāz under 'Abd al-Malik, which was underway at this time, with the recapturing of sites in the Tihāma/Western Ḥijāz that are linked closely to the poet's *ghazal* texts and to the pilgrimage routes. The linkage of the erotic themes to the conquest of the Umayyad forces here seems to be in play.

The naming in **line 42** of two famous steeds, *al-Wāliqī* and *Nāsiḥ* that belonged to the Khuzā'a, being left for dead by the caliph's forces, reinforces the degree to which the poet is emphasizing his own tribe's obeisance to Marwānid supremacy. After mentioning the pilgrim routes and the tribe of his beloved, he moves on to mentioning signs of his own tribe's obeisance. In **line 44**, the place names, which are in the heart of the Ḥijāz, now reverse course briefly, as it were, and head east: Sinn al-Sumayra is on the road toward Iraq, while 'Ānāt is on the way to Khurasān.

The 'Jordanian' (*al-Ardunī*), named in **line 45**, is the only historical personage named in the poem other than the *mamdūḥ* and the father of the *mamdūḥ*: it is a reference to Ḥassān b.

³¹⁷ See "Kināna," EI2 [Watt].

Mālik b. Baḥdal, the Kalbī chieftain, and nephew of Mu‘āwiya’s famous Kalbī wife, Maysūn. Ḥassān led Marwān’s forces at Marj Rāhiṭ.³¹⁸ Under Mu‘āwiya and Yazīd, Ḥassān had been governor of Syria and Palestine, had fought against ‘Ālī at Ṣiffīn, and had strong ties to the Sufyānid court. He was also famous for slandering Ibn Zubayr in public in the mosque in Damascus.

This series of place-names in the Ḥijāz raises the question of whether we can pinpoint any closer the historical moment of the poem’s declamation. The latest specific event that the poem refers to explicitly is the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ. Yet this section depicts the armies overrunning the Western Ḥijāz, with references to Umayyad-led forces overrunning much of the Tihāma and the western Ḥijāzī pilgrimage routes. The conquest of the Wādī al-Qurā and the northern Ḥijāz in fact took place in 67/687, although Ibn al-Zubayr remained in control of Mecca until 72/692.³¹⁹ It seems most likely, then, particularly given that there is no reference to the re-taking of the Ḥijāz from Ibn al-Zubayr, that 67-72/687-692 would be the most likely date of performance.

Having performed this act of obeisance, the poet then turns, quite strikingly, to a passage of *fakhr* (self-praise); the images that he chooses to boast of his own prowess are drawn from the realm of magic and snake-charming.

61. Many is the black snake hiding under the safest of rocks stubbornly when the snake-charmer approaches and claps his hands to attract it

³¹⁸ See “Ḥassān b. Mālik,” EI2 [Lammens]. On the genealogy of Ḥassān b. Mālik, see al-Zubayrī, *Kitāb nasab Quraysh*, 127; and Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 595-596.

³¹⁹ See Rotter, *Zweite Bürgerkrieg*, 183-186.

62. I have not reached out for it but made pleasing sounds to it, until it believed the noise it was hearing

63. I have marked it with eloquent breath, if only you could see, and it was transformed into letting my breaths pasture in its mind

64. I crept up until spells brought her/it into my palm, to bring her to submission so that she could crawl from her place

The poet is here boasting of his ability to influence and ‘charm’ the audience of his verse, comparing this to the act of a snake-charmer (*ḥāwī*). As one who wields super-natural powers of persuasion and influence, the poet should by implication be respected and even feared by those in power. As will be re-affirmed in the section that follows immediately, the poet seems to be pleading also for a degree also of *mobility* or elasticity in relation to his status, perhaps preparing the way for the ‘apology’ (*i’tidhār*) that will feature in the final section of the poem.

In **line 61**, in the image of the ‘black snake who hides under the safest of rocks’ (*wa-sawdā’i miṭrāqin ilā ’āmini al-ṣafā*) it is tempting to see an allusion to Ibn al-Zubayr, who famously was encamped in the Ka’ba complex at Mecca. If so, this would potentially give further support for the poem having been performed prior to Ibn al-Zubayr’s defeat. There is not, however, any reference in the text specific enough to conclusively see the ‘snake’ in connection to a specific rival. Furthermore, the snake is not typically charged with odious associations in early Arabic poetry, as snakes were also a locus of positive ‘magical’ associations, and emblems of audacity and daring.³²⁰ The beloved, for example, can be compared to a snake, as in a poem attributed in the *Aghānī* to ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī’a: ‘As often as I speak to her, I feel that I am speaking to a snake subdued by charm.’³²¹ In Kuthayyir’s

³²⁰ See the references in Bürgel, “Murderous Glances”, 8 n. 23.

³²¹ Agh 1.199; see Bürgel, op cit.

text, the allusion to the ‘clapping’ together of the hands, however, seems to evoke the hand-clasping involved in the act of ‘rendering the *bay‘a*,’ the central ritual act that establishes authority in an Islamic/early Arabian context.³²²

Interestingly, in a fragmentarily preserved panegyric text by Kuthayyir for his later patron ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān we find a parrallel image, K 43, lines 5-6:

5. Yet your talismans continue to take away my enmity, and to extract my rancour from its hiding places
6. On your behalf the snake-charmers bewitch me until a snake hidden under its covering replies to you

In these lines, it is the *mamdūh* himself who seems to exert the magical influence back onto the poet himself. The verbal magic of poetry is portrayed as a ‘current’ so to speak, active between the poet and the *mamdūh*. As a piece of *fakhr* that stresses the powerful effects of the poet’s words, and which occurs amid the *madīh* movement of a major panegyric, one can compare the passage to lines 46 and 47 of al-Akḥṭal’s *Khaffa l-Qaṭīnu* ode for ‘Abd al-Malik, wherein al-Akḥṭal vaunts the force of his words to silence rival tribes, and declares ‘for words can often pierce where sword-points fail’ (*wa-l-qawlu yanfadhu mā lā yanfadhu l-ibaru*).³²³ The particular imagery in which Kuthayyir couches his boast however, seems perhaps to be of a more distinctly Ḥijāzī register, as the citation of ‘Umar b. Abī Rabī‘a may indicate.

In line 64, however, there an additional element of signification is included in the poet’s boast, as the poet appears to refer directly to his own crafting of the poem: the phrase

³²² See Marsham, *Rituals*, esp. chapters 1 and 2, and *passim*.

³²³ Translated by Stetkevych, “Umayyad Panegyric,” 105.

'where charms brought it/her into my palm' (*ḥaythu adrakahā l-ruqā ilā l-kaffi*), which might be taken to refer to the boast of capturing the snake, yet also carries reference to the poem itself being 'captured' by the poet.

Following this boast, the poet turns to the final and climactic section of the poem.

65. Indeed I am a man who has done great things, but (this) man has showered me with blessings

66. I swear, there is no companion that I have known among the people, but that you have exceeded their friendship

67. There is no suspicion brought to me against you by them today whose weight I cannot bear

68. They were the people of benefits and then, in what came to pass, another people of benefits intervened, and took over those benefits

69. So do not show disdain toward Marwān for the blessings done by his people, the Banū 'Abd Shams, but rather thank him for their actions

70. Your father repaired the Dome of the Kingdom after its canopy had decayed and the people had altered its state

71. When people barter it for a life of deprivation; a life that is death (for it?), a death that is worthless for it

72. God protects the proud, his graces, who are like swords that had been polished once

by the smith

73. How excellent are the eyes of him who sees a kin-group who do worthy battle for
the noble of the tribe

74. The Commander of the Faithful is the one who has raided and obtained my secret
loyalty and advice

75. I am bold enough to assert that I have not cut off the bonds of our companionship
and the cords of our covenant

76. So do not consider me in these things like a kin-group that I disavow myself of when
I see the error of its ways

77. Like the loyalty of an enemy, or even like the loyalty of a friend whose advice is
weak, who disperses the truth when it appears

78. He was happy when I came and his wood grew green and my means of
communication to him gave forth their rain

The final section of the poem recapitulates and brings together the various rhetorical and semantic strains of the panegyric up to this point, uniting themes that have occurred discretely in the earlier movements. While praising 'Abd al-Malik as the triumphant victor, it also includes apology (*i'tidhār*) on behalf of the poet, who pleads to be 'forgiven' for unnamed past transgressions.

Lines 65-68 highlight the relationship of competition and reward that surround the poet's efforts to praise the patron, i.e. the reciprocal but agonistic attempt to win the patron's recompense. Line 65 stresses that the poet himself is worthy of this reward because he is '

a man who has done great things' (*fa-innī imru'un qad kuntu aḥsantu marratan*); the wording then of the second hemistich, in which the patron himself is referred to also as a man, *imru'un*, who has 'showered [the poet] with blessings' increases the degree to which the reciprocity of the relationship is stressed, the two parties being referred to with a degree of parity. It is likely from passages such as this that 'Abbās deduces the interpretation of Kuthayyir's panegyric as 'friendly'.³²⁴ In relation to the address to the *mamdūh* as a 'man' (*imru'un*), one can compare, for example, in a famous poem by 'Alqamah (fl. early 6th century) petitioning his patron al-Ḥārith, the address of the *mamdūh* as 'a man to whom my faith has come' (*wa-nta 'imrun afḍat ilayyika amānatī*).³²⁵ Kuthayyir's tone in this final section veers toward 'apology' (*i'tidhār*), coming to a head in lines 76-77, where the poet explicitly petitions for forgiveness. The poem thus evokes the precedent of the celebrated poems of apology (*i'tidhāriyyāt*) by al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī (fl. late 6th- early 7th centuries), panegyric odes addressed to the poet's former patron, al-Nu'mān of al-Ḥīra. Kuthayyir's climactic plea in lines 76-77 asking the addressee 'not to consider me in these things like a kin-group that I disavow myself of when I see the error of its ways' (*fa-lā taj'alannī fī l-'umūri ka-'aṣbatin tabarra'tu min-hā 'idh ra'aytu ḍalālī*) can be compared with al-Nābigha's rhetoric in the final section of his poem seeking to be brought back into the good graces of his former patron al-Nu'mān, where he pleads that 'I never said those evil things that were reported to you...' (*mā qultu min sayyi'in mimmā 'utīta bi-hī*).³²⁶ Both poets transmute the tension and heightened signification that has built over the course of the ode into a direct request to be forgiven for any past transgressions against the *mamdūh*.

Line 66 contains a first-person vow introduced by 'I swear' *uqsimu*. The 'vow' here is thus couched differently than the pilgrimage-oaths we have examined above, which are introduced by forms of the verb *ḥalafa*. Yet here too, the resonances with Qur'ānic oath-making are evident, as in Q 90:1 'I swear by this city [Mecca], *lā uqsimu bi-hādhā l-balad*.

³²⁴ See "Kuthayyir," *EI2* ['Abbās].

³²⁵ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 107, 23.

³²⁶ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 8, 39.

This is also evocative of the oath that occurs in the final praise section of al-Nābigha's above-cited poem of apology. At lines 37-39, al-Nābigha swears an oath before his former patron al-Nu'mān 'by the life of him whose Ka'bah I have annointed' (*fa-lā la-'amru llādhī massaḥtu ka'batahu*), before pleading to be forgiven by the prince for his past transgressions.

Crucially, the language used by Kuthayyir in this vow is also evocative of the language of erotic companionship that we have seen in his *ghazal*: 'I swear, there is no companion that I have known among the people, but that you have exceeded their friendship' (*fa-'uqsimu mā min khullatin qad khabartu-hā mina l-nāsi 'illā qad faḍalta khilāla-hā*). It is remarkable that this statement could signify meaningfully in two different areas of the poem: either within the context of *nasīb*, where it would be perfectly in tune with the poet's enduring attachment to a single beloved, or, here, within the section of praise, as a direct praise of the *mamdūh's* singular importance. This double-meaning reveals eloquently how the *ghazal* poetics of the *nasīb* ties into the act of praise for the patron. The term *khullah* that is used here is used widely to refer to *either* the patron *or* the beloved. *Khullah* is in fact one of a number of terms that signify in both contexts, among which could also be cited *mawadda*, a term used in a military context in line 34 above, but which tends to mean both the 'affection' of the beloved and the 'affection' of the patron/*mamdūh*; likewise, and this seems to be a point that should be of serious significance for the interpretation of the work of the Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrist, the term '*ahd*', which is used in the context of *nasīb* to mean the 'compact' of the lovers or the 'time' that they spend as lovers, is also the central term used to refer to a leader's legitimate leadership, as in the present text, in line 75.³²⁷

In **lines 67 and 68**, the poet declares that he can defeat any accusation (*zannatun*, 67) against the *mamdūh*, then declares that he has exceeded the 'benefits' (*nu'mā*, 68) provided of any other patron. These lines likewise parallel lines 39-40 of al-Nābigha's ode, where the

³²⁷ On the significance of '*ahd*' in the Umayyad context, see especially Marsham, *Rituals*, 188 and 237-9.

poet pleads with the prince that no ‘calumny of enemies’ (*maqālata ’aqwāmin*)³²⁸ can lead him astray from his patron. This is followed in line 69 by an exhortation ‘not to show disdain toward (*lā takfurū*) Marwān for the blessings done by his people, the Banū ‘Abd Shams.’ This exhortation not to ‘show ingratitude,’ whereby the poet affirms the covenant between the ruler and those he protects, again shows the importance of the enactment and acclamation of ‘*ahd*’ in the panegyric. The strongly qur’ānic overtones of ‘*lā takfurū*’ are clear also, establishing a parallel between loyalty to the Marwanids and the qur’ānic exhortations to piety.

After praising Marwān for having ‘restored the dome of kingship (*talāfā qubbata l-mulk*, line 70), the poet then offers in **lines 74 and 75**, what is in some sense his ultimate declaration of loyalty. This comes most clearly in line 75, where the poet exclaims again in terms that, if removed from immediate context, could be meaningfully and seamlessly interpreted within either the *nasīb* or *madīḥ* movements: ‘I am bold enough to assert that I have not cut off the bonds of our companionship and the cords of our connection’ (*wa-’innī mudillun ’adda’ī ’anna ṣaḥbatan wa-’asbāba ’ahdin lam ’uqaṭṭi’ wiṣāla-hā*). As in line 66, we see here that the poet is declaring his loyalty to the *mamdūḥ* in terms that could also, and in fact *are* also, used to describe the love bond in his *ghazal* poems and panegyrics. Here, the central terms are ‘*ahd*, ‘covenant’ and *wiṣāl*, ‘connection,’ terms that are used in describing the poet’s relationship to patronage/authority, but which also concepts that feature in the erotics of the *nasīb*. It is instructive to compare a further usage of the term ‘*ahd*’ by Kuthayyir in a praise poem for ‘Abd al-Malik, K 31, line 14: *la-hu ’ahdu wuddin lam yukaddar yazīnu-hu ridā qawli ma’rūfīn ḥadīthin wa-muzmini*. (‘Who has a covenant of friendship not growing turbid, decorated by the increase of beneficent speech, both new and lasting’). Here, in a passage where ‘*ahd*’ is used again to refer to the patron, the usage of the phrase ‘*ahdu wuddin*, covenant of friendship/affection, brings the erotic connotation further to the fore.

³²⁸ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 5, 40.

In **lines 76 and 77**, Kuthayyir petitions ‘not to be considered like a kin-group that I have disavowed because I see the error of its ways’ (*ka-‘uṣbatin tabarra’tu minhā ’idh ra’aytu ḍalālahā*). Although it is immediately attractive to take this concluding ‘disavowal’ as a reference to the poet’s previous connections to other patrons, the poet, again, is not specific here about external rivals or past patrons. Taken together with the *fakhr* in lines 61-65, where the poet boasts of his prowess at ‘snake-charming’, the closing lines here seem to involve a measured assertion by Kuthayyir of his own relative independence. It is foremost an apology (*i’tidhār*) on his own behalf that the poet seems to be offering, as well as a declaration of fealty after mistaken loyalties to others. Again, there is a distinct resonance with the celebrated *i’tidhāriyyāt* of al-Nābigha al-Dhubaynī, wherein that poet pleaded to be re-accepted into the circle of generosity around al-Nu‘mān of al-Ḥīra, to be ‘forgiven’ for his ‘false’ praising of other powers. In Kuthayyir’s case, where the *akhbār* tradition does not report any previous *personal* betrayal of the prince (as in the case of al-Nābigha), we can assume that the apology is either in reference to his previous loyalty to Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, or else purely an adoption of this trope of apology for the sake of performance.

The foregoing commentary should demonstrate that certain key strains of signification run throughout the entire panegyric text. We have attempted to highlight in particular the ways in which the poem can be explicated by means of attention to the semantic-rhetorical commonalities between the portrayal of the erotic and the eulogistic act. In terms of genre, this is articulated in verbal/semantic overlap between *nasīb* and *raḥīl*, and between *nasīb* and *madiḥ*; but, more broadly, we contend that the bringing together of the erotic and praise of the patron are essential and complex aspects of the poem’s signification. This is clear in the double-usage of terms such as *mawadda*, *khulla*, and ‘*ahd* to depict the equally ‘singular’ bonds of companionship that bind the poet to both beloved and patron. The sense given strongly by the poem as a whole is that the intense longing of the *nasīb* is collapsed, so to speak, into a praising of the *mamdūh* as the poet’s ultimate ‘companion,’ who subdues the domain of the Ḥijāz.

