FATEMIYE

القَصِيدَةُ الغَرَامِيَّةُ

THE GHARAMI ODE

A Love Poem on Hadith Terminology

Ibn Farḥ al-Ishbīlī

(d. 699 AH)

Translation & Notes
Shaykh Adnaan Raja

القصيدة الغرامية

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

This work is shared in memory of the hadith master, Mufti Sardār Aḥmad al-Qādirī (d.1382 AH). May this humble gift stand as a token of reverence for his lifelong service to the Sunnah, and may its reward reach him as an enduring charity.
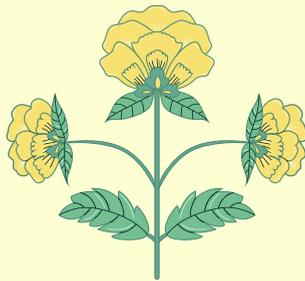
رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه

Introduction

This poem is a striking example of classical Arabic literary creativity. It presents itself as a love poem that draws on the vocabulary of the hadith sciences, using technical terms in their literal sense rather than their later disciplinary meanings. At the same time, the poem gently guides the reader toward familiarity with essential hadith terminology. By weaving technical concepts into an emotional narrative, the poet transforms specialised language into something memorable and intimate. The result is a work that functions both as a sincere expression of love and as an elegant aid to learning, demonstrating how Arabic literary culture could unite aesthetic pleasure with intellectual instruction.

I originally prepared this translation many years ago as a supplementary aid for my students as they began memorising this poem. I now share it with all seekers of knowledge and people of hadith.

Adnaan L. Raja
1439/2016

In the name of Allah the Merciful and Compassionate

غَـرَامِـي صَحِـيحٌ وَالـرَّجَـا فِيـكَ مُعْـضَـلُ
وَحُـزْنِـي وَدَمْـعِـي مُـرْسَـلٌ وَمُسَـلْـسَـلُ

My love is unscathed,[1] yet hope in you is arduous;[2]
My sorrows and tears: pouring,[3] continuous.[4]

❈

وَصَـبْـرِيَ عَنْـكُمْ يَشْهَـدُ الْعَـقْـلُ أَنَّـهُ
ضَـعِـيـفٌ وَمَـتْـرُوكٌ وَذُلِّـيَ أَجْمَـــــلُ

Patience without you, my mind makes clear,
Is weak[5] and abandoned;[6] my humility is more dear.

❈

وَلاَ حَسَـنٌ إِلاَّ سَمَـاعُ حَدِيثِـــكُمْ
مُـشَـافَهَـةً يُمْـلَى عَـلَـيَّ فَأَنْـقُـلُ

There is no goodness[7] but listening[8] to your speech;[9]
Dictated[10] to me, which I take and preach.[11]

❈

وَأَمْـرِيَ مَـوْقُوفٌ عَلَيْـكَ وَلَـيْسَ لِـي
عَـلَى أَحَدٍ إِلاَّ عَـلَيْـكَ الْمُعَـــــوَّلُ

My whole affair depends[12] on you alone,
For none but you can be my corner-stone.

وَلَـوْ كَـانَ مَـرْفُـوعًا إِلَيْـكَ لَكُـنْتَ لِـي
عَـلَى رَغْـمِ عُـذَّالِي تَـرِقُّ وَتَـعْـــــدِلُ

And were my case raised[13] up to you alone,
You'd show mercy, though foes bemoan.

❋

وَعَـذْلُ عَـذُولِـي مُـنْكَرٌ لا أُسِيغُـهُ
وَزُورٌ وَتَـدْلِيـسٌ يُـرَدُّ وَيُـهْـمَـــــلُ

The critics' reproach is rejected,[14] disregarded,
As lies and half-truths[15] are empty, discarded.

❋

أُقَـضِّي زَمَـانِي فِيـكَ مُتَّـصِـلَ الأَسَى
وَمُـنْقَـطِـعًا عَـمَّـا بِـهِ أَتَـوَصَّـــــلُ

I spend each moment bound[16] in misery's hue,
Cut off[17] from that which unites me with you.

