

Centuries of Poetry Speaks of Oppressions on Sayyidah Zahra

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Sayyedah Fatima Az-Zahraa (a.s.), daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) and Sayyedah Khadija Al-Kobra (a.s.), spouse of Imam Ali (a.s.) and mother of Imam Hassan (a.s.), Imam Hussein (a.s.), Sayyedah Zeinab (a.s.) and Sayyedah Umm Kulthum (a.s.), was martyred at the age of 18 years on 13th Jamadi-ol Awwal, according to some traditions, while other narrations tell it was 3rd Jamadi-oth Thani.

Poets, since the first generations and till our time, have thoroughly covered what Sayyidah al-Zahra' (A.S.) underwent of oppression, persecution and beating. They make their poetry target those who participated in all of that or did not stop it. Some of them were contemporary to the Imams (A.S.), or their time was close to that of the Imam's.

This is regarded as a reliable and strong historical chronicle and record. Its strength underscores the fact that its contexts were true as it was transmitted by traditionists and historians. Here I would like to cite a bouquet of such poetry in successive centuries and till our :time

Sayyid al-Himyari (d. 173 A.H.) .1

Sayyid al-Himyari, may Allah have mercy on him, was contemporary to Imam al-Sadiq (A.S.) and Imam al-Kazim (A.S.) and he says the following:

Beaten, she was, and of her rights deprived,
And was made to taste, after his demise, of wounds.

God sever the hands that her did they hit,
And of that who agreed thereto and followed suit.

God may never forgive him nor
[Spare him of the horror of leaving the grave.]¹

Al-Barqi (d. 245 A.H.) .2

Al-Barqi, namely `Abdullah ibn `Ammar, has said,

They gathered the firewood at the house,
And those who ignited it kept taunting,
While nobody at the house except

The Purified Lady, the Truthful one,
[And the Prophet's two grandsons.]2

Al-Nu`man, the Judge (d. 363 A.H.) .3

Judge al-Nu`man, an Isma`ilite, composed a poem about what happened following the demise of the Messenger of Allah (A.S.) in one inclusive poem wherein he says,

Both swore fealty to him and said:
The best, you are, of everyone in state!
Among them were people of those at Badr slain,
And at others, people of confined grudge, plain.
They swore fealty, the heads of their folks,
So people swore, too, on that day
Except a few who recognized the way
Of their Prophet, so they kept away.
To Ali, their Imam, they went;
Said he: Your effort is already spent!
They said: No We shall do it for sure!
So he said: Set out now and your heads shave
So people will know you then come in a wave
To me so we may fight, God will make a way
For us to judge, and we will see what He does say.
The failed when they saw him determined,
So those who went to him counted only seven,
While fealty was sworn by all the rest
Who thought swearing it was the best.
I did call them by their very names.
He said: I shall not fight you for sure
For few you are and cannot meet the rest
So they sat to see what he would do
With them and what order to issue.
`Omer came to them with a group
Seeing the man they installed is not obeyed
Till they reached the door of Fatima (A.S.)
The Batal lady who boycotted them.
She intercepted between him and them

Hoping they would not reach her man
But he broke the door, the first of them
And they forced their way through her veil
As she did cry, ask for help and wail.
They hit her, so she did miscarry
Al-Zubayr heard the call and went in a hurry
But stumbled, his sword was taken
And was surely by them broken
So they caught al-Zubayr and he
In their hands a captive came to be.
The wasi came out with the rest of the men
Seeing their defenses were totally in vain.
They overpowered them and brought them to `Ateeq.

He goes on to say:
What a sigh in my heart
Like fire I feel in my mind.
Their killing al-Zahra Fatima
Ignited in my insides the fire
For it is known among the people
She died after having miscarried
She ordered to be at night buried
And her grave's marks obliterated
So nobody knows where she is buried.
So that only her cousin would be there
And his family, and in distress she did disappear.
Her Lord greets her, with her nations she was displeased.
They swore fealty to him against their wish
As taqiyya. Alas! God for His servants did allow
Not to be forced to make for the ruler an untrue vow.

Till he says,
It is narrated for sure
That he said when he came:
Swear it! Said he: I shall not!
He said: Then I shall have you killed!