The poem belongs to the tradition of ‘high panegyric’ that reached its high-point in the late-Jāhilī praise poems of al-Nābigha al-Dhubaynī, al-A‘shā, and Zuhayr, and which seems to have enjoyed a kind of ‘renaissance’ and new centrality in the Umayyad period.³²⁹ Given that the ode is performed in the distinct register of the Ḥijāzī poet, the text attests, if such attestation is needed, that the panegyric form was attempted and produced by poets outside the circle of the Syro-Iraqi Umayyad-era panegyrists such as al-Akhṭal, al-Nābigha al-Shaybānī, al-Rā‘ī al-Numayrī, and others, and was recognized and practiced by poets of the Ḥijāz as well. More specifically, the poem belongs to the corpus of extant panegyrics by poets produced during and after the Second Fitna, on several sides of this conflict, including the Zubayrid poems by Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, al-Akhṭal’s *Khaffa l-Qaṭīnu* ode, Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī’s ode for ‘Abd al-Malik after the defeat of Ibn al-Zubayr, and numerous others. Kuthayyir, given that he worked within the poetic traditions of the Ḥijāz itself and was greatly concerned with themes related to the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz, was perhaps uniquely well suited to perform panegyric in this context.

To summarize, the expression of subjective and forward-looking yearning instantiated in the *nasīb*, and carried on through the group-rider raḥil movement, is tied directly into the lauding of Umayyad presence in the Ḥijāz, both through the naming of sites connected to the Umayyads in the *nasīb* opening (*al-bilāt*, line 3), and through the explicit mention of the Umayyads in place of the name of the beloved (*ḥubbī Umayya*, line 23). The Umayyad connection to the Ḥijāz thus is evoked as a kind of ‘spectral beloved’ that lingers into the sacral-tinged depiction of the group of Umayyad ‘lords’ (*bahālīl*) in lines 24-36. In the central, martial passage of the poem, lines 37-60, where the poet pays homage to the caliph by describing the subjection of the Ḥijāz to his invading squadrons, the poet symbolically lays at the caliph’s feet, so to speak, the lands most closely associated with his *ghazal* and *nasīb*: the area of the western Ḥijāz that is the abode of his beloved ‘Azza’s tribe, and sites closely associated with the pilgrimage, are named in succession. Finally, after a section of

³²⁹ See Rūmiyyah, *Qaṣīdat al-madh*, 261-296; and Stetkevych, “Umayyad Panegyric,” 90-93.

distinctive self-praise involving reference to his own 'magical' poetic powers, the climactic final section of the poem constitutes a kind of recombination of the themes and strains of polysemy found in the poem: faith and loyalty to the Banū Marwān is declared (line 69), and the poet asserts emphatically that he 'has not cut off the ties of covenant (*'ahd*) and connection' with the patron (75). Taken together, the poem asserts the caliph's rightful control of the Ḥijāz and lauds him as the tested and legitimate ruler, depicting the *mamdūḥ* as the emblem of redress for the longing that has been opened in the poem's initial erotic movement.

Kuthayyir's other praise poetry for 'Abd al-Malik, although too exiguous to permit sustained literary study, provides further confirming evidence for much of what we have noticed in K 1. Namely, the several preserved *nasībs* from this fragmentary material contain complex 'introverted' and forward-looking amatory material that show a developed depiction of the so-called 'Udhri persona consistent with the *nasīb* of K 1. For example, in a five-line fragment from the *nasīb* of an ode praising 'Abd al-Malik (K 32, lines 6-9), the poet depicts his attachment to his beloved in terms that are fully reminiscent of his long-form *ghazal* poems:

6. If the soul recalls her it remains as though it suffered from a Thuāmī fever giving it shivers
7. Tears flooded from my eyes until it was as if they had been made-up with dry Thughr from the Wādī al-Qūrā
8. If I claim that I have moved on, the eye disputes with tears, and many tears come to the eye
9. If a companion desired to replace her, we forbad this and declared the Ḥājibīya was first

In other fragments from the same text, Kuthayyir mentions the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ (line 21), and praises ‘Abd al-Malik for winning the caliphate by force (*al-khilāfa*, line 19). Thus while the fragmentary state of transmission of Kuthayyir’s remaining praise poetry for ‘Abd al-Malik prevents us from offering detailed discussion of these texts, a reading of the extant fragments of Kuthayyir’s praise poetry confirms the existence of the panegyric poetics we have described in K 1: namely, the integration of *ghazal* thematics into the praise ode, and the figuring of the bond to the *mamdūḥ* in terms that evoke the ‘companionship’ of the *nasīb*.

3.4 Poetry and Ḥijāzī Prestige among the Banū Marwān: Kuthayyir and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān (Ibn Laylā)

In addition to Kuthayyir’s poetry for ‘Abd al-Malik, of which we have fragmentary remains of some nine poems (112 lines), Kuthayyir’s panegyric corpus contains remains of poetry for two other sons of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam: the corpus contains fragments from twelve panegyric poems (217 lines) for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān (d. 85/704), who was crown prince (*walī al-‘ahd*) and governor of Egypt from 65-86/685-705; and remains of two poems (76 lines) for Bishr b. Marwān (d. 74/693), who briefly governed Baṣra and Kūfa for his brother ‘Abd al-Malik.³³⁰

Although the exiguous state of preservation of Kuthayyir’s praise poetry from this period makes the study of his poetry from this period somewhat difficult, it is clear that his attachment to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Egypt represents a key period in the poet’s career. As we will discuss now in some detail, the court of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz at Ḥulwān in Egypt during the caliphate of ‘Abd al-Malik was a flourishing hub for the ‘panegyrist-elegiast’ poets from the Ḥijāz, i.e. the Ḥijāzī poets, most famous for their new *ghazal* poetry, who made their careers as panegyrists for the Marwānids after the Second Fitna. At ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s court, Jamīl b. Ma‘mar, for whom Kuthayyir was the *rāwī*, died in 81/701, while other Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrists such as Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, Nuṣayb b al-Rabāḥ, and al-Aḥwaṣ were all favored there as well. In this section, we will first provide an introduction examining at some length the nature of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s patronage of Ḥijāzī poetry, as an illustration of competition for prestige among the Marwānid elite. Following this introduction, we will offer a commentary on a sample of Kuthayyir’s fragmentary poetry from this period.

³³⁰ One of the two poems for Bishr b. Marwān, K 5, is transmitted in full in the *Muntahā al-ṭalab*. It is a 55-line bipartite praise poem containing a 15-line *nasīb* including some ‘*Udhri*-like material (e.g., ‘you hunt but are not hunted’ *tuṣīdu wa-lā tuṣādu*, line 8), and a more ‘conventional’ praise section than K 1. It will not be studied in this dissertation for reasons of space.

During the brief period of his caliphate, Marwān b. al-Ḥakam designated his two sons, ‘Abd al-Malik and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, to succeed him into the office of *amīr al-mu‘minīn*. This initiated the institution of the *wilāyatu l-‘ahd*, an institution whereby the ruling caliph would name the first and second apointee to follow him in the office.³³¹ At the death of Marwān in the spring of 65/685, when ‘Abd al-Malik assumed the caliphate, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān thus became *walī al-‘ahd*, crown prince and next in line to the caliphate.

In the year of his father’s death, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān had participated alongside Marwān in the campaign that wrested Egypt from its short-term Zubayrid governor, and had been installed as governor of the province by his father in Rajab 65 / February-March 685. Over the next twenty years (65-85/685-705), ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ruled Egypt as governor, exercising powers largely independently from the caliph in Damascus, until his death, just months before that of ‘Abd al-Malik, in 75/704. A recent monograph on the life and reign of this prince, based on the earliest chronicles of Islamic rule in Egypt and on material and numismatic evidence, has argued that during ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s governorship the province was essentially ruled as an ‘independent polity,’ and that rivalry and increasing enmity between the two brothers led ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to resist all interference by ‘Abd al-Malik, with whom he competed openly for prestige and authority.³³²

The rivalry between the sons of Marwān was chiefly articulated in terms of the matrilineal descent of the two brothers. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s mother was Laylā bt. Zabān b. al-Aṣḡagh b.

³³¹ On the *wilāyatu l-‘ahd* in the Marwānid period, see Marsham, *Rituals*, esp. chapters 5 and 6.

³³² See Mabra, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwanid State: the Life of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān* (New Jersey: 2017). The principle early sources on ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s reign are al-Kindī, *Wulāt Miṣr*, 42-55; and Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*.

‘Amr, who was the granddaughter of the king of the royal Kalbī house of Dūmat al-Jandal.³³³ Joshua Mabra has stressed that it was from this royal Kalbī lineage that ‘Abd al-‘Azīz derived his legitimacy as the *amīr* of Egypt and the heir apparent to the caliphate, and that this connection to the Kalb is what ensured his support among the coalition of the Southern Arab tribes (the Quḍā‘a).³³⁴ Indeed it was this alliance, with the Kalbī leaders of a Quḍā‘a-based confederation of tribes, that constituted the power base of the ruling Umayyads more broadly, going back to the period of Sufyānid rule: Mu‘āwiya had been married to Maysūn, the sister of the *sayyid* of the Kalb, Ḥassān b. Mālik b. Baḥdal, Marwān’s champion at Marj Rāhiṭ, who appears above in Kuthayyir’s panegyric for ‘Abd al-Malik, and the claims of the Marwānids for legitimacy as rulers of the Islamic polity hinged largely on the confederation of ‘Southern’ tribes, identified as Quḍā‘a-Yaman-Ḥimyar.

Early sources preserve reports that ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and ‘Abd al-Malik openly defied and ridiculed each other, employing terms of abuse related to their different matrilineal descent. In al-Ṭabarī’s History it is reported, for example, that, when ‘Abd al-‘Azīz refused to execute a captive at the orders of the caliph, ‘Abd al-Malik openly cursed ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s maternal lineage, calling him ‘a son of piss-on-heels.’³³⁵ This rivalry had ramifications in a number of areas: ‘Abd al-‘Azīz deposed officials put in place by the caliph, struck his own coinage, and apparently resisted the movements toward centralization and Arabicization promoted from Damascus. When ‘Abd al-‘Azīz finally died, easing the way for the sons of ‘Abd al-Malik toward the succession, ‘Abd al-Malik promptly appointed another of his sons, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Malik, as governor of Egypt, and instructed him to obliterate all traces of his uncle ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, and to replace all of his functionaries and appointees.³³⁶

³³³See al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5, 11 ff.

³³⁴ Mabra, *Princely Authority*, esp. 29-33.

³³⁵ Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh*, II, 790.

³³⁶ See Mabra, *Princely Authority*; and al-Kindī, *Wulāt*, 58.

It is during this period of rivalry and competitive display of prestige and power that not only Kuthayyir, but also a number of poets from the Ḥijāz who were best known for both *ghazal* and panegyric appear as panegyrists in the court of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, who is known widely, especially in poetry, by his matronymic *kunya* Ibn Laylā, was a famous sponsor of poetry,³³⁷ and it is striking the degree to which we find in his *nawāl* poets associated with the *ghazal* and poetic trends in the Ḥijāz. We have seen above (section 2.2) a passage quoted by Ibn Khallikān stating that Jamīl b. Ma‘mar, was patronized by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Egypt; indeed, there is at least one extant fragment of a praise poem by Jamīl for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, and the poet is reported to have died at ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s court at Ḥulwān in 81/701. The poets most closely associated with this crown prince were all Ḥijāzī poets connected to the *ghazal*: most notably, his famous *mawlā*, the *ghazal* poet Nuṣayb b. al-Rabāḥ, who came from the same region of the Ḥijāz as Kuthayyir; and his two other most famous panegyrists, the Medinan Anṣārī *ghazal* poet al-Aḥwaṣ and Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, who, as we have seen above, had been the panegyrist for the Zubayrids during the Second Fitna. Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, the poet of the Hudhayl who, as we have seen, was imprisoned by Ibn al-Zubayr, and who, like Jamīl and Kuthayyir, is most famous for poems in the so-called ‘Udhri *ghazal* style, was also patronized by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz.³³⁸ Although Mabra’s recent monograph, the first extensive study dedicated to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, includes some attention paid to the panegyrics by Ibn Qays and al-Aḥwaṣ, the prince’s pattern of sponsorship of Ḥijāzī poets has so far not been pointed out in scholarship.³³⁹

³³⁷ See, for example, the reference in Agh 1.327, quoted in section 2.3 above, to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz as a great ‘reciter and scholar of poetry’ (*fa-’inna l-’amīra rāwiyatun ’ālimun bi-l-shi’ri*). For a sense of the importance of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s connections to poets, see Guidi, *Tables alphabétiques du Kitāb al-agānī* (Leiden: 1900), 455, which lists some 40 appearances by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in the *Aghānī*, all of which relate to his interactions with poets.

³³⁸ On Abū Ṣakhr’s connection to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, see Agh 23.268.

³³⁹ The chapter in *Princely Authority* that relates to poetry (chapter 4) is unfortunately not as thorough as the other chapters of the useful book: Mabra provides partial translations of panegyrics by Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt and al-Aḥwaṣ, with traditional biographies of the poets, in order to show the way in which the texts illustrate the rivalry between the prince and ‘Abd al-Malik. Mabra is apparently unaware, for example, of Rhodokanakis’s exemplary edition of Ibn Qays’s *dīwān*.

This sponsoring of Ḥijāzī poetry by the *walī al-‘ahd*, seems to represent, at least in part, an axis of competition for prestige and legitimacy among the Banū Marwān. In the aftermath of the Second Fitna, a period in which the Ḥijāz itself had been the central site of competing projections of legitimacy, it stands to reason that both ‘Abd al-Malik and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, in shoring up their assertions of legitimate control over the *umma*, might have found the sponsorship of poets and poetry from the Ḥijāz to be an apt means to project their affiliation with the Ḥijāz, and thus to enhance their legitimacy and acceptance among important tribes and elite groups of the Ḥijāz.

To set this patronage phenomenon in context, we can find parallels to this projection of Ḥijāzī prestige among the Marwānids in the post-Fitna environment in a number of venues of princely/caliphal patronage and display. The Marwānids indeed appear to have competed among themselves to project their affiliation to the Ḥijāz in several ways, including: the sponsorship of qur’ānic scribal activities and religious scholarship; the cultivation of genealogical ties through marriage into the elite of the Ḥijāz; and, perhaps most prominently, competition over connections to the *ḥajj* and leadership of its conduct. The Marwānid sponsorship of, and demonstrated taste for, Ḥijāzī trends in panegyric and other poetry during this period, ought to be understood as an inflection of such trends.

Perhaps the chief way in which the ruling family were associated with, and displayed their connection to, the Ḥijāz was through the *ḥajj*. Early leaders sought to lead the *ḥajj*, following the model of the ‘farewell pilgrimage’ led by the prophet in the year 10/632.³⁴⁰ The great significance attributed to patronage of, and connection to, the pilgrimage rituals and the holy cities of the Ḥijāz is apparent, for example, in the statement of the third/ninth-

³⁴⁰ For an account of the differing traditions about this ritual, see Munt, “The Official Announcement of an Umayyad Caliph’s Successful Pilgrimage to Mecca,” in *The Hajj: Collected Essays*. ed. Porter et al (London: 2012), 15-20, esp. 18.

century historian al-Ya‘qūbī: ‘He who controls the two sanctuaries Mecca and Medīna and leads the pilgrimage thus merits the caliphate.’³⁴¹ Marsham has articulated concisely the high degree of importance connected to leadership of the *ḥajj* in this period: ‘leadership of the *ḥajj* was closely associated with leadership of the *umma*, and appears to have been a prerequisite for the nomination of the *walī al-‘ahd*; at this gathering he could be acclaimed by the descendants of the Anṣār and the Muhājirūn, the Meccans and the provincial Muslims.’³⁴²

The legitimizing importance of the *ḥajj* is highlighted even more if we look again at the events in the Ḥijāz during the Second Fitna. During the period of time when he was in control of Mecca, Ibn al-Zubayr led the pilgrimage there every year.³⁴³ During these years, the pilgrimage itself became a site of great contestation, and numerous events of open conflict and tension involving the *ḥajj* in this period are reported, culminating in the *ḥajj* season of 68/687, when four separate groups performed the *ḥajj* under four separate banners, with separate groups of pilgrims representing the Umayyads, the followers of Ibn al-Zubayr, the Khārijites led by Najda al-Ḥarūrī, and the followers of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, respectively, who are all reported to have tensely fulfilled the rituals in one another’s vicinity.³⁴⁴ When Ibn al-Zubayr was finally defeated, the ‘unification’ of the caliphate was marked by the pilgrimage being led, in 73/692 and 74/693, by the vanquisher of Ibn al-Zubayr, the powerful Umayyad governor of the Ḥijāz, al-Ḥajjāj.

³⁴¹ Al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh* (Leiden: 1883), 2:321, quoted in Sijpesteijn, “An Early Umayyad Papyrus Invitation for the Ḥajj,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73:2 (2014), 185.

³⁴² Marsham, *Rituals*, 123.

³⁴³ See Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1:186.

³⁴⁴ On this contested pilgrimage, which immediately preceded Ibn al-Ḥanafīya’s trip to Syria with Kuthayyir, see Hawting, “The Ḥajj in the Second Civil War,” in *Golden Roads: Migration, Pilgrimage, and Travel in Medieval and Modern Islam*, ed. Netton (Wiltshire: 1993); “Amīr al-ḥadīdj,” EI2 [Jomier]; Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5:75-76; and al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1:155.