❋

وَهَـا أَنَا فِي أَكْفَـانِ هَجْـرِكَ مُـدْرَجٌ
تُكَـلِّفُـنِي مَـا لا أُطِـيقُ فَأَحْمِـــــلُ

Wrapped[18] in shrouds your parting spun for me,
You place on me a load I cannot bear to carry.[19]

❋

وَأَجْرَيْتُ دَمْعِي فَـوْقَ خَـدِّي مُدَبَّجًـا
وَمَـا هِـيَ إِلا مُهْـجَتِـي تَتَحَـلَّـــلُ

I let my tears run down my cheek entwined,[20]
They are my melted soul escaping, unconfined.

فَمُتَّفِقٌ جِسْمِي وَسُهْدِي وَعَبْرَتِـــــي
وَمُفْتَرِقٌ صَبْرِي وَقَلْبِي الْمُبَلْبَـــــــلُ

Body, tears, and wakeful longing, all united.[21]
My anguished heart and patience, utterly separated.[22]

❋

وَمُؤْتَلِفٌ وَجْدِي وَشَجْوِي وَلَوْعَتِـــــي
وَمُخْتَلِفٌ حَـظِّي وَمَا مِنْكَ آمُـــــلُ

My passion, grief, and burning ache align,[23]
Yet far apart[24] are fortune's lot and hope of mine.

❋

خُـذِ الْوَجْدَ مِنِّي مُسْنَـدًا وَمُعَنْـعَنًـــا
فَغَيْرِي بِمَوْضُوع الْهَوَى يَتَحَلَّـــــــلُ

Learn yearning from[25] me, firmly borne,[26] relayed,
For others' love is groundless,[27] soon decayed.

❋

وَذِي نُبَذٌ مِنْ مُبْهَم الْحُبِّ فَاعْتَبِـــــرْ
وَغَامِضُهُ إِنْ رُمْتَ شَرْحًا أُطَـــــــوِّلُ

These are but fragments of love's obscurity,[28] take heed,
Its depths,[29] if fully told, would far exceed.

❋

عَزِيزٌ بِكُمْ صَبٌّ ذَلِيلٌ لِعِزِّكُـــــــمْ
وَمَشْهُورُ أَوْصَافِ الْمُحِبِّ التَّذَلُّـــــلُ

Dear,[30] because of you I love, abased before your due,
For humility is the lovers' mark, known[31] and true.

غَرِيبٌ يُقَاسِي الْبُعْدَ عَنْكَ وَمَا لَـــــــهُ

وَحَقِّكَ عَنْ دَارِ الْقِلِى مُتَحَــــــــــــوَّلُ

A stranger,[32] crushed by distance, bound to pain;
Yet from this place of torment he'll not wane.

❁

فَرِفْقًا بِمَقْـــطُوعِ الْوَسَــائِلِ مَا لَـــــــهُ

إِلَيْكَ سَبِيلٌ لا وَلا عَنْـــكَ مَعْـــــدِلُ

Be gentle with one cut off,[33] left without a way;
No path to you he finds, nor from you can he stray.

❁

فَلا زِلْتَ فِي عِزٍّ مَنِيعٍ وَرِفْعَــــــــــــــةٍ

وَلا زِلْتَ تَعْلُو بِالتَّجَنِّي فَأَنْــــــــــزِلُ

You forever stand in honour and pride's glow;
You rise[34] through injustice, while I fall low.[35]

❁

أُوَرِّي بِسُعْدَى وَالرَّبَابِ وَزَيْنَــــــــبِ

وَأَنْتَ الَّذِي تُعْنَى وَأَنْتَ الْمُؤَمَّــــلُ

I cloak my tale with Su'dā, Rabāb, and Zaynab too;
But really, you alone I tend to; you alone I pursue.

❁

فَـخُـــذْ أَوَّلًا مِـــنْ آخِــرٍ ثُـــمَّ أَوَّلًا

مِنْ النِّصْفِ مِنْهُ فَهْوَ فِيهِ مُكَمَّــــلُ

So take the first from the last, then the first again;
From its very half: there the whole is made plain.[36]

أَبَرُّ إِذَا أَقْسَمْتُ أَنِّي بِحُبِّهِ أَهِيــــــــمُ
وَقَلْبِي بِالصَّبَـابَةِ مُشْعَــــــــــلُ

I speak in truth: I swear that in his love I stray,
My heart with longing set aflame each day.