May Allah testify that he was weak
When he swore fealty to the usurper
Fearing being killed, and others swore too
For fear of those who were there.
If they made the Trusted One so weak
Before him Aaron was treated the same
By the nation of Moses when they
Wanted otherwise to have him killed
Treading the same steps indeed
The steps the wasis had to tread
.Just as the sent Messenger said

Mihyar al-Daylani (d. 428 A.H.) .4

The brilliant poet, Mihyar al-Daylami, may Allah have mercy on his soul, has said the following
lines in a poem he wrote:

How come it was not severed
The hand that stretched to harm you?
That of the son of one inferior to you?
They were elated when they insulted you,
.(Being wrongful to your own father (A.S

Ali ibn al-Muqarrab (d. 629 A.H.) .5

Prince Ali ibn Muqarrab, of al-Ahsa', one of the wise and well known men of letters, has said:

I wonder which one of them shall I mourn
And for whom shall my tears overflow?
To the wasi when, at his mosque, he was crowned
By the sword before bowing down?
Or to the Batal, Fatima, who was deprived
Of her inheritance, rightfully hers according to all
And according to one who to her said:
You sought wrong, so desist
Your father loudly declared before many:
We, prophets, leave for our sons nothing to inherit.
What we leave is for each and all.
So be pleased with what your father said.

She said: Give me what my father left me
The best of all people, the one with intercession.
But they regarded their witness void
And the text of the Book did not convince them.
She remained oppressed, persecuted, when her claim
Was rejected, when her ribs were crushed.
Or should I mourn the one who had to drink
[From their Ju`da the cup of disguised poison?][3]

Al-Khala`i (d. 750 A.H.) .6

Shaikh Ali (A.S.) ibn `Abd al-`Azaz al-Khala`i al-Hilli said the following among other verses in
one of his poems:

O Lord of the one who was disputed about
What her father left her of inheritance and who
Was sought by those of grudge and hatred
And who made anyone drink the cup of grief
To a father because of her son
Like the son of Marjana, the accursed one
Who made me of it drink
And who before called a liar
Someone by the Lord from sins purified
And is there another son of a Prophet
For whom fire was lit
[As those who circled my home to burn me?][4]

Ala' ad-Din al-Hilli (killed in 786 A.H.)` .7

The virtuous scholar and the accomplished man of letters `Ala' ad-Din son of Shaikh Ali ibn al-Husain al-Hilli al-Shafhani, a contemporary to the First Martyr, who, may Allah have mercy on him, explained some of his poets, said,
They unanimously agreed upon it, with their whims,
Ignorance and hope, to burn the house of al-Zahra'
Fatima! What an awful momentous thing to do!
A house wherein five whose sixth is Gabriel
Without a reason set ablaze,
[And the Murtada from his home forcibly taken...][5]

Mughamis al-Hilli (d. in the late 900s A.H.) .8

Shaikh Mughamis al-Hilli said the following in one of his poems:

And the Purified One, Fatima (A.S.), her inheritance seized

By the worst of people as her tears are shed

After having miscarried because of a blow,

[So she passed away, what was hers confiscated].[6]

Muflih al-Saymari (d. 900 A.H.) .9

The famous `allama, the great Faqih and the respected man of letters, Shaikh Muflih al-

Saymari, said the following in one of his poems:

Shackled in the straps of his own sword they took Ali (A.S.)

And `Ammar before his rib crushed and was assaulted,

And they raided the home of the daughter of the Chosen One

And of their own Imam as one kept calling:

In her house burn a fire!

Of the inheritance of Prophet Muhammed (A.S.) was she deprived

[And she was whipped and slapped].[7]

Al-Hurr al-`Amili (d. 1104 A.H.) .10

The public speaker and the `allama Faqih Shaikh al-Hurr al-`amili, author of the modern

encyclopedia known as Wasa'il al-Shi'a, wrote a poem wherein he says,

Her children are five: Hasan and Husain (A.S.)

And Zainab, older than Umm Kulthom

And Muhassan was miscarried when

`Omer forcibly opened their door

As it became known to all.

So she died after the Prophet (A.S.)

Willingly went to her Lord satisfied

With what He for her had been decreed.

Such brings pain to the heart

And every other calamity is surely less in pain

What grief, humiliation, persecution and oppression

And savagery became clear to all.

Then he explains how she died, saying,

Its cause, it was said, natural death but

It was also said that it was caused of the pain
Inflicted from a blow dealt to her by that man
When she instantly miscarried her fetus
[For whom she kept weeping and wailing.]⁸

Al-Salih al-Fattani al-`Amili .11

Shaikh Muhammed Mehdi al-Fattani al-Nabati al-`amili, a scholar, poet, an imam of fiqh, hadith and Tafsir, has said, O Master! O Messenger of Allah! Stand and see What happened to
your very family:

More that what you did tell:
They took away caliphate from Ali,
And what you said many did deny.
They led him to so-and-so to swear fealty,
Against his wish, oppressors taking him forcefully.
For that, he was with the sword his Shabir became
A martyr, and by poison his Shabbar died.
As if he was not the like of the Prophet
Nor was he, by his Lord, purified.
And Fatima is there, her sanctity did they violate,
By one who caused her rib at the door to break.
Your Husain, without a cause, slain,
Her body cut to parts, with blood stained
[Dusted, lying on the ground is your Husain.]⁹