During the Sufyānid period of Umayyad rule, a pattern had been established whereby the appointed successor to the caliphate would be routinely chosen as a leader of the pilgrimage. Yet during the twenty-year period of his governorship, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was never asked to carry out this coveted function. Rather, ‘Abd al-Malik selected his sons al-Walīd and Sulaymān to perform this role in 78/698 and 81/701 respectively, overlooking the official *walī al-‘ahd*.³⁴⁵ Yet there is evidence that ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, as governor of Egypt, did look for alternative ways to assert his connection to the pilgrimage institution, and to the holy space of the Ḥijāz itself. To give only one interesting example, in response to having not been offered leadership of the *ḥajj*, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is said to have been the first to hold a ‘Arafāt ceremony’ at Fuṣṭāṭ in the year 71/690.³⁴⁶ Particularly given the prevalent reference to the complex of rituals and concepts around the *ḥajj* that we find in the poetry of Kuthayyir and other Ḥijāzī elegiast-panegyrists, it certainly seems relevant to consider ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s aspirational view toward *ḥajj*-leadership as a potential factor in his sponsorship of these poets.

A second avenue by which the *walī al-‘ahd* may have asserted his connection to the Ḥijāz was through the sponsorship of qur’ānic scribal activity. It is in the period following the Second Fitna, during the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik, that we see the first widespread evidence of centralized and sponsored qur’ānic scribal activities – this sponsorship has been viewed, by Omar Hamdan and Estelle Whelan among others, as part of an ‘imperial project’ led by ‘Abd al-Malik that involved the establishment of the *textus receptus* of the Qur’ān and the patronage of ‘imperial scriptoria.’³⁴⁷ But it is not only the caliph who seems to have

³⁴⁵ See Mcmillan, *Meaning of Mecca. The Politics of Pilgrimage in Early Islam* (London: 2012), 74-78, for a list of pilgrimage leaders during ‘Abd al-Malik’s reign and explanation of Sufyanid/ Marwanid patterns of pilgrimage appointments.

³⁴⁶ See al-Kindī, *Wulāt*, 50; Sijpesteijn, “Early Umayyad Papyrus,” 187 n. 68.

³⁴⁷ On the ‘imperial scriptoria’ of ‘Abd al-Malik and his imperial project, see especially Hamdan, “The Second Maṣāḥif Project: a Step towards the Canonization of the Qur’ān,” in *The Qur’ān in Context. Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur’ānic Milieu*, ed. Neuwirth et al (Leiden: 2010), 795-836.

sponsored such activity: the other Banū Marwān, and the powerful Umayyad governor of the Ḥijāz, al-Ḥajjāj, were also reportedly involved in this type of patronage. According to a late report given by the historian Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1407), ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, at his court at Ḥulwān, just south of Fuṣṭāṭ, sponsored and oversaw the production of Qur’ānic *maṣāḥif* and manuscripts in the Ḥijāzī script. Ibn Duqmāq writes the following about a famous Cairene manuscript known as the Qur’ān of Asmā’:

The reason why this *muṣḥaf* was written is that al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī wrote *maṣāḥif* and sent them to the *amṣār*, and one of them was sent to Egypt. This caused the anger of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Marwān, who was then governor of Egypt for his brother ‘Abd al-Malik. He said: ‘He sends a *muṣḥaf* to a *jund* where I reside!’ So he commissioned the *muṣḥaf* which is still in the mosque today.³⁴⁸

Ibn Duqmāq goes on to describe the ritual function that this monumental manuscript of the Qur’ān fulfilled in the court of Ḥulwān: ‘It used to be carried from the palace of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to the mosque every Friday morning and read, then returned to its place.’ Such sponsorship of scribal activity might be seen as a venture by the prince to project association with the complex of cultural practices related to the Ḥijāz – although certainly by this period, promotion of Qur’ānic scribal activities can be seen to promote imperial and legitimizing claims that go well beyond the borders of the disputed Ḥijāz.

A third area in which ‘Abd al-‘Azīz seems to have been concerned with cultivating connections to the Ḥijāz is in the cultivation of marriage and kinship ties to the Ḥijāzī elite. In Asad Ahmed’s valuable prosopographical study of the family relations of several elite families of the Ḥijāz in the Umayyad and early Abbasid period, Ahmed notes that ‘Abd al-

³⁴⁸ Quoted in George, *The Rise of Islamic Calligraphy* (London: 2010), 86.

‘Azīz’s son and presumed heir, al-Aṣḡagh b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 85/704), was married for a time to ‘the famous Sukayna bt. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī Ṭālib, a Medinan woman of the ‘Udhra of the Kalb.’³⁴⁹ In assessing the significance of this marriage arrangement, Ahmed writes: ‘One suspects that this general pattern of Egyptian-Ḥijāzī connections among the Ḥijāzī elite is something worthy of attention (‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān’s family was the closest direct Umayyad link to the Ḥijāz).’³⁵⁰ This indeed seems to be quite pertinent evidence for the notion that we might view ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s sponsorship of Ḥijāzī poetry in the context of a wider range of connections to the religious elite of the Ḥijāz. Of particular relevance for the case of Kuthayyir, we should note that this connection between the Hashimites/‘Alids of Medina, represented by the marriage of al-Aṣḡagh to Sukayna, seems to support the notion that Kuthayyir’s connections to the circle of the Hashimite Ibn al-Ḥanafīya, would have been viewed favorably by the patron. Sukayna herself who, after her divorce from al-Aṣḡagh, would go on to achieve fame as a host and sponsor of poetry salons and symposia in Medina, is linked specifically to Kuthayyir in a number of picturesque *akhbār* reports.³⁵¹ In the person of Sukayna -- who was the daughter of al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī, a woman of the ‘Udhra tribe of the Kalb, and married for a time to a major figure of the Marwānid line – we can glimpse the constellation of concerns that connect affiliation to the Ḥijāz in a Marwānid context with the sponsorship of *ghazal* poetry.

Unfortunately, the state of preservation of Kuthayyir’s praise poetry for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is quite exiguous, making it difficult to assess the panegyrics from this period. Despite being lacunose, the evidence does show, however, that Kuthayyir produced panegyric prolifically for the prince: there are transmitted remains of some twelve panegyric poems by Kuthayyir for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, consisting of eight praise poems (K 43-51) and four elegies after the prince’s death (K 52-55), yielding a total of 217 lines of poetry; it should be recalled, however, that this corpus includes only five fragments of at least seven lines in

³⁴⁹ Ahmed, *The Religious Elite of the Early Islamic Hijaz* (Oxford: 2011), 70.

³⁵⁰ Ahmed, *Religious Elite*, 70 n. 317.

³⁵¹ See “Sukayna b. al-Ḥusayn,” EI2 [Arazi]; and Vadet, “Sukayna petite-fille de ‘Ali,” *Arabica* 4 (1957), 261-87.

length (K 43:9-17; 45:1-7 and 10-18; 47: 5-13 and 18-29), and no fragment longer than eleven lines.

In addition to these fragmentarily preserved texts, there is also one poem by Kuthayyir preserved in full in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab* (K 16), that mentions ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. It is a poem addressed to one of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s sons, Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, apparently delivered just after the death of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. This 30-line panegyric poem, which mentions the death of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and lauds the young prince as a rightful bearer of his father’s legacy, while less striking as a piece of panegyric than K 1, sheds some light on Kuthayyir’s Marwānid panegyrics during this middle period of his career, and will thus be translated and discussed below. But first let us turn briefly to the fragmentarily preserved poems for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, to gain some sense of the thematics of Kuthayyir’s praise for this patron.

One of the best-preserved texts of *madīḥ* by Kuthayyir for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is K 45. Two sections of the text are preserved: an eight line section of *nasīb* that consists primarily of an extended descriptive simile related to the beloved (Abbas’s lines 1-8); and a nine-line section that transitions from a *raḥīl* passage into a section of direct praise (lines 10-18).³⁵²

The *nasīb*-fragment, which we will not quote in full, consists primarily of a passage of physical description (*wasf*) of the beloved. It opens with the line: ‘O, as I give greetings to Salmā, and ask a question loaded with the cares of a lover’ (*‘a-lammā ‘alā salmā nusallim wa-nas’al su’āla ḥafīyin bi-l-ḥabībi muwakkali*). This address to the beloved is then followed by the poet’s declaration that he has been ‘captured’ (*sabat-nī bi-‘adhbi...*, line 2) by the saliva of the beloved, and then by five lines of physical description (*wasf*), three of these lines introduced by an initial *wāw*-construction, a familiar feature of descriptive passages (lines 3-5).

³⁵² Both fragments are preserved in the *Ḥamāsa* of al-Shajarī; see ‘Abbās, *takhrīj al-qaṣīda*, 292.

Following this opening fragment in ‘Abbās’s edition is one line of explicit transition (*takhalluṣ*), transmitted separately, naming the *mamdūḥ* as Ibn Marwān (*ilayka bna Marwāna*, line 9). Following this is the fragment with which we are primarily concerned:

K 45, *ṭawīl*:

10. He journeyed growing in glory in every horse-race, journeyed with the gait of a champion with shining face
11. When the seekers come seeking bounty from him, and gather at his gate, his bounty is much and quick
12. And he gives in such a way that brings to an end all desires, the giving of one who is abundant and meets all desires
13. Yet more severely modest than a bashful girl, and more efficient in accomplishing things than a sharpened spear-head
14. And more frightening to enemies than a lion in its thicket, red-colored, its eyes sweeping widely as it tends to its children
15. With a prey everyday that he drags into his lair to feed to his lionesses and cubs
16. If the riders of Ka‘b and ‘Āmir arrive to you in delegations, making every noble and fast camel run quickly
17. They meet you with my eulogy truly spoken, which I have put into the finest poetry
18. A praise which makes the people of the pilgrimage-sites faithful, and is chanted by the riders at every gathering place.

Employing rhetoric for which we could find parallels in a range of *madīḥ* for Umayyad patrons, the poet depicts the patron in this passage as outstripping his rivals in glory (line 10), giving endlessly to those he sponsors (lines 11-12), and behaving either ‘modestly’ (*ḥayāʾ*, line 13) or else fearfully (*akhwaf*, line 14). We wish to point out two aspects of the passage, however, that appear relevant to our interpretation of the patronage context of this poetry. Firstly, we note in line 11 that those who seek the patron’s generosity, including the poet himself, are described, to translate literally, as ‘seekers [who] frequent/ are acquainted with him, gather[ing] at his door’ (*matā yaʿtahid-hu l-rāghibūna fa-yakthirū ʿalā bābi-hi*). The line seems to resonate, in ways that are perhaps difficult to capture in translation, with the polysemous play on *ʿahd* within praise and *nasīb* that we have noted above in Kuthayyir’s panegyric. The use of the terms *yaʿtahidūna* (‘they frequent, are in contact with’) and *al-rāghibūna* (those who desire) to describe the petitioners of the *mamdūḥ*’s favor (here to be identified as including also the panegyrist) are interesting: the root-semantics of *yaʿtahidūna* ‘they are in contact with’ imply desire for an *ʿahd* ‘bond’ between poet and *mamdūḥ*, while the term *rāghib* for these petitioners also perhaps carries some erotic connotation. The next line strengthens this impression somewhat, where the patron is described as ‘giving so that all wishes come to an end’ (*wa-yuʿtī ʿaṭāʾan tantahī dūna-hu l-munā*). The erotic tonality of this line is suggested further if we compare it to a line from Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* poem, K 3, to describe the beloved: ‘[she] who constantly brings wishes has turned away’ (*tawālī allātī tuʿtī l-munā qad tawallati*, K 3, line 24).

Following this passage of *madīḥ*, in the last three lines of the fragment, Kuthayyir makes a declaration that seems highly relevant to his role as a panegyrist for ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. First, he declares that the ‘riders of Kaʿb and ʿĀmir’ (*rukbānu Kaʿbin wa-ʿĀmirin*), if they meet in delegations (*wafadat*, line 16) before the prince, will recite to the prince ‘my true praise’ (*thanāʾiyya ṣādiqin*, line 17). The poet is describing his own role in assuring the loyalty of tribes that are key to the prince’s power. In line 18, this function is then directly tied to pilgrimage: Kuthayyir describes his work as ‘a praise that makes the people of the pilgrimage-sites faithful, chanted by the riders in every caravan.’ (*thanāʾan yuwāfī bi-l-mawāsimi ahla-hā wa-yunshidu-hu l-rukbānu fī kulli maḥfali*). Kuthayyir here directly ties

the power of his praise to the ‘pilgrimage-sites’ (the *mawāsim*), where the tribes will gather. Given the context of contestation for prestigious association to the pilgrimage that we have described above, in which ‘Abd al-‘Azīz appears to have actively projected connections to the *ḥajj*, this fragment seems revealing about the nature of the prince’s support for Ḥijāzī poetry.

This image of the Ḥijāzī panegyrist as offering with his praise poetry a means to project connections to the tribes of the Ḥijāz and ensure their support, is reinforced by another fragment of Kuthayyir’s panegyric for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. This is a four-line fragment from K 46, a praise poem in which ‘Abd al-‘Azīz is named as the *mamdūḥ* (as Ibn Laylā), of which 31 lines, including some strongly ‘Udhri-colored *nasīb*, are extant. The longest preserved fragment of the poem, lines 27-30 of ‘Abbās’s text, consists of the following boast:

K 46, *ṭawīl*

27. If death does not stop me – and death is dominant, with its well-laid traps and snares,

28. I will adorn for him speech, the poetry of which will be recited by the tribes whenever they meet among the mountains

29. They will spread in all directions – some like torrents, others climbing mountain peaks even when the dwellings are empty of their occupants

30. To be sung by riders from the people of Yaḥṣub and Buṣra, and recited by Tamīm and Wā’il

In line 28, the poet’s declaration that ‘I will adorn for him speech the poetry of which will be chanted if the tribes meet in the mountains’ (*‘uḥabbir la-hu qawlan tanāshadu shi‘rahu idhā mā iltaqati bayna l-jibāli l-qabā’ilu*), echoes the passage we have just seen in K 45. Such passages show how Kuthayyir’s panegyric contained promise, sometimes made explicit, of

increased prestige for the prince among the tribes of the Ḥijāz. This increased prestige seems to be tied with networks of tribal meeting related to the *ḥajj*.

There is a further fragment from a praise poem for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz that shows a feature further connecting the poet’s work explicitly to the pilgrimage. This fragment from a praise poem for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz contains an apology (*i’tidhār*) by the poet for an apparent mistake or violation on his part. While the content of this ‘mistake’ and the larger context of the fragment are missing, the text contains a formal ‘pilgrimage-oath’ by the poet. Such oaths are, as we have seen already, a highly significant feature of Kuthayyir’s work as both panegyrist and *ghazal* poet. The fragment, from K 48, is as follows:

2. The mouth of Ibn Laylā is forming a statement to me, and if I have come to [hear this] statement, I am the one who will receive it[’s benefit]
3. I was amazed to let go of the affair of guidance [i.e. petition] after it was clear that ‘Abd al-‘Aziz accepted it
4. And my aim was to tame the difficult matters, and on that day her docility enabled me [to do that]
5. I swore by the Lord of the camels ambling toward Minā, whose gait and strut takes the land by storm
6. That if ‘Abd al-‘Azīz returned to me its like, and made me capable of it, then I would not cancel it

The circumstances of this apology are not clear, and the scene provided in the *akhbār* for the passage are doubtful.³⁵³ What is immediately striking here, however, is that we see the language of the ‘pilgrimage-oath,’ sworn upon the ‘camels ambling to Minā’ (*al-rāqīṣāt ilā Minā*) being employed here by the poet in a situation of petition before the prince: i.e., the *ḥilf* is present in the panegyric, with phrasing identical to that of the oaths we have seen in the *ghazal*.

These three fragments, although they can provide only a very limited understanding of Kuthayyir’s panegyric during this period, show that reference to the tribes of the Ḥijāz, and to the pilgrimage, functioned in his praise poems for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in ways that would be compatible with the patronage-motivations we have suggested above: Kuthayyir boldly and effectively asserts that, as a poet of the Ḥijāz with strong connections to the tribes and sacred territory of this area, his praise for the Marwānid patron will ‘make faithful the people of the pilgrimage-sites (*yuwāfī bi-l-mawāsimi ahlahā*).

The only fully transmitted praise poem by Kuthayyir that mentions ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, K 16 is a thirty-line praise poem addressed to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s son, Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, that is preserved in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. It should be considered a relatively minor panegyric, in that it does not exhibit any of the more striking tonal, thematic, or formal features of the major panegyric for ‘Abd al-Malik (K 1), or of the later panegyrics for ‘Umar II (K 58 and 11), which will be studied below. But as a fully preserved text of a praise poem from this middle period of Kuthayyir’s career, the text is a valuable example of Kuthayyir’s work as a panegyrist.

³⁵³ In the *Khizāna* of al-Baghdādī, 3:582, an anecdote is given claiming that Kuthayyir, after having performed a particularly good poem, asked to become *kātib* (secretary) to the prince, but was denied this request as he lacked the requisite technical skill.

The text can be dated fairly precisely: the text mentions the death of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in a way that makes clear that the poem comes from the period just after this event, which is reported to have occurred in Egypt in 85/704. The *mamdūh* of the poem, Abū Bakr b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, is reported, like his brother the caliph ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (‘Umar II, on whom see below), to have grown up between his father’s court in Ḥulwān and Medina, and to have been immersed in religious studies as a young man; he was a lifelong close confidant of his brother ‘Umar.³⁵⁴

Uniquely among the extant texts of panegyric poems by Kuthayyir, the structure of the poem clearly evinces the so-called ‘classical’ tri-partite panegyric structure: a ten-line *nasīb* is followed by a ten-line section of journey toward the patron (*raḥīl*), which is introduced in lines 11 and 12 by a fully ‘explicit’ narrative *takhalluṣ* (transition). The *mamdūh* is named toward the end of the *raḥīl* section (‘toward you, Abū Bakr’, line 17), and this introduces the section of praise (*madiḥ*) that closes the poem. There is thus a clear structural symmetry in the extant recension of the text in the *Muntahā*, with each of the three sections extending over ten lines. It is a distinct thematic feature of the poem that within the praise movement, there is reference to the ‘bones and tattered clothes’ of the recently-deceased father of the *mamdūh*, so that the text can be considered a hybrid of praise (*madiḥ*) and elegy (*marthīya*).