NOTES

- lit. = literal/lexical meaning
- tech. = technical meaning in hadith studies

[1] ṢAḤĪḤ

lit. *"sound, genuine, true, unscathed."*

tech. in hadith sciences, a report fulfilling all conditions of authenticity: unbroken chain of transmission, upright and precise narrators, and freedom from hidden defects and irregularity.

[2] MUʿḌAL

lit. *"difficult, severe, intractable, arduous."*

tech. a narration in which two or more consecutive transmitters are missing from the chain, rendering it severely weak.

[3] MURSAL

lit. *"sent forth, released, unrestrained, flowing freely."*

tech. a report in which a Successor (tābiʿī) narrates directly from the Prophet ﷺ, omitting the Companion from the chain.

[4] MUSALSAL

lit. *"linked in a chain, consecutive, continuous."*

tech. a hadith in which a specific quality is maintained throughout all or most of the chain of transmission. This quality may be:

i. Temporal – each narrator transmits the hadith at a particular time, such as the Hadith of Eid;

ii. Spatial – each narrator transmits it in a particular place;

iii. Verbal – each narrator includes a specific phrase when narrating, such as the Hadith of Mercy;

iv. Physical – each narrator performs a specific action while learning or transmitting the hadith;

v. Circumstantial – each narrator shares a defining condition, such as age, name, lineage, or place of residence.

[5] ḌAʿĪF

lit. "weak, feeble, frail, lacking strength or firmness."

tech. a narration that fails to meet one or more of the conditions required for authenticity.

[6] MATRŪK

lit. "abandoned, forsaken, left aside, cast off."

tech. a narration that is extremely weak, usually due to a narrator who is accused of fabrication, habitual error, or severe unreliability. It represents one of the lowest grades of hadith classification and is inadmissible as evidence.

[7] ḤASAN

lit. "good, beautiful, pleasing."

tech. a report that fulfils the basic conditions of authenticity but whose narrators possess slightly lesser precision than those of a ṣaḥīḥ narration; it remains acceptable and authoritative.

[8] SAMĀʿ

lit. "hearing, listening, audition."

tech. generally, the process by which a student receives a narration from a teacher in a manner recognised by the scholars of hadith, but specifically, often used interchangeably with imlāʾ; see footnote 10.

[9] ḤADĪTH

lit. "speech, discourse, something newly produced."

tech. a report that conveys the words, actions, tacit approvals, or descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ, a Companion, or a Successor.

[10] IMLĀʾ

lit. "dictation."

tech. A formal method of transmission in which the teacher reads the hadith aloud to the students. The majority consider it the most authoritative mode of reception, though Imām Mālik held that ʿarḍ (the student reading to the teacher) was superior.

[11] NAQL

lit. "to convey, transfer, carry something from one place to another."

tech. the transmission of knowledge through established, unbroken chains of authority and academic genealogies (isnād).

[12] MAWQŪF

lit. "stopped, halted, dependant."

tech. a report conveying the words, actions, or opinions of a Companion.

[13] MARFŪʿ

lit. "raised, lifted, elevated."

tech. a report that is attributed directly to the Prophet ﷺ, whether it conveys his words, actions, tacit approvals, or descriptions.

[14] MUNKAR

lit. "rejected, denied, something disapproved of."

tech. according to Imām al-Suyūṭī in his "Alfiyya," a report narrated by an unreliable transmitter that conflicts with the report of reliable narrators; the former is munkar, while the latter is maʿrūf.

[15] TADLĪS

lit. "to obscure, to conceal, to disguise something."

tech. A practice whereby a narrator conceals a defect in transmission, creating the impression of a stronger or more direct connection than actually exists. It comprises:

i. Tadlīs al-isnād - a narrator reports from someone he met or lived in the same period as a hadith which he did not actually hear from him, using ambiguous wording.

ii. Tadlīs al-shuyūkh - a narrator disguises the identity of his teacher by using unfamiliar names, descriptions, sobriquets, or attributions, so that the teacher is not easily recognised.

iiii. Tadlīs al-taswiyah - a narrator omits a weak transmitter who stands between two reliable narrators who met one another, and inserts wording that suggests a direct connection between them. The chain thus appears entirely sound to one unfamiliar with the hidden omission.

[16] MUTTAṢIL

lit. "connected, continuous, joined without interruption."

tech. an unbroken chain of transmission in which each narrator directly received the report from the preceding narrator, with no missing links.