Sayyid Hayder al-Hilli (d. 1304 A.H.) .12

The great poet and man of letters and one of the most prominent poets of Iraq of his time,
namely Sayyid Hayder al-Hilli, has said the following in one of his poems:

No, by your pardon, the folks did no pardon implement,
Nor, by your clemency, were the folks at all clement:
What your mother carried they did cause to miscarry,
[And your grandfather's son with arrow to death did they carry.]¹⁰

Sayyid Baqir al-Hindi (d. 1329 A.H.) .13

The great scholar and the prominent poet, Sayyid Baqir son of Sayyid Muhammed al-Hindi, has
said,

You don't know with fire they burned the door,
Thus they hoped to put out, with fire, the noor.
You don't know what nail had to do
With Fatima's chest, if you only knew
In what condition her broken rib was
What miscarriage, why red were her eyes,
Why her ear-rings on the ground did scatter,
Unveiled was she when her house they did enter,
As Ali looked on, the man of manliness
The honorable, the fearless.
The Lion of Allah did they harass,
Like a camel did they lead him in duress.
The Batal behind them stumbled
On the tail of her robe which they pulled
With moaning that in the hearts did it ignite
The fire, and in anxiety that melted the stones of height.
She called upon them: Let my cousin Ali alone or I
To the Hearing One, the Seeing, shall I cry.
They paid her no heed,
By them she was scared indeed,
So they took Ali as a captive away,
Tied, like a captive; they had their day.
He goes on till he says the following:
Ali sees and hears, and the sword is sharp
And Ali's might is not to be taken lightly
But his Brother's will restricted what he could
Which was more than one really would,
So patience, O one entrusted with the affair
One whose judgment is wise and fair
One with a calamity that is on and on
One that melts one whose heart is stone.
How many calamities my narration of them to prolong
Wherein purity was stripped in time not so long?
How, eyes being quite red, can thee control,

O Son of Taha, a sweet slumber at all?
So weep and sigh for her foes
Did not let her weep and wail her woes.
As if I can see him saying, as he does weep,
With little solace but with tears high and deep:
May I after her never take for my relief
A home of happiness after her "house of grief."
So when, O son of Fatima, you will bring to life in a way
[The tyrants and the oppressors even before the Judgment Day?][11

Allama al-Qazwini (d. 1335 A.H.)` .14

The virtuous `allama, Sayyid Muhammed son of Sayyid Mehdi al-Qazwini al-Hilli al-Najafi, has said,
SALIM said something, said I: O Salman!
Did they really enter without permission?!
Said he: Yes, by the Glory of the Great One
While al-Zahra' had no veil at all.
But she behind the door sought refuge,
Observing the rules of veil.
When they saw her, they did squeeze
Her, almost killing her, may my life
Be her ransom. Said she; O Fidda!
Support me, for surely have they
Killed my fetus this very day.
She miscarried, the Daughter of Guidance, O Grief!
Miscarried her son,
[The one called Muhassan.][12

Hafiz Ibrahim (d. 1351 A.H.) .15

Hafiz Ibrahim, Poet of the Nile, has said,
A statement to Ali said by `Omer,
How great the one who heard it is,
How respectful the one who said it is!
"To burn your home shall I
"Leave none in it if you

“Do not swear fealty,” though
The Daughter of the Chosen one still inside.
Only Aba Hafs could thus say
To `Adnan’s knight and protector.[13]

Commenting on the above-cited verses, Grand Ayatullah `allama al-Muzaffar, may Allah have mercy on his soul, has said, “This poet mistakenly thought that the said statement was indicative of the courage of `Omer who demonstrated no courage at all during famous battles, nor did he record any feats of valor during the many wars waged by the Prophet (A.S.)! This was only due to a trust entrusted to him by the Prophet (A.S.) who admonished him to be [patient. Had he (Ali [a]) confronted `Omer, the latter would surely have fled away.”[14

Al-Isfahani, the Critic (d. 1361 A.H.) .16

The grand philosopher and the religious authority and the mentor/critic, said the following in a poetic urjaza in his dawan known as Al-Anwar al-Qudsiyya:

Her calamity, the opening to all calamities,
Was what she went through at the door,
For the talk about that door is surely grievous
Due to what the hands of betrayal committed.
Did the foes really assault
The House of Guidance,
The landing place of Revelation,
The center of all bliss?
Was the fire they did ignite
At her house’s door
And the Sign of Noor
Overwhelms it with light?
Her door is the door of the Prophet
Of mercy, the Prophet of salvation
Of this very Nation.
Nay! Her door is the door of
The most High, the most Exalted.
As though Allah’s Countenance was manifested.
With that fire they gained nothing but shame
After which there will be that of the Fire of Hell.
How ignorant some people are!