The commentary interposed between the sections of the poem focusses again on elements that link the rhetoric of this panegyric to elements of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal*.

K 16, ṭawīl

³⁵⁴ On Abū Bakr, see Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5, 185; al-‘Askarī, *Jamharat al-amthāl*, 105.

1. O that Salmā has gone away and you suffer, and that something has taken her away in the morning
2. You do not stay away in a night when you remain, nor rise in the morning, but that your youthful passion for her is new
3. Abodes in the areas of Surīr [are] as if upon them was the plaster on the structures at Ghayqa
4. The empty years pass, and I do not see her ruins vanish at the courtyard of Shabbā
5. At Ghayqa and the mountain peaks, the peaks of Ḍabya, where the white oryx does still roam around
6. And the white-chested cow weeps her grief as if she has a lost child in the empty highlands
7. As a Himyarite girl plays at the height of noon plucking with her hands the strings and playing long
8. In long nights of youth gone by, and white necked supple women
9. Who spread in every sleeping room the spray of musk, while mixed saffron shines about them
10. So let Salmā go, if distance has come between you, since you are a man whose time is fleeting and - you claim - very strong
11. So forget the cares of the soul, for dealing with them is harsh if a man does not deal with them cleverly

The *nasīb* opens with the declaration ‘O that Salmā has gone away and you suffer’ (*‘alā ‘anna’at Salmā wa-‘anta ‘amīdu*). *‘Amīd* denotes an ‘enduring sickness of the heart’, a seeming synonym for *saqīm*, as in its usage in a poem by Imru’ Qays: ‘Have you recalled to your soul

that which does not return, and memory has excited a sick heart' (*a-adhkarta nafsaka mā lan ya'ūda fa-hāja l-tadhakkuru qalban 'amīda*).³⁵⁵ This reference to illness is combined here with the usage of the verb *afāda* in the second hemistich to refer to the 'calamity' that has taken away the beloved; this verb appears commonly in elegy to refer 'euphemistically' to the cause of death of the lamented deceased, and thus its usage here already introduces resonances of *marthīya* in the poem.³⁵⁶ **Line 2**, where the poet declares that every morning his 'passion is new' (*ṣibāka jadīdu*) employs the characteristic future-orientation of *ghazal*. Yet the *nasīb* here carries on to depict the desolation of the ruins, which are linked to a series of place-names all located within the western Ḥijāz (*Ghayqa*, line 3; *al-Shibā*, line 4; *Ẓabya*, line 5). The desolation of these now-abandoned *aṭlāl* – which seems to create an appropriate mood of sadness in a poem that will incorporate mention of death of the patron – is combined here with a sustained deployment of imagery evoking the motif of the 'youth gone by' or 'empty years' (*al-sinūna l-khāliyāt*, line 4; *layālī...allādhī maḍā*, line 8). Within this imagery of vanished youth occur the sensuous images of the 'Ḥimyarite girl' playing music at the height of day (7), and the 'white-breasted women' spreading their perfume (9).

It is noteworthy that this *nasīb* ends, in **lines 10 and 11**, with a fully explicit narrative *takhalluṣ*, wherein the poet exhorts himself, in line 10, to 'leave Salmā since distance has taken her away' (*fa-da' 'anka Salmā 'idh 'atā l-na'yu dūnahā*). The following line then conveys the *humūm* conceit, with the poet insisting he 'forget the cares of the soul' (*salī humūma l-nafs*),³⁵⁷ thus introducing the *raḥīl* or travelogue section that will follow. This *nasīb* movement in general, although its temporality resonates with Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetics, is more 'narrative' than those of Kuthayyir's other surviving panegyrics, in the sense that it refers unambiguously to the 'overcoming' of attachments; as we will see in

³⁵⁵ Ahlwardt, *Six Divans*, 10.197.

³⁵⁶ On *afāda* as a term in elegy, see Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, volume 1, 41, in a note to a *marthīya* by Janūb al-Hudhaliyya.

³⁵⁷ See Papoutsakis, *Desert Travel as a Form of Boasting* (2009), 28.

discussing the final praise section, we might speculate that this feature suits the particular elegaic setting of the poem.

12. On a white camel that has on its sides and flank muscles, underneath its saddle, a swelling
13. She has a flooding down its chest if it marches on, and in the space between the shoulder blades an elevation
14. And under the corners of her saddle is a strong, noble, brave camel vied with by long-necked camels
15. You will see her, if the rider becomes thirsty, and the arrival to water is sought after, yet far away
16. Strutting like a flashy girl showing off to her sisters in law, twisting like the turns of the *wishāḥ*
17. toward you Abū Bakr moving with its rider, despite tiredness spreading out its limbs in wide gait
18. Passing by the hills near isolated abodes, the abodes near Ghālib. I say, if it is asked where I go
19. I go to Abū Bakr, even if between us there are desert expanses and rocky tracts that give trouble to the camels

The *raḥīl*-section of the poem – which might more accurately be called a ‘travelogue’, representing as it does a clear narrative connection between the *nasīb* and the arrival to the patron – shows the poet describing his camel as he crosses a desert to reach Abū Bakr. The description of the camel with perspiration running down its chest (13), vying with the other exhausted animals (14), bearing its rider to a much-needed water source are all

typical of the ‘group-rider’ *raḥīl*, a common feature in Umayyad-era panegyric.³⁵⁸ The comparison of the camel in line 16 to a ‘flashy girl strutting before her companions’ (*tazīfu kamā zāfat ilā salifātihā mubāhiyatun*) is notable: such similes, which carry forward the erotic imagery of the *nasīb*, are common in *raḥīl* passages. At **line 19**, just at the end of this travelogue, the *mamdūḥ* is named, transitioning into the section of direct praise.

20. So that you may know that I remain faithful to [your] affection, and that I
have no ingratitude toward the hand that has been so generous to me
21. For you are, and always will be, fully praise-worthy to me, in generosity and
otherwise, in every circumstance
22. The blessings of your outstretched hand are extended in giving, while some
hands treat me with ingratitude
23. And the blessings of the one who will come between me and him are a grave-
stone and burial mound, and hills blown away by the winds
24. O may my decaying bones and tattered clothes in the grave not go far
25. And destroy how I view ‘Abd al-‘Azīz - when we meet his star rises brightly,
auspiciously
26. He has among his sons a *majlis*, and their sons are noble men sitting upright
and steady as sword blades
27. There is no eternity for any living man, even if he grows old, or for the fixed
mountains,
28. You Abū Bakr are my pure friend after him, who returns and cares for the
ones he had affection for
29. You are a man inspired with truth and generosity, given long-lasting glory by

³⁵⁸ See Jacobi, “Camel-Section” (1982), 14-15; and Papoutsakis, *Desert Travel*, 110 f.

your ancestors

30. Ancestors from the two Ka'bs with shining white faces, they have done deeds
whose glory is ever-lasting

This section combines praise for the patron Abū Bakr (**lines 20-24** and **28-30**) with elegy for the patron's father, the deceased 'Abd al-'Azīz (referred to explicitly in lines 25-27). The effect of the lines is to praise the present patron as one who carries forward the legacy of his illustrious father, providing a *majlis* 'council' (line 26) among the Banū 'Abd al-'Azīz that will perpetuate the 'generosity' (*nawāl*, line 21, and *nā'il*, line 29) and 'glory' (*majd*, line 30) of their line, which in the poem's final line is referred back to the 'two Ka'bs', their putative ancestors. The wording of the direct reference to 'Abd al-'Azīz in line 25 is particularly noteworthy: the poet refers, using the imperfect tense verb 'arā 'I view' with the frequentative particle *qad*, to his encounter with 'Abd al-'Azīz: 'how I view Abd al-Aziz - when we meet his star rises brightly, auspiciously' (*bi-mā qad arā 'Abda al-'Azīzi wa-najmuhu idhā naltaqī ṭalqu l-ṭulū'i su'ūdu*). Although the imperfect tense with *qad* can be used, especially in early poetry, to refer to continuous actions in the past,³⁵⁹ one is reminded here of Jacobi's interpretation of '*qad arā*' in the *ghazal* poem attributed to Abū Dhu'ayb, discussed in section 2.1, where the use of imperfect verbs emphatically marks the ongoing nature of the poet's attachment. Here, this reference to the deceased patron seems in a sense to evince the same 'ongoing' temporality that we have witnessed in Kuthayyir's *ghazal*.

³⁵⁹ See Wright, *Grammar of the Arabic Language, Part I* (Cambridge: 1896), 286c, note: 'In poetry, *qad arā* may be used for *qad kuntu arā videbam...*'.

3.5 ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Piety, and ‘The End of Poetry’

Between the years of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s death in 85/705 and the ascension to the caliphate of his son ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in 99/717, there are no extant texts of panegyric by Kuthayyir for Umayyad patrons. In a *khbar* that is given in the *Kitāb al-Amālī* of al-Qālī and ‘*Uyūn al-Akhhār*’ by Ibn Qutayba, the following quotation is attributed to Kuthayyir:³⁶⁰

‘It was said to him: what is with you that you do not declaim poetry? Have you fallen silent? He said: by God, it would not be so, but I lost my youth, so I am not excited; ‘Azza was taken from me, so I do not make *nasīb*; and Ibn Laylā died, so I feel no desire.’

*Qīla la-hu: mā la-ka lā taqūlu l-shi‘ra? ‘ajbalta? Fa-qāla : wallāhi mā kāna dhālika wa-lākin faqadtu l-shabāba fa-mā ‘aṭrubu, wa-ruzi’tu ‘Azzata fa-mā ansību, wa-māta bnu Laylā fa-mā ‘arghubu*³⁶¹

This report is significant in several respects: it acknowledges first of all that the gap we witness in Kuthayyir’s panegyric poetry is not an accident of transmission, but rather was observed by early critics as well, who had access to his full *dīwān*. Secondly, it signifies that a special bond, figured here even as ‘desire’ (*‘arghabu*) was perceived between Kuthayyir and his patron ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, a judgement echoed in other passages of criticism that mention the ‘sincerity’ of Kuthayyir’s panegyric for ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, especially in his

³⁶⁰ See al-Qālī, *Kitāb al-amālī*, 1:30, and Ibn Qutayba, ‘*Uyūn al-akhhār*, 2:185.

³⁶¹ The version given by Ibn Qutayba, op cit., reads: *mātati ‘Azzatu fa-mā ‘aṭrubu, wa-dhahiba l-shabābu fa-mā ‘a‘jubu* (‘Azza died so I am not excited, and youth has gone so I feel no wonder).’

elegies (*marāthī*).³⁶²

The 'interlude' that is thus observable in Kuthayyir's panegyric career coincides with the periods of rule of the two sons of 'Abd al-Malik: al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (ruled 86-96/705-715), and Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik (ruled 96-99/715-717). During the rule of the Banū 'Abd al-Malik, who had been rivals to the caliphal claims of Kuthayyir's previous patrons, Kuthayyir did not produce panegyric for Umayyad patrons. In what follows, we will provide a historical introduction to Kuthayyir's appearance as a panegyrist during the reign of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz ('Umar II), who held the caliphate 99-101/717-719, followed by a translation and study of Kuthayyir's two most significant panegyrics for 'Umar II.

When 'Abd al-'Azīz died in 85/704, it is reported that 'Abd al-Malik sent to Egypt one of his sons, 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Malik (governed Egypt 86-90/705-708), to take over the governorship of the country, with express orders to 'wipe out the traces' of 'Abd al-'Azīz.³⁶³ 'Abd al-'Azīz's eldest son and presumed heir, al-Aṣḡagh b. 'Abd al-'Azīz, had died only months before his father, and it is reported in al-Kindī that 'Umar II was appointed by his father to be his successor just months before his death. But with the death of the *walī al-'ahd*, 'Abd al-Malik seized this opportunity to exert hegemony over Egypt, and to institute a range of 'post-fitna' centralizing policies that had previously been impeded by 'Abd al-'Azīz.³⁶⁴ The death of 'Abd al-'Azīz wiped out, for the time being at least, expectations that any of the Banū 'Abd al-'Azīz would succeed to the caliphate, and it was soon arranged that instead two sons of 'Abd al-Malik would be next in line for the office, in accordance with the caliph's long-expressed wishes. After 'Abd al-Malik, al-Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik would rule from 86-96/705-715, followed by Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Malik, who ruled 96-99/715-717.

³⁶² See Rūmiyyah, *Qaṣīdatu l-madh*, 544 f.

³⁶³ Al-Kindī, *Wulāt Miṣr*, 55; see also Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 94-95.

³⁶⁴ See Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 84.

But in contrast to the open hostility that prevailed during ‘Abd al-Malik’s reign between the two branches of the Marwānids, an attitude of conciliation or, one might say, a policy aimed at co-optation, seems to have prevailed in the years after ‘Abd al-Malik’s death. This conciliatory/co-opting policy included the cultivation of kinship ties between the two families, as well as the delegation of important offices and leadership roles to some of the Banū ‘Abd al-‘Azīz. The most prominent example of this is the appointment of ‘Umar II to the prestigious and powerful position of the governor of Medina and the Ḥijāz, a position he held from 86-91/705-711. Prior to this appointment, and just after the death of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, ‘Umar was summoned by ‘Abd al-Malik to Damascus and a marriage was arranged with the caliph’s daughter, Fāṭima.³⁶⁵ At approximately the same time, ‘Abd al-Malik’s son and the new caliph-in-waiting, al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik was married to Umm al-Banīn bt. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, the daughter of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz who would play a conspicuous role in her relations with Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets, including Kuthayyir.³⁶⁶

‘Umar II, who grew up between his father’s court in Ḥulwān and Medina, took over the prestigious governorship of Medina in Rabī‘ I 87/February 706, and held this office until 93/712.³⁶⁷ Prominent among his activities as governor were his supervision of an extensive rebuilding project of the congregational mosque in the city, at the orders of the caliph al-Walīd, which included an extensive refurbishment of the Bilāṭ and the Prophet’s mosque,³⁶⁸ and his apparent sponsorship of early religious scholarship in the city and the first collections by the *muḥaddithūn*.³⁶⁹ After being recalled to Damascus in 93/712, ‘Umar II seems to have been an important member of the court of Sulaymān b. ‘Abd al-Malik (ruled 96-98/715-717), and traveled with the caliph to Mecca for example in 97/716, the same year he was appointed *walī al-‘ahd*, reportedly as the result of maneuverings within

³⁶⁵ See “Umar (II),” E13 [Cobb].

³⁶⁶ On Umm al-Banīn, see esp. the introduction to Rhodokanakis, *Diwan*, 49 f.

³⁶⁷ A comprehensive critical account of ‘Umar II’s early life is given by Becker, “Studien zur Omajjadengeschichte. A. ‘Umar II”, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 15 (1900), 1-36.

³⁶⁸ See Munt, *Holy City*, 103-104.

³⁶⁹ See “Al-Fuqahā’ al-Sab’a”, E12 [Pellat], discussed further below.

the court.³⁷⁰ ‘Umar II’s caliphate, which lasted just under two years, is perhaps best known for his fiscal policies, although the precise outlines of these remain unclear, and for his supposedly ‘pacifist’ stance on military affairs. But it is the complex image of the personality of this figure in later historical sources, rather than an outline of his policies, that is of most relevance to our study.

‘Umar II is one of the most remarkable figures among the Umayyads. An exceptional range of early narrative sources – much of it containing elements of hagiography and myth, and compiled in their extant forms in the Abbasid period – portray his character in a way that is highly distinct from other Umayyad figures.³⁷¹ ‘Umar II is depicted as a pious figure, in some sense a continuation of the ‘right-guided’ rule of the early caliphs such as his namesake and great-grandfather ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.³⁷² Even in Abbasid historiographical contexts where we might expect a negative depiction of the character of the ‘worldly’ and irreligious Umayyad leaders, ‘Umar II generally appears as a figure of proto-Sunnī piety. But while the ‘right-guidedness’ of ‘Umar II as caliph link him back to the generation of his great-grandfather, the particular mix of piety with forms of sensuous, emotional, and aesthetic display that we find in depictions of the younger ‘Umar II seem to be distinctly Umayyad, and it is these features of ‘Umar II that we wish to highlight in introducing Kuthayyir’s panegyric for the figure.

The complexity of ‘Umar II’s historical image is bound up with a singularly rich and interesting body of literary evidence about him. The *Sīrat ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, compiled

³⁷⁰ On this period of ‘Umar II’s life, see Bosworth, “Rajā’ ibn Ḥaywa al-Kindī and the Umayyad Caliphs,” *IQ* 16 (1972), 36-80.

³⁷¹ On the depiction of ‘Umar II in the historical tradition, with particular reference to his biography in Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Tarīkh Dimashq*, see Khalek, “Early Islamic History Reimagined: the Biography of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz in Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Tarīkh Madīnat Dimashq*,” *JAOS* 134:3 (2014), 431-451, especially 44-46.