[17] MUNQAṬIʿ

lit. "cut off, severed, broken, disconnected."

tech. a report whose chain of transmission is broken at some point, meaning that one or more narrators are missing from the isnād, though not necessarily in consecutive order.

[18] MUDRAJ

lit. "inserted, interwoven, wrapped."

tech. a hadith in which extraneous words have been inserted into the text or chain by a narrator, without being distinguished from the original wording.

[19] ḤAML

lit. "carrying, bearing, conveying, taking upon oneself."

tech. the act of receiving and bearing a hadith through an accepted method of transmission; it forms the first stage of the scholarly process, preceding adāʾ: the act of transmitting the ḥadīth onward.

[20] MUDABBAJ

lit. "ornamented, adorned, entwined."

tech. a mode of transmission in which two contemporaries narrate from one another. In modern usage, it usually refers to the mutual exchange of ijāza between two scholars.

[21-21] MUTTAFIQ & MUFTARIQ

lit. "(muttafiq) in agreement, united, in harmony; (muftariq) separated, distinct, different."

tech. a term used for narrators whose names, sobriquets, patronymics, and lineages coincide in wording and pronunciation, though they are distinct persons. In reality, they constitute a single category rather than two separate ones. Al-muttafiq and al-muftariq are merely two aspects of the same phenomenon: the agreement of narrators in names or designations while differing in their actual identities.

[23-24] MUʾTALIF & MUKHTALIF

lit. "(muʾtalif) "harmonised, aligned; (mukhtalif) differing, divergent, varied."

tech. narrators whose names are written in the same way (or very similarly) in Arabic script, but are pronounced differently. This category exists to prevent errors in reading and attribution that arise from the ambiguity of Arabic orthography, especially in early manuscripts lacking vowel and consonant markers.

[25] MUʿANʿAN

lit. "to use the word "from" (ʿan)."

tech. a narration in which a transmitter relates a hadith using the preposition ʿan (from) instead of an explicit formula of audition such as ḥaddathanā (he narrated to us) or samiʿtu (I heard). Since ʿan does not by itself prove direct hearing, its use introduces the possibility that the narrator did not actually hear the ḥadīth from the person he names. For this reason, muʿanʿan transmission is treated as a potential indicator of tadlīs (see footnote 15).

[26] MUSNAD

lit. "supported, rested upon, attributed."

tech. according to the majority of scholars, it is a report whose chain of transmission is connected and whose attribution is raised directly to the Prophet ﷺ.

[27] MAWḌŪʿ

lit. "topic, invented, put down."

tech. a report that has been deliberately forged and falsely attributed to the Prophet ﷺ, or another source, and is therefore completely rejected.

[28] MUBHAM

lit. "ambiguous, unclear, unspecified, left vague."

tech. a report in which a narrator is mentioned without being named or identified.

[29] GHĀMIḌ

lit. "obscure, hidden, subtle, difficult to perceive or understand."

tech. a subtle problems in the isnād or text that are not obvious on the surface, and which demand expertise in comparison, context, and narrator analysis to detect.

[30] ʿAZĪZ

lit. "rare, scarce, difficult to find, dear, precious."

tech. A report transmitted by at least two narrators at each level of the isnād.

[31] MASHHŪR

lit. "well-known, famous, widely recognised."

tech. a report narrated by three or more transmitters at each level of the isnād.

[32] GHARĪB

lit. "strange, solitary."

tech. a hadith in which a single narrator is alone in transmitting it at some point in the chain, whether at its beginning, middle, or end. This solitude does not in itself render the report weak, but it does invite closer scrutiny.

[33] MAQṬŪʿ

lit. "cut off, severed."

tech. A report whose attribution ends with a Successor (tābiʿī), and is not attributed to the Prophet ﷺ or a Companion.

[34] ʿĀLĪ

lit. "high, elevated."

tech. a chain with fewer narrators between the transmitter and the Prophet ﷺ, or between the transmitter and the source being cited.

[35] NĀZIL

lit. "low, descending."

tech. A chain with more narrators between the transmitter and the Prophet ﷺ (or source). It is lower in rank due to its greater length, though it may still be perfectly authentic.

[36]

In the final verse, the first word [أبر] and the last word [أهيم] spell out [إبراهيم] (Ibrāhīm), thereby revealing the name of the beloved.

FATEMIYE

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