The fire burns not the Noor of Allah!
The most Exalted, the most Sublime!
But the breaking of the rib has none to repair
Except with the sword of one of might and power.
What wrenched those sacred ribs was a calamity
None like it in all eternity.
From the spring of blood that gushed out of her chest
Can one tell what she suffered, through what she went.
They transgressed all limits when they
On the cheek slapped her, may
The hand of oppression God paralyze.
And still remains the redness of her eyes
Of the eyes of knowledge can only remedied
By white swords when the banner is spread.
And the whips have a sound of dreariness
Hear by Time, lacking any happiness.
Remains, like a bracelet, the mark
On the wrist of al-Zahra' that was so dark
A most strong of any argument.
From the blackness of her arm the cosmos
Was blackened, O Arm of Allah! O Imam al-Murtada!
How the sword's scabbard was on her side planted
Bringing to memory all what to her happened.
I know not the story of the nail,
So ask the Custodian of all secrets.
In the womb of glory things that
Cause the inside to bleed.
Can they really hide
What is known and wide?
What about the door, the wall, the blood?
True witnesses which none can hide.
The criminal committed against her son
His crime the like of which is none.
So mountains were crushed

Upon hearing her wailing, though hushed.
Is this how the Prophet's Daughter should be treated
Running after power, how wondrous it is!
Should one a grieved, saddened woman keep,
For fear of slander, forbidding her to weep?
By Allah! She ought to shed tears of blood
As long as the earth remains and the world
For having lost the dear one, her great father
For her oppression and for insulting her protector.
Should the inheritance of the Truthful One
Become free for all and her legacy
From the very best of creation?
How could one call her statement a lie
For it will be one's answer to the verse
Of Purification...?
Should the faith be learned from a Bedouin
Leaving aside the one referred to in the Book?
Thus they confiscated what she did own
Committing the extreme in calamity.
Woe upon them! They asked for a proof
Contrary to the clearly defined Sunnah!
And their rejection of those who did testify
Is the greatest testimony to what we clarify.
Filling the gaps was not coincidental
Nay! They closed hers and the Murtada's door.
They turned away from the truth and did close
Its door, as though they were secure against its retribution.
Should part of the Greatly Purified one
Be buried at night, her grave unknown to man?
She was not buried at night and secretly
except because she was with the oppressors angry.
Nobody heard that she could ever thus be
In esteem unrecognized, her grave unknown to you and me.
Woe unto them from the Wrath of the Great One

[For having oppressed the flower of the Chosen One.[15

KASHIFAL-GHITA' (d. 1373) .17

The renowned scholar and the authority and mentor Muhammed Husain KASHIFAL-GHITA', may Allah have mercy on him, said the following in one of his poems:

At the Taffs did a wounded hero fall as did one
Behind the door fall named al-Muhassan,
And in every tent
A fire was set
From the very flame
That did burn in shame
The door of the house where did reside
The daughter of the Prophet sent to guide.[16]

There are other renowned poets whom I cannot cite here hoping this much should suffice to .make my point clear, and I seek help from none but Allah

Notes

[1]Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim, Vol. 3, p. 13.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Adab al-Taff, Vol. 4, p. 32 from Ithbat al-Hudat.

[4]Al-Turayhi, Al-Muntakhab, p. 161.

[5]Al-Amani, Al-Ghdar, Vol. 6, p. 391.

[6]Al-Turayhi, Al-Muntakhab, p. 293.

[7]Ibid., p. 137.

[8]Urjaja fa Tawarakh al-Nabi wal 'A'imma, pp. 13-14 (a manuscript at the library of the Center of Islamic Studies). Refer to the biographies of renowned women on pp. 316-17, Vol. 2.

[9]Adab al-Taff, Vol. 5, pp. 329-30 from p. 323, Vol. 2, of Al-Majma' al-Ra'iq (manuscript at the Library of Imam al-Sadiq [a], Kazimiyya, Iraq).

[10]Ibid., Vol. 8, p. 26. Sayyid Hayder al-Hilli, Dawan.

[11]Riyad al-Madh wal Ratha', pp. 197-98.

[12]Ibid., p. 6.

[13]Hafz Ibrahim, Dawan, Vol. 1, p. 75 (published by Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya, Egypt).

[14]Dala'il al-Sidq, Vol. 3, p. 54.

[15]Al-Anwar al-Qudsiyya, pp. 42-44.

[16]Al-Muqarram, Maqtal al-Husain (A), p. 389