³⁷² ‘Umar II’s mother, Umm ‘Āṣim, was the granddaughter of the second caliph. On Umm ‘Āṣim Laylā bt. ‘Āṣim bt. ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, see al-Ṣafadī, *al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, 22:506-10.

by the Egyptian Mālikī scholar ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥakam (d. 214/829),³⁷³ brings together a range of anecdotes about ‘Umar, sermons and correspondence attributed to him, and accounts of his interactions with contemporaries, and provides ‘documents’ of edicts and records of his policies as caliph. It has been called by Franz Rosenthal, ‘the oldest preserved representative (apart from the *Sīra* of the prophet) of Muslim biographical writing on the large scale in monograph form,’³⁷⁴ but its picturesque anecdotal material, like the poetic *akhbār*, often requires to be approached, perhaps, again, more as a form of narrative exegesis than as historical record. There are also a range of other quite extensive early accounts of ‘Umar II, including most significantly those by Ibn Sa‘d, Ibn Jawzī, and al-Balādhurī,³⁷⁵ and a number of early epistles attributed to ‘Umar II.³⁷⁶ Finally, ‘Umar II is also one of only two Umayyad rulers to receive an article dedicated to him in the *Aghānī*, an article that contains a number of interesting *akhbār* related to his interactions with poets.³⁷⁷ In order to provide a background for Kuthayyir’s relationship to this patron, and to provide a historical context for distinct tonal and thematic features of Kuthayyir’s poetry for this patron, we will provide a brief survey of two issues in this source material on ‘Umar II: (1) the complex mix of information related to ‘Umar II’s relationship to ‘piety’ and religious scholarship, alongside details of his interest in sensual matters, including poetry; and (2) ‘Umar II’s distinct and favorable relationship to the Hāshimites, and particularly to the ‘Alids of Medina. Following our translation and commentary on Kuthayyir’s poetry, we will point in our interpretation to ways in which these two issues can be seen reflected in the texts.

³⁷³ *Sīrat ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, ed. Ubayd (Cairo: 1927).

³⁷⁴ “Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam,” E12 [Rosenthal].

³⁷⁵ For a summary of the biographical tradition on ‘Umar up to Ibn ‘Asākir, see Khalek, “Early Islamic History,” 432-434.

³⁷⁶ On the epistles of ‘Umar, see especially Mourad, *Early Islam Between Myth and History. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110H/728CE) and the Formation of His Legacy in Classical Islamic Scholarship* (Leiden: 2006), chapter 2.

³⁷⁷ The article on ‘Umar in the *Aghānī* is Agh 9.250-268. See Kilpatrick, “‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, al-Walīd ibn Yazīd and their Kin: Images of the Umayyads in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*,” in *Umayyad Legacies. Medieval memories from Syria to Spain*, eds. Borrut and Cobb (Leiden: 2010), 63-88.

‘Umar II grew up between his father’s court in Ḥulwān and in Medina, where it is reported that he first had contacts with *muḥaddithūn* and religious scholars.³⁷⁸ At the same time, there are a number of passages in *Sīrat ‘Umar* that describe ‘Umar as having displayed exceptional personal style and grooming as a young man: he is said to have been ‘among the greatest of the Umayyads in refinement and self-possession (*wa-kāna ... min ‘a‘zama ‘umawīyin taraffuhan wa-tamallukan*), and it is said that he walked with an elegant strut that became known as the “Umarī gait” (*al-mashyatu al-‘umarīya*).³⁷⁹ The detail is given that ‘the slave-girls knew [his walk] by its beauty and his strut’ (*fa-kāna l-jawārī yata‘allamnahā min ḥusnihā wa-tabakkhhturihi*).³⁸⁰ This picturesque detail, among others, depicts the prince as given to aesthetic refinement and sensual pleasure.

One finds also reports that connect the prince’s early ‘life of pleasure’ directly to an interest in poetry, and the love poetry of the Ḥijāz in particular. In the article on the poet Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ in the Aghānī, there is an account of ‘Umar and Nuṣayb in the Prophet’s mosque in Medina during ‘Umar’s term as governor. In this evocative passage, Nuṣayb asks ‘Umar whether he would like to hear the poet recite *marāthī* on ‘Umar’s father --- the governor refuses him, and asks the poet to recite love poetry instead.³⁸¹

It should be recalled that ‘Umar II’s governorship of Medina, which seems to overlap with what is depicted as ‘Umar II’s period of interest in the ‘fineness’ and sensuality of life, and *ghazal* poetry, indeed overlaps with the period in which he is meant to have sponsored and engaged in religious study. From the point when ‘Umar assumed the governorship of Medina in Rabī‘ I 87/February 706, he is said to have governed in close connection with the

³⁷⁸ See Becker, “Studien,” 1-6.

³⁷⁹ *Sīrat ‘Umar*, 21.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ Agh 1.345.

fuqahā’ of the holy city. The period of ‘Umar II’s governorship of Medina coincides roughly with the period of flourishing of the so-called ‘Seven Fuqahā’ of Medina’ (*Fuqahā’ al-Madīna al-Sab‘a*) and the earliest appearance of *ḥadīth* studies and *fiqh*.³⁸² During this time ‘Umar is related to have had close relations with the prominent religious figures of the city, some of whom were also well-known poets, such as ‘Ubayd Allāh b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Hudhalī, who is said to have been ‘Umar II’s tutor in Medina.³⁸³ ‘Ubayd Allāh, known as an extremely learned transmitter of religious knowledge, was also well-known as a poet, is the subject of an article in the *Aghānī*;³⁸⁴ we have noted above, in our commentary to K 3 verse 2, the similarity between Kuthayyir’s verse and a line attributed to ‘Ubayd Allāh in the *Aghānī*. In an evocative passage in Ibn Asakir, it is stated that ‘Umar ‘gathered *fuqahā*’ when he was governor, and had them ‘recall death’ *yatadhākarūna al-mawta*, around him.³⁸⁵ As we will have occasion to note again below after we have examined Kuthayyir’s panegyric for ‘Umar II, such references are helpful in elucidating overlaps between a rhetoric of ‘piety’ in the praise poems, and a repertoire of tones and images drawn from *ghazal*.

Certainly, such depictions serve the narrative function of contrasting with ‘Umar II’s later piety, and can be understood partly in relation to the justificatory logic of ‘Umar II’s later portrayal as virtuous. The passages could also be explicated as evincing the tendency of historical material on the Umayyads toward stereotypes of ‘debauchery’ and ‘worldliness.’ But given the clear tendency of the sources to lean in the direction of ‘right-guidedness’ in the case of ‘Umar II, these passages stand out. It would be wrong to disregard these reports in forming our historical portrait of the caliph. Most significantly, we will see in our study of Kuthayyir’s poetry for ‘Umar II that just this feature of ‘Umar’s biography – his early attachment to worldly pleasures, contrasted with his later, ‘other-worldly’ tendency toward asceticism – features prominently in some unusual passages of panegyric for the

³⁸² See “Fukahā’ al-Madīna al-Sab‘a,” E12 [Pellat].

³⁸³ Ibid.

³⁸⁴ See Agh 9.145.

³⁸⁵ Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tarīkh Dimashq*, 45:239

prince. Kuthayyir's poem K 58, which we study immediately below in the context of the *khobar* from the *Aghānī* in which it is transmitted, strongly confirms that the story of 'Umar's 'spiritual progress' should, at the least, be considered a *projection* of 'Umar II's personality that is contemporaneous with his period of rule.

The second aspect of 'Umar II's life relevant here consists in his friendly connections to the Hāshimites, and in particular to the 'Alids, during the period of his rule. There are several striking examples of 'Umar II showing special consideration to the 'Alids in his policies and decision-making, and several anecdotal accounts that portray his favorable disposition toward the 'Alids of Medina. One example, perhaps the clearest, is his handling of an affair having to do with possession of the Ḥijāzī estate of Fadak, a property in a village near Khaybar, that was largely populated by Jews, which Marwān had inherited and passed down to his sons 'Abd al-'Azīz and 'Abd al-Malik. When 'Umar II became caliph, it is reported that he handed the property to the 'Alids 'for the purpose of ending the injustices inflicted on the Alids.'³⁸⁶ This fits into a general picture of Umar's policies as friendly to the 'Alids, and he is depicted as having been reverential to those who had a close connection to 'Alī. It is reported in several sources that when 'Umar II took over Medina, he banned the cursing of 'Alī in congregational mosques.³⁸⁷ Scholarship has indeed taken note of the fact that 'Umar II is frequently associated in sources with projections of being the *mahdī*, perhaps in connection to his rule during the end of the first Islamic century, a period that was subject of apocalyptic speculation; his actual connections to 'Alids in Medina, and display of authority in ways compatible with this, has been less observed.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁶ See "Fadak," EI2 [Vecchia].

³⁸⁷ See Ibn 'Asākir, *Tarīkh Dimashq*, 45:136.

³⁸⁸ On 'Umar II in connection to projections as the *mahdī*, see Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (Cambridge: 1986), 114; and Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir. L'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides* (Leiden : 2010), chapter 5. Ahmed notes, in *Religious Elite*, 70, n. 316: 'Mu'āwiya, Marwān, 'Abd al-Malik (for about half his reign), and 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz seem to have been a lot more diplomatic in their relations with the Alids than other Umayyads.'

‘Umar II’s connections to the Hashimites, and to the ‘Alids in particular, are relevant to Kuthayyir’s attachment to this patron – and there is indeed a *khobar* transmitted in the article on Kuthayyir in the *Aghānī* that remarks on this connection between the well-known Shī‘ī (Kaysānī) poet and the caliph. The *khobar*, which goes back to Abū ‘Ubayd, reads:

‘Umar b ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said: I can tell the righteous among the Banū Hāshim from the rotten by way of Kuthayyir’s love: those he loves are rotten, and those he hates are righteous, for he was a Khashabī who declared (belief in) *raj‘a*.

*qāla ‘Umar b ‘Abd al-‘Azīz: ‘innī la-’a’rafu šullāḥa banī hāshimi min fussādi-him bi-ḥubbi Kuthayyirin: man ‘aḥabba-hu minhum fa-huwa fāsīdun, wa-man abghaḍahu fa-huwa šāliḥ; li-’annahu kāna khashabīyan yaqūlu bi-l-raj‘ati*³⁸⁹

The final phrase of this passage seems perhaps to be a gloss or explanation by Abū l-Faraj, and of course we ought not to assume this to be a direct quotation from ‘Umar II. Yet the *khobar* convincingly demonstrates that Kuthayyir’s connection to ‘Umar II was seen as connected in a meaningful sense to Kuthayyir’s connections to the Hāshimites.

Although it has occasionally been alleged that ‘Umar II’s piety caused him not to support or sponsor panegyric poetry during his caliphate, this assumption appears false: ‘Umar II appears as *mamdūḥ* and patron in a number of panegyrics by Jarīr, al-Aḥwaṣ, Nuṣayb, and, most prominently, Kuthayyir.³⁹⁰ We will present now a study of two panegyric texts by

³⁸⁹ Agh 9.19.

³⁹⁰ For a useful summary of, and quotations from, the poetry dedicated to ‘Umar II, see Nadler, *Die Umayyadenkalifen*, 188-216. Bakhouch, “Le calife ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz et les Poètes,” *Bulletin d’études orientales*

Kuthayyir for ‘Umar II. K 58 is a panegyric poem that has been called by Hilary Kilpatrick ‘highly unusual,’ a poem which specifically praises the ‘spiritual progress’ of the caliph as he transforms from a young man tempted by sensual matters, to a pious ruler who has overcome worldly desire. The poem is transmitted in an interesting *khavar*-context that depicts the encounter between Kuthayyir and ‘Umar II. K 11 is a praise poem, preserved in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*. It is imbued strongly with themes related to Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* and to the pilgrimage complex; it displays a bi-partite structure, consisting of a twenty-line *nasīb*, including a pilgrimage oath, followed by twenty lines of praise.

The first panegyric by Kuthayyir for ‘Umar that we will discuss is the only one of Kuthayyir’s poems for ‘Umar II that has so far been given any scholarly attention.³⁹¹ It is provided within a *khavar* given both in the *Aghānī* and in the article on Kuthayyir in Ibn Qutayba’s *Kitāb al-Shi‘r wa l-Shu‘arā’*. In what is presented as the first-person narrative of Kuthayyir, the *khavar* provides an account of how Kuthayyir, Nuṣayb, and al-Aḥwaṣ came to meet ‘Umar II, becoming his panegyrists during the period of his rule as *amīr al-mu‘minīn*. Before turning to the poem itself, we will first present the text of the *khavar* in the version provided by Ibn Qutayba, which is referred back to Ḥammād al-Rāwiyah.³⁹²

The first narrator, al-Riyāshī, says that he came to Medīna ‘seeking knowledge’ (*altamisu l-‘ilma*). It turns out that he is apparently seeking a specific piece of knowledge. He meets Kuthayyir in Medina, and asks him to tell him what he wants to know. Kuthayyir first tells him that he must go ask Nuṣayb and al-Aḥwaṣ, then finally agrees to tell al-Riyāshī what he wants to know. Kuthayyir then begins his narrative:

58 (2008-2009), 161-204, which we will discuss below, provides a useful gathering of evidence but we disagree with his claims affirming the idea of an ‘end’ of poetry in the period of ‘Umar II’s reign.

³⁹¹ See Bakhouch, “‘Umar et les poètes,” 161-204.

³⁹² Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-shi‘r wa l-shu‘arā’*, 316-320.

When the matter of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz came to pass [i.e., presumably, when he became caliph: *lammā kāna min ‘amri ‘Umara bni ‘Abdi l-‘Azīzi mā kāna*), Nuṣayb, al-Aḥwaṣ and I each went forward to assert to ‘Umar his prior status (*yudillu bi-sābiqatihī*) with ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and his brothers. The first person we met was Maslamah b. ‘Abd al-Malik, who was at that time the Youth of the Arabs, and each one of us looked at his two shoulders [i.e. ‘sized him up’] and knew that he was the caliph’s partner in the caliphate (*‘anna-hu sharīku l-khalīfati fī l-khilāfa*). He welcomed us generously and made our stay pleasant. Then he said, ‘are you aware that your leader gives nothing to poets (*‘imāmu-kum lā yu‘tī l-shu‘arā’ shay’an*)? We said, ‘we have come, so look after us in this matter.’ He said, ‘If a man of religion from among the family of Marwān has taken over the caliphate, then the people of the *dunyā* are now those who must take care of your needs and do for you what you require. (*‘in kāna dhū dīnin min āli Marwānin qad waliya l-khilāfata fa-qad baqiya min dhawī dunyāhim man yaqdī ḥawā’ijahum wa-yaf’alu bi-kum mā antum la-hu ahlun*). So we stayed at his door for four months and did not get an audience. Maslamah tried to have us summoned but it was not allowed. So I said, What if I went to the Mosque on Friday and memorized some of ‘Umar’s speech! So I went to the mosque and I was the first to preserve his speech. I heard him say in one of his orations: to every journey there is an appropriate provision, so provide the journey from worldly existence to the hereafter with piety, and be among those who face what God has provided them of requital and difficulty, and make a seeking of this and a fear of that. Do not let weariness weigh heavy and make bitter your hearts so that you are bowed to your enemy. And know that he is at peace with the *dunyā* who is confident in security from God’s punishment in the afterlife. As for he who has not treated a wound when he is struck by yet another wound, how can he be at peace with the *dunyā*! By God I would not order you to do what I forbid myself, let my hand-clasp be lost, and my poverty show, and my poorness be clear, on a

day when nothing avails but reality and truth. The mosque then shook with weeping, and ‘Umar cried until his clothes were soaked, until we thought that he had passed away. So I went to my two companions, and I said, ‘make ready for ‘Umar some poetry that we have never prepared before, for this man is not of-this-world (*fa-laysa l-rajlu bi-dunyawī*). Then Maslamah summoned us on a Friday after the general audience (*ba‘da mā udhina li-l-‘āmmati*). We entered and greeted him as caliph, and he replied. Then I said to him, ‘O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, we have stayed long and there has been no reward, and delegations from among the Arabs have told us that you will not be generous to us (lit., ‘told us of your dryness to us’). He said, ‘O Kuthayyir, have you not heard the word of God the mighty and magnificent in His Book ‘Charity is for the poor and needy...so which of these are you?’ I said to him with a laugh, I am the son of the road, who is cut off there. He said, ‘Are you not the guest of Sa‘īd?’ I said, ‘Indeed’ He said, ‘I cannot consider the guest of Abū Sa‘īd to be abandoned in the road. Then he summoned me to recite, and he said, ‘Speak, and only speak truth, for God is asking [this of] you.’ So I declaimed:

At this point in the report is given a nineteen-line quotation from K 58 (lines 10, 13, and 15-31 of ‘Abbās’s edition), the poem that will be translated and discussed immediately below. Following this, as the *khavar* continues, both al-Aḥwaṣ and Nuṣayb are summoned with the same request, ‘To speak, and say only truth’ (*Qul wa-lā taqul illā ḥaqqan*), because ‘God is/will be asking you’ (*fa-‘inna llāhu sā’iluka*). A sixteen-line quotation is given from a poem by al-Aḥwaṣ which, like the poem by Kuthayyir that we will study presently, is largely concerned with praise of ‘Umar in terms of his ‘piety’ (*taqwā*), spiritual right-guidedness, and adherence to religious wisdom. Nuṣayb is then summoned, but is forbidden to recite poetry and banished to the Syrian village of Dābiq. Finally, both al-Aḥwaṣ and Kuthayyir are rewarded with payment, each receiving the modest sums of either one-hundred and fifty, or three-hundred dirhams (the *khavar* reports variants for the amounts).

There are a number of interesting features of this *khabar* that pertain to ‘Umar II’s image and the place of poetry within his court. Whether or not we take any of the concrete details of the scene around ‘Umar II in Medina to be historical fact, the account clearly presumes the existence of a body of panegyric poetry composed for ‘Umar II that contains themes of personal piety and ‘right-guidedness.’ Indeed, the *khabar* provides a panegyric setting in which these poems are performed by Kuthayyir and al-Aḥwaṣ, while also affirming that there is tension between this panegyric practice and the strictures of Islam. In specific, when ‘Umar II asks Kuthayyir into what category of licit recipients of ‘charity’ (*al-ṣadaqāt*) he belongs, quoting the Qur’ān verse in doing so, we see here a tension being pointed out between the strictures of right-conduct as to giving of wealth, and the practice of bestowing gifts on poets.

In an article dedicated to interpreting the evidence about ‘Umar II’s relationship to poetry,³⁹³ Mohamed Bakhouch has recently claimed that this *khabar* shows that ‘Umar II ended, or radically altered, the practice of giving generously to poets. Bakhouch’s conclusion does not seem convincing. It should be pointed out that within the story related in the *khabar*, Kuthayyir and al-Aḥwaṣ are provided with monetary reward in the end. Additionally, if the *khabar* is interpreted not as a historical report but rather as to some degree a narrative *justification* for the fact that panegyric poetry exists from this period in which Islamic piety is praised by these two *ghazal* poets, then it seems rather more instructive for us to take the *khabar* as offering a compelling narrative exegesis of the circumstances of panegyric in ‘Umar II’s court.

In the account, Kuthayyir goes into the mosque to hear the sermons of ‘Umar II, from which he then derives ideas and molds the rhetoric of his ‘pietistic’ praise, which will fit the caliph’s stricture to ‘speak only truth.’ Again, we take this detail to be not primarily a historical claim, but rather to offer a confirmation in the form of exegesis that the themes in

³⁹³ Bakhouch, “Umar et les Poètes,” (2008).

Kuthayyir's poetry resonate with and conform closely to attitudes and rhetoric that were used to project the public image of 'Umar II. But to discuss this further, we will now turn to the text of the poem itself.

The version of the poem translated and discussed here is the text presented by 'Abbās, which consists of several fragments: 10-31, with the exception of lines 12 and 13, are given in continuous texts in the *Aghānī* and Ibn Qutayba; the two fragments that comprise the poem's opening, lines 1-4 and 5-8, are likewise given in two early sources. Because the whole of the poem as reconstructed is relevant to our interpretation, we produce all extant fragments of the poem here.

K 58: *ṭawīl*

1. Turn aside at the edge of the abodes and give them greetings, even if she/they do not listen or speak
2. She/they have become disfigured, by the passage of winds and by constant rains
3. I meditated on her signs after her people had left, at the edges of A'zām and on the trails of Aznum
4. These winding traces appear as if they were the traces of wells and campgrounds that had been effaced for an entire year
5. My companion says, 'let us go, why have we stopped here, when stopping is ignorant for a steadfast man?'
6. You blame [her] without knowing the secrets of the companion – you should excuse all but accursed speech!
7. If I have not been intemperant, then you have blamed me wrongly; even if I am blamed as intemperant, I still show forbearance

8. What is decisive for a man is forbearance and Islam, and to abandon the compulsions of an enslaved heart
9. [These are] clear and illuminating proofs of right-guidedness for a youth, and true moral behaviors that are learned by study
10. You took over [the governorship] and did not curse ‘Alī, nor terrify a just man, nor accept the assertion of one who does wrong
11. You made the light of truth shine out, so that it could overpower every dark cover that shades over the flashing truth
12. You followed up on everything you did before, and turned away from everything that came before your progress³⁹⁴
13. You made your statements true through action, so that every Muslim became content
14. You spoke the clear truth - and indeed the signs of right guidance only become clear through speech
15. Indeed, better for the youth, since he has finished with his deviation and bending, is that which is clear, that which straightens
16. And the lowly world has put on the clothes of a dissolute whore and appeared before you, showing her hand and wrist
17. She would sometimes look to you with a diseased eye, and smile at you showing teeth like decorous pearls
18. You turned away from her disgusted, as if she has given you a drink of diluted poison and colocynth
19. You were at the very peak of life’s mountains, rising in the waves and foam of its sea

³⁹⁴ The second hemistich, *wa-’a’raḡta ‘ammā kāna qabla l-taqaddumi*, entails that the *mamdūh* has ‘turned away’ from previous, presumably less noble, behaviors.

20. And you still reach its greatest height, scaling the loftiest structure by your striving
21. When the benefit of kingship reached you - , and for a worldly seeker, there can be no demand after such a prize -
22. You abandoned that which vanishes because it was lowly, and, with a steadfast view, you preferred that which endures
23. You turned against that which vanishes, and you put to flight that which was before you on a day of terrible gravity³⁹⁵
24. Because you were caliph, there was nothing but God to deter you from substantial wealth and [spilling] blood
25. A care arose in your heart that kept you awake, and by means of it you reached the highest point
26. Nowhere on the earth, either East or West, is there any one calling out, either in pure [Arabic] or a foreign tongue
27. Who would say, 'Amīr al-Mu'minīn, you have wronged me, you have taken from me a Dīnār or Dirham!'
28. Nor did you obtain anything through punishment, except of criminals, nor did you wrongly spill blood to fill your cup
29. If they could, the Muslims would give to you half of their lifetimes without regret
30. So that you might thereby live, as long as the Ḥajj is performed for God by speeding riders, who circle the Maqām and Zamzam [Well]
31. And profit by the handclasp of the swearer of the bay'a, do great by it, do great by it, do great by it!

³⁹⁵ The final phrase, *fī yawmin mina l-sharri muzlimi*, 'a day of terrible gravity,' refers to the final Day of Judgement.

The *aṭlāl-nasīb*, which consists here of two fragments forming **lines 1-4** and **5-8** respectively, opens the poem already with indirect reference to qur'ānic vocabulary and rhetoric. The remains of the abodes (*diyār*) first introduced in line 1 are referred to in lines 2 and 3 as *āyāt* 'signs.' It is first said in line 1 that the remains of the abodes 'do not hear and do not speak' (*lam tasma' wa-lam takallami*), a phrase that personifies the *aṭlāl*, raising the notion of their de-cipherability as 'signs.' The use of *āyāt*, a polyvalent term strongly associated with qur'ānic creation theology and, later, hermeneutics,³⁹⁶ establishes potential scriptural allusions in the poem.

In **lines 5-8**, the poet is reproached by his companion for 'ignorance' (*wa jahlin bi-l-ḥalīmi l-mu'ammami*, line 5), because he has stopped along the road. In the following line, the poet replies in his defence that 'you blame [her] without knowing the secrets of the companion – you should excuse all but accursed speech' (*talūmu wa-lam ta'lam bi-'asrāri khullatin fa-ta'dhara 'illā 'an ḥadīthin murajjami*). The contrast here between *ḥilm* and *jahl*, which will recur elsewhere in the poem, and the term *ḥadīth murajjam* 'damnable speech,' continue the qur'ānic rhetoric of the poem. This culminates explicitly in line 8, which brings this religiously coded *nasīb* to a climax: 'What is decisive for a man is forbearance and Islam, and to abandon the compulsions of an enslaved heart' (*wa-fī l-ḥilm wa-l-'islāmi li-l-mar'i wāzi'un wa-fī tarki ṭā'āti l-fu'ādi al-mutayyami*). Here, the value of *ḥilm*, in the sense of 'overcoming' love in the traditional Bedouin value-scheme, is juxtaposed directly with Islām: what is at stake in the drama of the poem is now unambiguously equated with a kind of 'spiritual' progress. Line 9 then reinforces the degree to which this progress is also epistemological, marked by the 'learning' (*ta'allum*) a set of 'right-guiding' signs (*baṣā'iru rushdin li-l-fatā mustabīnatun*).

Line 10, which is the beginning of the nineteen-line fragment given by Ibn Qutayba and the *Aghānī*, begins the section of direct praise for 'Umar II, which continues to the end of the

³⁹⁶ On the term *āya*, see Neuwirth, *KTS*, 434-450.

poem. There is no *raḥīl* or other transitional element extant. ‘Umar II is praised essentially for his ‘right-guidedness’, in the sense of his having turned away from his former ‘worldliness’ and having become, coincident with his arrival to the caliphate, a paragon of virtue and spiritual clarity. The praise section begins, in line 10, with the claim that ‘you took over [the governorship] and did not curse ‘Alī’ (*walīta fa-lam tashrim ‘alīyan*). This claim seems to directly confirm the report, given in some historical sources, that when he was governor of Medina, ‘Umar banned the cursing of ‘Alī in congregational mosques.³⁹⁷

Line 12 introduces into the poem the idea of the patron’s spiritual ‘progress’ (*taqaddum*), stating explicitly that the *mamdūḥ* has ‘turned away from everything that came before your progress’ (*wa-‘a‘raḍta ‘ammā kāna qabla l-taqaddumi*). In the next line, after it is stated that the *mamdūḥ* ‘makes your statements true through action’, the poet declares that, as a result, ‘every Muslim becomes content’ (*fa-amsā rāḍīyan kullu muslimi*). The explicit usage of the term ‘Muslim’ here serves to identify the *mamdūḥ*’s spiritual ‘progress’ as crucial to, and emblematic for, a wider community or audience of believers; in other words, the pious *mamdūḥ* exemplifies the ideals held by all Muslims, whom he thereby benefits. **Line 14** then recapitulates what we have identified as the hermeneutical coloring of the *nasīb* movement, with the statement that the *mamdūḥ*’s speaking of the ‘clear truth’ (*al-ḥaqqi al-mubīni*) has ‘made clear the signs of right-guidedness’ (*wa-inna-mā tabayyanu āyātu l-hudā bi-l-takallumi*). By employing the term *āya* now in the sense of the decoding of ‘signs of [spiritual] right-guidance’, the polyvalent force of this term in both *nasīb* and *madiḥ* is made clear.

Lines 15-20 depict vividly the *mamdūḥ* arriving to, and successfully dealing with, a moral crux: he overcomes the ‘temptation’ or ‘confusion’ (*zaygh*, line 15) presented by the *dunyā* (line 16), which is personified as ‘wearing the clothes of a disolute [whore]’ (*wa-qad labisat lubsa l-halūki*, 16) and smiling with a ‘sick eye’ (*wa-tūmiḍu aḥyānan bi-‘aynin marīḍatin*,

³⁹⁷ This claim is made, for example, in Ibn ‘Asākir, *Tarīkh Dimashq*, 45:136.

17). The personification of the term *dunyā* is post-qur'ānic, as such personification does not occur anywhere in the Qur'ān; it seems rather to make reference to a developing rhetoric of asceticism (proto-*zuhd*) in the period. In the following lines (18-20), the *mamdūh* turns away from this figure of the personified *dunyā*, a figure of disease and corruption.

Line 21 makes clear that the moment of this turning away from the *dunyā* coincided with the moment that 'Umar attained to what is called *mulk* 'kingship/(worldly) possession', again a polyvalent qur'ānic reference that depicts the ascendant caliph turning away from 'worldly things.' Remarkably, he is said to reach this moment of clarity at the moment he attains the 'thing after [obtaining] which no seeker of the *dunyā* can speak' (*wa lam yakun li-ṭālibi dunyā ba'dahu min takallumi*, line 21), i.e., the ultimate gratification of desire, control of the caliphate.

At this point, in **lines 22-25**, the *mamdūh*'s ascent to spiritual clarity is described: 'you abandoned that which vanishes because it was lowly, and, with a steadfast view, you preferred that which endures' (*tarakta llādhī yafnā...wa-'ātharta mā yabqā bi-ra'yin muṣammami*, 22); he is then praised for having condemned what perishes (23). In line 24 it is declared that this spiritual progress occurred just while, as *khalīfa*, there was nothing but God to prevent him from obtaining all worldly goods. Strikingly, at this very point, in line 25, it is said that a 'care arose in your heart that kept you awake' (*samā la-ka hammun fi l-fu'ādi mu'arriqun*). It is remarkable that this 'care that keeps [one] awake' *hammun mu'arriqun* is figured much in the same way as we find figurations of the 'care' of the lover in *ghazal* and *nasīb*: recalling the thematics of Kuthayyir's *ghazal*, we here see that the care of the lover is integrated into, indeed forms the emotional climax of, a rhetoric of piety before the caliph.

In **lines 26-28** the poet declares that the *mamdūh* has not profited unfairly from anyone, that one could not find one anywhere from whom the caliph has wrongly taken money. The

introduction of commercial language introduces the implication that the poet should deserve the material reward of the patron.

In **lines 30 and 31**, the extant text of the poem closes with an image of the *ḥajj*: the poet declares ‘So that you might thereby live, as long as the *ḥajj* is performed for God by speeding riders, who circle the Maqām and Zamzam [Well]’ (*fa-‘ishta bi-hi mā ḥajja li-llāhi rākibun mudhidhdhun muṭīfun bi-l-maqāmi wa-zamzami*, 30). This affirms the *mamdūh*’s affiliation to the Ḥijāz and his identity as ritual leader of the pilgrimage. As erstwhile governor of the Ḥijāz and frequent leader of the pilgrimage, the significance of the *ḥajj* in ‘Umar II’s projected image as ‘leader of the Muslims’ seems particularly significant. Then finally, in line 31, we are presented with an image of the *bay‘a* itself (‘so profit by the handclasp of a swearer of the *bay‘a*: *fa-irbaḥ bi-hā min ṣafqatin li-mubāyi‘in*), thus closing the panegyric with an acclamation of ‘Umar’s status as caliph, following directly on the mention of the pilgrimage. It is a vivid depiction of the close linkage of these two ritual aspects of Islamic legitimacy.³⁹⁸

The text is remarkable in showing the degree to which the patron’s internal spiritual struggle, his overcoming of temptation and attainment of piety, is figured as coincident with the moment of his reaching the caliphate and the possession of unlimited *mulk* – most notably, this complex pietistic praise is framed in rhetoric familiar from the *ghazal* (see especially lines 22-25).

In addition to this poem, there are two additional panegyric texts by Kuthayyir for ‘Umar II, both of which are transmitted in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab*: K 11, a 46-line praise poem for the caliph; and K 13, an elegy of 31-lines that refers to ‘Umar’s death and burial at Dayr Sum‘ān.

³⁹⁸ For a discussion of the rendering of the *bay‘a* at the early Marwānid court in relation to early poetry, see Marsham, *Rituals*, 102-106.

While K 58 above has been the subject of at least a small degree of notice in scholarship,³⁹⁹ Kuthayyir's other poetry for 'Umar II, which is transmitted uniquely in the *Muntahā al-Ṭalab* and not quoted elsewhere, has not received any notice. In what follows, we will provide a translation and commentary on K 11, a poem which offers, we argue, a striking example of a late mode of panegyric employed by Kuthayyir.

The poem is bi-partite, containing a long *nasīb*-section of twenty lines, followed, without *raḥīl* section or transitional motif, by twenty-six lines of *madīḥ*. The *nasīb* contains a pilgrimage oath like those in Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetry, and the *nasīb* features the visitation of a phantom (*khayāl*) among a group of pilgrims at Mecca.

K 11: *ṭawīl*

1. Janūb made a night-visit to us after the evening [prayer], and you were confounded
by this wonder
2. She appeared when we were near Marr and Arāk, when she had passed Dūnān and
Naqīb
3. We were within al-Ḥajūn valley – it was as if we were ill, and a wailing went up
among the saddles
4. She greeted men who were sleeping, and they could not return her greeting – in some
visitations there is disturbance
5. She visited us at night despite her distance, and when she is near, I tell you, her night-
travel is terrifying

³⁹⁹ See the references to the poem in Bakhouch, Kilpatrick, and Nadler.

6. I love you, as the barren camel with aborted offspring cries to its *baww*⁴⁰⁰ in the valley of Tihāma,
7. As as the dove laments at the base of a *wādī*, answered by the crying evening wind that excites passion.
8. I am enfolded in shame and so I bend down, I sit down although the path toward you is near
9. I come to the houses surrounding you, although I do not love them, and I multiply the distance from your tent, although it is close
10. I suffer patiently the things of you that terrify me, I call out to what took you away, and I respond.
11. Because of the memory of you, I remain like one whose mind has been taken away from him, wandering in the shelter of the abodes
12. Or like one who, because of the ailment of your love, is a bereft stranger in the desert of Burayḥ
13. I disclose to you what I encounter – in my soul is a need that creeps between my skin and bone
14. I see you if I visit you, although my visit to you is rare; for me, what I see in you is like the pole-stars
15. Tell me, is there help for me in the love I see from you, or have I sinned against you?
16. Tell me, have I gone astray by some mistake I made, or have I done some sin that I can atone for?
17. I swore an oath, and in truth there is no shame on a man who sees it – although some oath-swearers are liars -

⁴⁰⁰ The *baww* is a stuffed camel hide used to deceive a she-camel into giving milk when her young has died.

18. By the Lord of the mounts that move swiftly, by what Quraysh built, and by the sacrifices of Ghāfiq and Tujīb
19. By the meeting-place of the camels at Minā, where Iyād is shaved, and where Ghāmid and ‘Atīb enter a state of sanctity⁴⁰¹
20. It is the oath of a man who does not conceal sin, who is truth-telling – and above all oath-swearers is a Watcher

The poem-opening employs the motif of the ‘phantom’ (*khayāl*), wherein the spirit of the beloved visits a sleeping group of travelers, among them the poet. Although the terms *ṭayf* or *khayāl* (spirit/phantom) do not appear, the motif is marked in the poem’s opening line by the usage of the verb *ṭaraqat* ‘she travelled/visited at night,’ a term, which recurs here as well in line 5, and which is well-known as a ‘key-word’ to mark this motif.⁴⁰² In the first five lines of the poem, the group of riders is depicted as sleeping (*niyāman*, line 4) in ‘the lowland of al-Ḥajūn’ (*bi-baṭḥā’a l-ḥajūni*, 3), which is a hill in Mecca, ‘facing the *masjid*’, where pilgrims would gather stones.⁴⁰³ The further place names (Marr and Arāk in line 2) likewise locate the visitation in Mecca, so that the group that is sleeping ‘as if we were sick (*ka-’annanā mirāḍun*) clearly appear to be a group of traveling pilgrims.

In **lines 6-14**, the poet addresses the visiting phantom in impassioned tones, speaking self-referentially. In lines 6 and 7, the poet declares ‘I love you’ (*’uḥibbu-ki*) to the phantom, and then qualifies his ‘love’ as equal to that of a bereft camel-mare who has lost her child and cries to a *baww* (a skin of a young camel filled with straw used to console the camel), or as a ‘dove laments at the base of a *wādī*’ (*’wa-mā saja’at min baṭni wādin ḥamāmatun*). In **lines 8-10**, the poet stresses the ongoing state of abasement in which he finds himself, overcome by ‘shame’ or ‘humility’ (*al-ḥayā*, 8). The state he describes is one of someone ‘haunted’ by

⁴⁰¹ *Ḥallat*, ‘enter a state of sanctity,’ used here in reference to the tribes making pilgrimage, also means ‘to alight.’

⁴⁰² See Jacobi, “The *Khayāl* Motif in Early Arabic Poetry”, *Oriens* 32 (1990), 50-64, 55.

⁴⁰³ See ‘Abbās’s edition of the *Dīwān*, note to line 3.

the spectral presence of the beloved, as in line 10 he declares ‘I suffer patiently the things of you that terrify me, I call out to what took you away, and I respond’ (*wa-’ughdī ‘alā ‘ashyā’in minki tarībunī wa-’uda‘ī ilā mā nābakum fa-’ujību*). Not only does the poet continue to long for the beloved, but his existence has become that of a ‘stranger’ (*gharīb*, line 12), haunted and suffering even from physical pain due to the lingering of ‘a need that creeps between my skin and bone’ (*wa-fī l-nafsi ḥājatun la-hā bayna jildī wa l-‘izāmi dabību*, 13). This extended passage of *nasīb* is marked by the distinct tonal and rhetorical characteristics associated with the ‘Udhri *ghazal*: an ‘introspective’ tone that focusses on the poet’s self-perception, and the paralyzing fixation on the beloved.

Lines 15 and 16 introduce a rhetoric of ‘sin’ and ‘atonement’ after this strong *ghazal* opening. In line 15, the poet exclaims with seeming exasperation ‘tell me, will there be help’ (*‘abīnī a-ta‘wīlun*), then asks at the end of the line ‘or have I [committed] sins against you?’ (*‘am ‘indī ‘ilayki dhunūbu*). The question is then re-iterated in line 16, with the poet asking if he has made some error (*mustaḥīrun bi-‘illatin*), or whether, on the contrary, there is some ‘sin for which I can atone’ (*wa-’immā madhnabun fa-’atūbu*). Here, in the context of the opening of a praise poem for ‘Umar II, we see that the strongly ‘Udhri *nasīb* opening, in which the poet details the subjective abasement he suffers in connection to the haunting of the beloved, is linked directly to a discourse of ‘sinning’ and atonement. In other words, we begin to see again an overlap of a *ghazal*-rhetoric into a rhetoric of piety.

In **Lines 17-20** the *nasīb* then culminates in a pilgrimage-oath. The oath is introduced by *ḥalaftu* at the start of line 17, and prefaced by the statement that ‘there is no shame on a man who sees it – although some oath-swearers are liars’ (*wa-mā bi-l-ṣidqi ‘aybun ‘alā imri’in yarāhu wa-ba‘du l-ḥālifīn kadhūbu*). The oath-object then follows in line 18, specified as ‘By the Lord of the mounts that move swiftly, by what Quraysh built, and by the sacrifices of Ghāfiq and Tujīb’ (*bi-rabbi l-maṭāyā l-sābiḥāti wa mā banat qurayshun wa-’ahdat ghāfiqun wa-tujīb*). The mention of the Ka‘ba in connection to the tribes of Ghāfiq and Tujīb seems to connect the *ḥilf* to the galvanizing collective function of the panegyric.

The Tujīb were a south-Arabian sub-tribe of Kinda that was instrumental in the conquering of Egypt and had a strong element in early Islamic Egyptian elite society⁴⁰⁴ (in which ‘Umar II largely grew up). The mentioning of the ‘alighting in Minā’ (*Minan...ḥaythu ḥallat*) of the four groups mentioned here (Ghāfiq, Tujīb, Ghāmid, and ‘Atīb) seems to unite all of these groups through mention of the *ḥajj* ritual, which in turn is tied into the *nasīb* by the articulation of the ‘pilgrimage-oath’ in relation to the beloved.

In sum, this *nasīb* for ‘Umar II shows Kuthayyir employing, in a panegyric context, the rhetoric, tone, and verbal register we have seen in his long-form pilgrimage *ghazal*. Furthermore, the strong elements of ‘piety’, as in the mention of ‘sin’ and ‘atonement’ in lines 15-16, leading into the pilgrimage-oath, show that Kuthayyir’s mode of *ghazal*-panegyric seems particularly well-tuned to ‘Umar’s projection as a ‘pious’ figure.

Without ‘camel section’ or *raḥīl*, the poem then opens into a praise movement addressed to ‘Umar.

21. Blessings on the one whose guests cover his fire and the place where the exhausted camels throw down their reins
22. And the place of petition of the one seeking good, when cold and drought have continuously affected the people
23. The protector of the tribe’s honor in what befalls them, when calamities strike again and again
24. In every situation, whatever strikes us, this is ‘Umar, when calamity strikes
25. A youth whose silence is forbearance, whose speech is decisive, steadfast, who deserves all praise in hardship

⁴⁰⁴ On the Tujīb’s role in Egypt, see al-Kindī, *Wulāt*, 72; and Sijpesteijn, “Early Umayyad Papyrus” (2014), 7 n. 39.

26. He is an orator who has spoken with wisdom, impressive, giving shelter like a raised tent
27. His generosity is tremendous, bounty comes with him, and bounty leaves when he is absent
28. He is noble among the noble, there is none like him to be seen in bounty and favors
29. He stubbornly refuses to know shame, he conquers his enemies, his heart is bold and fierce
30. His pure eye moves like that of a falcon in the sky, perched at the very top of a difficult mountain
31. Who swoops down in a cold morning, with the south wind that follows the birds coming to water
32. The father of Abū Ḥiḥṣ gathered glories for him [and before the two builders of this glory were difficulties]⁴⁰⁵
33. What one built is based on the structure left by the other,⁴⁰⁶ each being noble-born and excellent
34. His great-grandfather built up structures for his descendents; each of them was well-mannered when he was young
35. You follow after them on the same path, continuing the good deeds they accomplished

⁴⁰⁵ Lines 32 and 33 are difficult to interpret, as the text of the *Muntahā* appears to be slightly corrupted. In the second hemistich of 32, *banā dūnahu li-l-bānīyayni ṣu'ūbu*, the verb *banā* 'to build' is difficult to interpret without a direct object (*maf'ūl bi-hi*).

⁴⁰⁶ As 'Abbās notes in his commentary, the syntax of the line is not entirely clear (*ghayru wāḍiḥa*, note *ad versum*). The text of the *Muntahā* reads *fa-hādhā 'alā bunyāni hādhāka yabtanī banāhu wa-kullun munjabu wa-najību*; although one can provide a fairly confident paraphrase of the general sense of the line's first sentence, it is unclear how the sentence could be satisfactorily parsed or amended.

36. You have equaled the deeds of your father, just as he equaled his – so that you have hit the mark
37. You are a seed that grows into a flourishing root, just as seeds flourish into roots
38. Your father is Abū l-‘Āṣī, and some of the forebears are noble
39. You are the most pure, in every single way, and it is a good omen when you arrive
40. You looked after the needs of Mālik when they were struck by a severe time of need
41. You are one to whom Mālik⁴⁰⁷ offers petition and sacrifice, you are forebearant, beneficent, and successful
42. You took over and you did not neglect a friend, you did not take leave of a companion, and the stranger was not forbidden to see you
43. You revived the one who had exhausted his possessions – if you died, whom could he call to and receive answer?
44. You proceeded to the heights of majesty and obtained them, yes, you obtain these majesties
45. The people have not given you the caliphate and their piety, were it not that a praise-giver praises you, so thank him
46. For indeed, he bestowed this upon you knowing well that you are so giving to the deserving

The first part of the praise section, **lines 21-24**, depict the *mamdūh* as the protector and ‘strongman’ of the tribe (*ḥāmī dhimāri al-qawm*, line 23), the welcomer of guests and the refuge of the people when afflicted by a ‘calamity’ (*khuṭūb*, line 23; *mulimmah*, line 24). ‘Umar, who is named for the first time directly in line 24 (*bi-nā ‘Umar*, ‘we have ‘Umar’), is praised here in ways that are ‘traditional’, in the sense that they are consistent

⁴⁰⁷ Reading *mālik* for the *Muntahā’s hālik*, following ‘Abbās’s suggestion in his note *ad versum*.

with praise of the tribal strongman (as in ‘the protector of the tribe’, *ḥāmī dhimāri l-qawmi*, 23) who protects the people in difficult times.

Lines 25-31 stress the virtues of the *mamdūḥ* as one who speaks correctly and decisively, and only when it is required, and as a ‘young man whose silence is *ḥilm*’ (*fatan ṣamtu-hu ḥilmun*, line 25). In line 26, the *mamdūḥ* is described as an ‘orator’ (*khaṭībun*), who, when he speaks wisdom (*idhā mā qāla yawman bi-ḥikmatin*), is decisive. This is followed by a further litany of familiar virtues of the leader, namely that he is incredibly generous (*kathīru l-nadā*, 27) to his friends and ‘forbidding’ (*abī’un*, 29) to his enemies, and that he is the peerless leader of his people. This depiction culminates in the transitional simile of lines 30 and 31, where the *mamdūḥ* is compared to an eagle on a height, appearing in the morning, and going down in the morning with wind at his back.

Lines 33-39 are particularly concerned with the genealogical aspect of praising the *mamdūḥ*, stressing the ways in which ‘Umar II carries on the legacy of his noble forebearers. The mention in line 34 of ‘the grand-father of his father’ who built high the structure appears to be a reference to ‘Umar II’s great-grandfather ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, a figure who is often adduced as a model in the later historical image of ‘Umar II. As we found in K 16, the poem of praise for ‘Umar’s brother Abū Bakr, stress is put on the ability of the *mamdūḥ* to equal and live up to the deeds of his father and grandfather, as in line 36: ‘you have equaled the deeds of your father, just as he equaled his – so that you have hit the mark’ (*fa-aṣbaḥta taḥdhū min abīka ka-mā ḥadhā abūka abā-hu fi‘ila-hu fa-tuṣību*). It should be remembered that by this point in his career, Kuthayyir, who had praised ‘Abd al-Malik at the height of his power, as well as ‘Umar II’s father as the *walī al-‘ahd*, is well-positioned to confirm the *mamdūḥ*’s status in relation to this lineage.

The offer of praise in **line 42** for the fact that ‘you took over and you did not neglect a friend’ (*walīta fa-lam tughfil ṣadīqan*), as well as the claim in the following line that ‘you

have revived one who had murdered his possessions,' seem to make direct reference to 'Umar II's providing support for the panegyric poets, specifically those who had been in favor previously.

The final two lines of the poem provide a strong articulation of the (self-) importance of the panegyrist, while also encapsulating the importance of 'personal piety' (*taqwā*) in 'Umar II's cultivated image. The syntax of the two lines is dense and somewhat difficult to parse, so that a more literal rendering of the sense, particularly of line 45, may be useful: 'the people would not have given you the caliphate and [their] piety, and it is not that you --- and thank him!—are compensated by a compensator / but indeed He (only) gave that to you willingly, because of what you generously bestow.' (*wa-mā l-nāsu a'tawka l-khilāfata wa-l-tuqā wa-lā anta fa-shkur-hu yuthib-ka muthību / lākinmā a'tāka dhālika 'ālimun bi-mā fika mu'tin li-l-jazīli wahūbu*). Line 45 thus expresses the idea that the people give both the leadership (*khilāfa*) as well as a kind of personal piety (*al-tuqā*, which appears *metri causa* for *taqwā*) to the leader, just as the panegyrist (here called 'compensator' *muthīb*) gives to the ruler his justly deserved praise. This intricate statement of the connections between piety and the panegyrist's work shows the importance, at least in the court of 'Umar II, of the *ghazal*-panegyrist as a cultivator of 'pious feeling' in the audience.

To summarize Kuthayyir's panegyrics for 'Umar II, we can see firstly that a key element of the panegyrics for 'Umar is the way in which the 'progress' of the *mamdūh* from material interests to a high-minded spiritual state is stressed. As we have seen, this is a hallmark also of the depictions of the caliph in narrative sources. The panegyrics by Kuthayyir not only reinforce the impression of 'Umar II as concerned with the projection of a pious image, but also suggest that the achieved interiority of the poet's work in the *ghazal* and *nasīb* seem to serve this end: in K 11, thematic connections between the *nasīb* (lines 1-20) and praise movement (21-46) show that Kuthayyir's *ghazal*, with its pervasive reference to pilgrimage, are particularly well suited for his panegyric of this 'pious' leader.

In conclusion, Kuthayyir's blend of *ghazal*-themes with pietistic praise for 'Umar II should be seen contextually in relation to broader literary trends of the early Marwānid period. Although a full discussion of the ways in which trends in erotic poetry during the early Marwānid period may have interacted with early religious scholarship and modes of 'personal piety' is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a few observations on some areas for future study should at least help to provide a degree of context for the blending of *ghazal* and 'piety' in Kuthayyir's panegyric.

It was during the decades of Marwānid rule following the Second Fitna that Islamic religious scholarship first seems to have been supported and promoted on a prolific scale.⁴⁰⁸ One group in particular that has been noted among these earliest scholarly movements is the so-called Seven Fuqahā' of Medina. This group of early religious scholars and *muḥaddithūn* who flourished at the end of the first century AH / the first decades of the 8th century, and were thus contemporaries of Kuthayyir and the other Ḥijāzi panegyrist-elegiasts who flourished under Marwānid patronage, were notable early ascetics and religious scholars.⁴⁰⁹ A useful example of one of these figures is 'Ubayd Allāh b. 'Abd Allāh al-Hudhalī, a *muḥaddith* and well-known poet, reported to have been a teacher to 'Umar II when he was a young man.⁴¹⁰ 'Ubayd Allāh was sufficiently well-known as a poet of *ghazal* and 'proto-zuhd' poetry to have been given an entry in the *Aghānī*,⁴¹¹ and we have quoted above, in the opening of our commentary to K 3, a line of his poetry that shows verbal

⁴⁰⁸ See Judd, *Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-minded Supporters of the Marwanid Caliphate* (London: 2013).

⁴⁰⁹ For interesting notes on the connections between *ghazal* and a nascent literature of piety in the Umayyad period, see Nallino, *La littérature arabe des origines à l'époque de la dynastie umayyade: leçons professées en arabe à l'Université du Caire*, trans. Charles Pellat (Paris : 1950), 95-101. See also "Fukahā' al-Madina al-Saba'," E12 [Pellat].

⁴¹⁰ See Blachère, *HLA*, 626. Ibn Qutayba, *Uyūn al-akhbār* (Cairo : 1925), 367, reports that 'Ubayd Allāh taught fiqh to Malik ibn Anas.

⁴¹¹ Agh 9.139-152.

parallels to Kuthayyir (*mussā turāban*, ‘touch the ground’). It seems that further research into the connections between the development of piety in the early period, and poetic trends sponsored at the Marwānid court, could be a fruitful area of future research.

In Medina in the early Marwānid period – again, the same period in which the so-called ‘Udhri movement flourished – we also witness other figures who were both *fuqahā’* and poets in the *ghazal* genre, such as ‘Urwa ibn Udhayna,⁴¹² Sābiq ibn Abd Allāh al-Barbarī and al-A‘shā of Ḥamdān.⁴¹³ Certainly, the state of preservation of the works of these relatively minor *ghazal* poets / *fuqahā’*, which primarily consists of fragmentary (but occasionally quite extensive) quotation of their poetry within the *Aghānī*, makes it difficult to study their works in detail. Nevertheless, one hopes that a closer look at the remains of these and other figures, with attention paid to the overlap between their erotic poetry and the beginnings of religious scholarship and modes of personal piety, will yield a richer understanding of the dynamics of expression in the early Marwānid period.

⁴¹² See for example Agh. 18.327 and 2.239, where this poet interacts with ‘Umar II.

⁴¹³ On al-A‘shā al-Ḥamdānī, see van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, volume 1 (Berlin: 1991), 171; on Sābiq, see Blachère, *HLA*, 517; and Agh 6.57, where the two poets are said to appear before ‘Umar II.

CONCLUSION: PATRONAGE AND THE SACRED ḤIJĀZ

In this concluding section, we will offer a summary of the arguments advanced in this dissertation, and put forward some suggestions about the contribution that our study of Kuthayyir's poetry might offer more generally to the history of Umayyad-era poetry.

In discussing previous scholarship on Umayyad-era *ghazal* poetry, in section 2.1, we noted that the most significant recent studies of this corpus have focused on how Umayyad-era love poems differ tonally and thematically from the 'amatory prelude' (*nasīb*) of the pre-Islamic ode. More specifically, following the work of Jacobi, scholars have argued that the corpus of Umayyad-era *ghazal* poetry evinces a new degree of individualism and introspective subjectivity that is in tension with the more communal values of the pre-Islamic poetic corpus. This heightened individualism, alongside the apparent 'gloomy' or 'negative' tonality of the so-called 'Udhri strain of early Islamic and Umayyad-era love poetry, have been interpreted as expressions of disaffection and alienation in response to the radical social and ideological changes of the first Islamic century.

Our study of Kuthayyir's poetry, on the other hand, has attempted to revise this interpretive paradigm for the Umayyad-era *ghazal* in several respects. As a preliminary to our interpretation of Kuthayyir's extant poetry, we reexamined, in section 2.2, the evidence for the historical context of *ghazal* poetry, focusing on the period c. 60-100 /680-720, when a number of poets from the Ḥijāz, including Kuthayyir, found patronage at the courts of prominent figures of the Marwānid line. Drawing on evidence from the *akhbār* source-material, we argued that patronage by the Marwānids during and after the Second Fitna (60-72/680-692) should be seen as an important contextual element in the interpretation of the work of the Ḥijāzī poets that emerged during this period, particularly the work of the '*ghazal*-panegyrist' poets – including Kuthayyir, Jamīl b. Maʿmar, Abū Ṣakhr al-Hudhalī, Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ, Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt, and others – who became famous as representatives of the flourishing new love poetry of the Ḥijāz, while also making careers as praise poets for the Banū Marwān. As we discussed in section 3.4, the Marwānid elite was greatly concerned in this period to project its religio-political affiliation to the Ḥijāz,

through means that included the assertion of their rightful leadership of the *ḥajj*, the support of monumental architecture projects, the patronage of scribal activities, and the cultivation of marriage ties to the Ḥijāzī elites. In this context, the support for the Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrists by patrons such as ‘Abd al-Malik and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān should be understood, we claim, as an element of a pattern of the competitive projection and display of ‘Ḥijāzī prestige’ among the Marwānids, which accompanied their (re-)assertion of leadership over the Islamic polity.

With the frame of Marwānid patronage in mind, we attempted in the bulk of the dissertation to set forward an interpretation of the most significant extant texts of Kuthayyir’s *ghazal* and panegyric poetry. In offering a summary of our interpretation of this poetry in this conclusion, we wish to emphasize here a dimension that has run throughout our commentaries and interpretations of his work, and which, we assert, is of central importance to the historical interpretation of Kuthayyir’s poetry: at the core of Kuthayyir’s work, both in the depictions of erotic relationships in his *ghazal* poetry and in much of his praise poetry for various patrons, one is struck by the poet’s prominent and vivid rendering of the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz. Throughout his extant work, Kuthayyir makes frequent references to ritual and to the demarcation of sacred space in his home territory, depicting the Ḥijāz vividly as a territory imbued with meaning through ritual institutions, most notably the *ḥajj*. Thus, in our interpretations of several of Kuthayyir’s long-form *ghazal* poems in Chapter Two, we had frequent occasion to note Kuthayyir’s pervasive references to ritual, oath-making, pilgrimage, prayer, and the marking-off of sacred space in the Ḥijāz. We have discussed a number of the poet’s most striking references to ritual: for example, at the start of K 3, the poet exhorts himself to ‘pray where the beloved prayed’ so that God will erase his sins; at the close of K 10, the poet describes himself as covered in the blood of the camel that is ritually slaughtered during the pilgrimage (the *budn*), as a metaphor for his condition after the beloved’s departure; in our commentary to K 3, we have discussed how the poet deploys the semantic domains of the ‘sacred’ (*ḥ-r-m*) and the ‘licit’ (*ḥ-l-l*) throughout the text, building tension by way of a pervasive metaphor linking the poet’s experience in love to the de-sacralization or settling of sacred land. Indeed, extremely frequently throughout his poems, Kuthayyir refers to the

ḥajj, to the ritual institutions associated with it, and to particular aspects and topographical features of the ‘sacred geography’ of the Ḥijāz. The poet’s depiction of the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz, a space imbued with meaning through the communally recognized rituals of pilgrimage, can be said to take center stage in his poetry, resonating in practically every text by the poet that we have studied.

In the two sections that close Chapter Two, sections 2.5 and 2.6, we examined two particular features of Kuthayyir’s depiction of the sacred Ḥijāz. In section 2.5, we studied the poet’s references to pilgrimage, which often come in the form of pilgrimage-oaths, i.e., vows sworn between lovers by the Ka’ba, delivered in reported speech introduced by the word *ḥalafa*. These re-staged ritual speech acts, representations of vows sworn between lovers, apparently during the pilgrimage, occur most often toward the beginning of *ghazal* poems, but also occur in several of Kuthayyir’s panegyric texts, providing a striking link between Kuthayyir’s corpus of *ghazal* poems and his panegyric corpus. In our discussion of this feature, we argued that while the deployment of pilgrimage references in erotic contexts seems to build on earlier precedents in Ḥijāzī poetry, Kuthayyir’s poetic practice here, which has parallels in the work of other contemporary Ḥijāzī *ghazal*-panegyrists, should be seen as a highly distinctive and significant aspect of his *ghazal*-panegyric poetics, indicating the central role played by ritual and the depiction of Ḥijāzī sacred geography in the poet’s work. To put this briefly, the oaths explicitly bind up the poet’s expression of amorous feeling and longing to the Ka’ba and the ritual institutions of pilgrimage, thus binding the representation of an erotic relationship to the performance of communal rituals and foregrounding the setting of the sacred, ritually-imbued space of the Ḥijāz. At the end of section 2.5, we have pointed out that these pilgrimage-oaths, in affirming the ritual of pilgrimage, would have appealed to a Marwānid audience that was strongly concerned to assert its own affiliation the rituals of the *ḥajj*.

A second key feature related to Kuthayyir’s depiction of the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz, which we discussed in section 2.6, is the poet’s deployment of a ‘lovesick’ persona, that is, the poet’s depiction of himself as being chronically ‘ill’ (*saqīm*) as a result of his relationship to the beloved. This feature, which has traditionally been viewed as an element of the individualist ‘gloomy’ tonality of so-called ‘Udhrī love poetry, shows a departure from the

strongly negative connotations bound up with illness in erotic passages of the Jāhilī corpus. In Kuthayyir's poetry, rather than depict his illness negatively to create contrast with claims of his own heroic fortitude, the poet-lover instead affirms his own state of 'illness' (*suqm*) as a positive element of his poetic persona. In section 2.6, we argued that this depiction of *suqm* in Kuthayyir's work shows clear tonal and verbal parallels to the self-declaration 'I am ill' (*innī saqīm*) voiced by the prophet Abraham in a key narrative passage of the Qur'ān, as well as showing resonance with a further qur'ānic passage from the same sūra that describes the 'ill' prophet Jonah (Yūnus). We have argued that the elaboration of the *saqīm* persona by the *ghazal* poet, a feature that has previously been associated with the disaffected or frustrated figure of the so-called 'Udhri lover, should be viewed, rather, as a prophetic para-performance engaging inter-textually with aspects of contemporary qur'ānic recital. The *ghazal* poet, asserting and performing his love-sickness, evokes before his audience the positive model of the prophets who suffer redemptively in the Qur'ān, thus justifying and aggrandizing his position before an Umayyad audience, and enhancing the audience's sense of, and connection to, the sacredness and religious power of the Ḥijāz.

In sum, then, Kuthayyir's *ghazal* is centrally concerned with a rendering of the sacredness of the Ḥijāz, achieved mainly through references to communally recognized rituals such as the *ḥajj*. Taken together, we would argue that these ritual references are not merely incidental to the erotic themes dramatically depicted in Kuthayyir's poetry, but rather played a central and underlying role in the way Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poems signified in the context of their historical performance and reception. The 'sacred Ḥijāz' serves not merely as a backdrop against which the erotic drama of the poetry is performed, but rather as the essential symbolic/semantic environment of the poetic performance, providing a repertoire of ritually-imbued signifiers (such as the Ka'ba, or the *ḥimā*, 'sacred enclosure'), which the poet deploys in the depiction of his individual erotic drama. This is perhaps most evident in the feature of the recited pilgrimage-oaths, where these speech acts raise the stakes of the individual erotic experience, as it were, to the level of the communally sacred, bringing recognition of the shared ritual institution of pilgrimage directly before the attention of the audience. Likewise, in the deployment of the *saqīm* persona, the poet gives a prophetic and eschatological dimension to the erotic drama. Thus, the poet's art, while

focused on the expression of the individual's experience of erotic experience, incorporates – indeed, largely consists of – a strong affirmation of the communal ritual institutions associated with the Ḥijāz. Embedding the expression of erotic feeling within a sacred Ḥijāzī landscape that is imbued with meaning primarily through societally recognized ritual, Kuthayyir's *ghazal* stages an erotic drama that is of communal, rather than purely individualistic, significance. Here we see meaningful contrast between our reading and the heretofore prevalent literary-historical readings of *ghazal* poetry, which view this poetry predominately in terms of the assertion of the individual against more communal or tribal codes, or in terms of disaffection from the prevailing social and ideological order of the first Islamic century.

This element of Kuthayyir's poetics – his strong affirmation of collective ritual – is in our view key to the understanding of the historical context for the production of his poetry. Understood together with the argument for Marwānid patronage as an important contextual factor, Kuthayyir's strong affirmation of the sacredness of the Ḥijāz can be seen as a key dimension of his poetry's appeal. In a context in which legitimate leadership of the Islamic polity was defined largely in terms of affiliation to the sacred space of the Ḥijāz and its attendant rituals, such a *ghazal*-panegyric poetics rooted in, and affirming, the sacred space of the Ḥijāz would present uniquely strong claims to merit Umayyad sponsorship and interest. Performed before an Umayyad audience that was greatly concerned with the projection of ritual authority during and in the aftermath of conflicts waged over control of the Ḥijāz, Kuthayyir's work would thus offer his Marwānid patrons an appealing venue in which to affirm their own position of power and legitimacy, by way of sponsoring and appreciating a powerful affirmation of the sacredness of the poet's home territory, the Ḥijāz. By integrating reference to pilgrimage and ritual into his *ghazal* and panegyric poetry, the poet could thus uniquely confirm this elite's connections to the Ḥijāz. By then rewarding and appreciating the poet for his rendering of the sacred Ḥijāz, the Banū Marwān could affirm their own associations with the prophetic tradition and ritual institutions of the Ḥijāz. In this sense, one can speak of Kuthayyir's performances as presenting a confirmation of the 'ritual order' of the early Umayyad period, i.e., an intensely stylized, artistic means by which the ritual authority of the Umayyads was asserted and

confirmed.⁴¹⁴ Such patronage of Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poetry would have formed one among a variety of aesthetic means by which the Umayyads asserted their connections to the Ḥijāz -- as we have already had occasion to note. We would emphasize that, particularly in the early period of Marwānid rule, when control over the Ḥijāz was so crucial and often so tenuously held, the patronage of poets from the Ḥijāz such as Kuthayyir presented a unique means for the projection and legitimation of authority.

This understanding of Kuthayyir's *ghazal* poetics – that is, the understanding of his poetry as an expression of the erotic that foregrounds a representation of the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz in a way that was potentially flattering to the claims of the Marwānid elite – is closely related to, and supported by, our interpretation of Kuthayyir's career as a panegyrist. Over the course of Kuthayyir's career as a praise poet, from his first appearance as an advocate for Ibn al-Ḥanafīya during the Second Fitna, then throughout his career as a panegyrist for the Banū Marwān, Kuthayyir indeed deployed the 'ritual erotic' repertoire we have just described, in poems of praise that directly promoted the claims of the Marwānid line. In Chapter Three, which traced Kuthayyir's successive patronage attachments and offered interpretations of his surviving praise poetry, we have seen that much of the same thematic material that we have discussed in relation to his *ghazal* poems appears also in the context of his praise poems. In the texts of Kuthayyir's earliest panegyrics on behalf of Ibn al-Ḥanafīya during the Second Fitna, we have seen that the poet stressed Ibn al-Ḥanafīya's special connection to the sacred space of the Ḥijāz and lampooned his rival Ibn al-Zubayr. Later, in his major victory-ode for 'Abd al-Malik, which was delivered when Umayyad control over the Ḥijāz had not yet been fully re-established, Kuthayyir deploys the distinctive poetics of his *ghazal* to forward the Marwānid cause: the poem deploys passages of introspective present-tense longing for the beloved alongside

⁴¹⁴ On the role of the *ḥajj* in relation to the position of the Umayyads, see the references to the articles by Zadeh, Campo and Katz in section 2.5, as well as our discussion of 'Ḥijāzī prestige' in section 3.4. A useful parallel to this reading is provided by Combs-Schilling, *Sacred Performances*, esp. 7-46, who discusses erotic poetry as a means of reinforcing the 'ritual order' of early modern Moroccan society; see also Bell, *Ritual Theory. Ritual Practice* (Oxford: 1994), *passim*, esp. chapters 2 and 3, for an exposition of the basic theoretical difficulties in the application of 'ritual' and 'ritualization' as categories in historical-cultural analysis.

reference to the sacred geography of the Ḥijāz, accompanied by elements of verbal overlap and polysemy that make clear that the Umayyad *mamdūḥ* is being intentionally conflated with the poet's beloved. The poem offers a key example of how the poet employs a special relationship to the Ḥijāz as a means of promoting Marwānid claims on authority. In the following phase of Kuthayyir's panegyric career, when Kuthayyir was one among a number of Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets patronized by the *walī al-ʿahd* ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān in Egypt -- alongside Jamīl Buthayna, Nuṣayb b. Rabāḥ, al-Aḥwaṣ, and Ibn Qays al-Ruqayyāt -- the poet praised this patron's connections to the *ḥajj*, producing praise poetry for the patron that incorporated the performance of pilgrimage-oaths. Given the ample attestations of this patron's interest in Ḥijāzī poets during this period, as well as further evidence of his eagerness to affiliate himself with the rituals of the *ḥajj*, we have argued, in section 3.4, that it is plausible to link ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's patronage of Ḥijāzī *ghazal* poets to the prince's interest in promoting claims of 'Ḥijāzī prestige' against those of his half-brother, the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik. Kuthayyir's late panegyrics include reference to the *ḥajj* alongside deployment of the love-sick persona of the poet, blending these elements into a depiction of the patron as introspective and pious: these late panegyrics serve as striking examples of the 'ritual erotics' that Kuthayyir cultivated and deployed throughout his panegyric career on behalf of the Umayyads. Kuthayyir's praise poetry, then, confirms much of what we have argued above in connection to his *ghazal* poetry: both corpora show the poet deploying a core repertoire of sacred-geographical references, pilgrimage-oaths, qur'ānic parallels, and references to ritual, alongside the heightened introspection and present-tense orientation associated with the new *ghazal* poetry of the Ḥijāz. Both corpora thus appear well-suited to the interests of patrons concerned to assert their religious affiliation to the Ḥijāz.

It is hoped that this interpretation of Kuthayyir's poetry -- as a venue of eroticism that was also a strong affirmation of religio-political 'ritual order' before a Marwānid audience -- can lead to some useful general suggestions about the study of poetry's role within the early Umayyad period. We have suggested that the Marwānids' patronage of *ghazal* poets from the Ḥijāz, which reached its height in the decades just following the Second Fitna, offered a means for the Marwānids to assert their legitimacy and prestige within early Islamic

society. This reading implies that Umayyad-era erotic poetry should not be read exclusively as an individualist response to change in the early Islamic world. Rather, in the figurative repertoire and imaginative and symbolic settings of this poetry, which was so highly prized by the Marwānid elite, we often find affirmations of discernible ideological or religio-political motivations proper to that elite: thus, in the dense and introspective artistic productions of the *ghazal*-panegyrist poet, we can also discern projections of an early Islamic elite. These observations should encourage researchers to attempt to read the texts of early Arabic erotic poetry with a strong contextualizing bent, i.e., to pose primary questions about the historical contexts of the production and reception of poetry from the early Islamic period, concomitant with close readings of the semantic, stylistic, and thematic repertoire of this poetry. Specifically, research should contest the notion that love poetry from the period only reflects broader social or ideological concerns in ways that are 'negative,' if at all; rather, we have argued that in Umayyad-era love poetry, we see the depiction of individual erotic relationships in ways that affirm certain ritual institutions and religio-political claims. Subjective identification with elements of prevailing ideologies and power relationships are present in the erotic art of early *ghazal* poetry. Thus, while it may not be a simple task for contemporary scholarship to adequately describe or theorize this apparent duality – that is, to account for both the heightened subjectivity of early Islamic and Umayyad-era poetry, as well as its strong affirmation of communal (ritual) meaning before an elite audience – it is hoped that future literary histories of early Islamic-era poetry will be more closely attentive to the ways in which poetry, as a venue for eroticism, is also a venue for ideological and religio-political identification.

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- EIran *Encyclopedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (London: Routledge, 1982)
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- EnQ *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, 6 volumes, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2001).
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- JAL *Journal of Arabic Literature* (Leiden: Brill)
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