Representations of the pre-Islamic past in early Persian court poetry: the art of celebration

Berg, G.R. van den; Tor, D.G.; Inaba, M.

CHAPTER 12

Representations of the Pre-Islamic Past in Early Persian Court Poetry

The Art of Celebration

GABRIELLE VAN DEN BERG

Panegyric court poetry, celebrating rulers and their entourage, has "a noteworthy historical component," according to G. E. Tetley in her monograph on the Ghaznavid and Saljuq Turks from the perspective of court poetry. She continues: "Close study of the poems of some medieval Persian panegyric poets can provide insights on details of military, political and social history, titulature, topics of current interest and contemporary attitudes thereto, and, more speculatively, indications of possible political undercurrents and intrigues."[1] However, despite the seemingly obvious importance of this poetry, also from a historical point of view, early Persian court poetry today is not a favorite subject among scholars and students of Persian literature. Readers and scholars seem to struggle with what Michael Glünz termed the "alleged insincerity" and apparent "sycophancy" of the court poets.[2] But rather than neglecting or even rejecting this poetry, it is worthwhile to explore this rich source that has not been used extensively, and to examine how this large corpus of poetry relates to contemporary but much more extensively used text corpora, such as histories and mirrors for princes.

The *qasida* was one of the major genres of medieval Persian panegyric court poetry in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and a literary genre that seems eminently suitable to explore and illustrate the poetic representation of the pre-Islamic past and its uses. Here I will present some thoughts about the topic of feasts in a number of *qasidas* by three well-known Ghaznavid court poets, ʿUnsuri, Farrukhi, and Manuchihri, who thrived in the first half of the eleventh century and died around 1040.

THE *QASIDA*: SOME PRELIMINARY NOTES

Qasidas were composed with a marked purpose, such as to commemorate a victory, to celebrate annual feasts, and more generally to entertain the dedicatee of the poem, the patron of the poet. Praising the patron, often a sultan, amir, or a high official at the court, is a central element in the *qasida* as a genre. The *qasida* can also be described as a multipurpose poem: it served to immortalize the patron's fame and to legitimize the patron's rule, and at the same time *qasidas* can be seen as a way to guide the ruler, to encourage him as it were to live up to the expectations expressed already as facts of the past. And apart from this didactic function, the *qasida* was also meant to entertain both patron and the court, since this poetry was meant to be performed in public.

The *qasida* is a poetic form that appeared in the Persian poetic tradition after the Arab conquests of the seventh century. Scholars and poets who discussed Persian poetry in the medieval period seem to be of the opinion that there was no poetry before the Arab conquest and present the new poetry as an invention, stating even that no word for "poetry" or "poet" existed in Persian.[3] This was to say that there was no poetry composed according to the formal rules of Arabic poetry, which had become a literary standard by that time. This idea is expressed for example by the eleventh-century poet Fakhr al-Din Gurgani, the author of the narrative poem *Vis-u Ramin*: "A story even if it is nice and sweet / will become fashionable [*naw ayin*] with metre and rhyme."[4] The "nice and sweet story" refers to the romance Gurgani reworked in his narrative poem, a romance probably dating from the Parthian period, and the word *naw ayin*, meaning "new rule" or "fashionable," "of a new

fashion," refers to the new rules of meter and rhyme that had to be applied to poetry in order to be taken seriously.

The first substantial amount of Persian poetry following the new fashion dates from the eleventh century. This new poetry appeared in a number of genres, among which the *qasida* stands out in the early period, alongside the *mathnavi*, or narrative poem. Poetry from this era can be found in anthologies, dictionaries, biographies, histories, and mirrors for princes, but a greater number of poems have been collected and ordered in *divans*, collected works of lyrical poetry. There are no manuscripts of *divans* available from the earliest period—most manuscripts of poets who flourished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries date from much later. It is often not clear to what extent the texts of the poetry preserved in copies of *divans* that date from a much later period, often centuries later, reflect the actual output of the poets whose name they bear.[5] Questions regarding the authenticity and the transmission trajectories of poetic corpora remain largely unanswered.

In view of this, it is probably wise to keep in mind that what we actually study when dealing with early Persian court poetry is how posterity dealt with the legacy of courtly production of an earlier period—we have to realize that we see, for example, the Ghaznavid court poetry tradition through the eyes of later literators, scribes and composers, other voices of a less remote past who no doubt had their own agendas. Unless early manuscripts from a court poet such as Farrukhi come to light, there is no other option than to rely on the available material, preserved in late manuscripts and, from the nineteenth century onward, in printed editions.

THE *QASIDA* AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION

I would like to take a closer look at a number of panegyrical *qasidas* to find out what aspects of court life appear in a panegyrical *qasida* and how these can inform us on life at the Ghaznavid court. Even a cursory glance through a *divan* of Ghaznavid court poetry shows that there are many aspects one could discuss. It is no difficult task to compile a quick list of separate and at the same time interrelated topics that may occur in a *qasida*. One may think of conquest, foundation, celebration, mourning,

ceremony, courtly love, slavery, warfare, religion, morals, ethics, ancient stories, palaces, gardens, music, poetry, nature, horses, hunting, commodities, and people at the court, such as the boon companion or the minstrel—and this list is by no means exhaustive. It would appear that *qasidas* can be seen as encyclopedias of court life, but also of ethics and thought, "a register of social events and a codification of moral principles and cultural values," in the words of Sperl and Shackle.[6]

However, the topics mentioned above, the social events, the moral principles, and the cultural values are embedded in a thick layer of rhetorical language: images, metaphors, and allusions abound. One cannot do away with this rhetorical language in order to reach the "real thing": the language, the form, if one wishes, is of course a core element of the *qasida* and cannot be seen as separate from the content. The registering and the codifying could only have been successful by the use of this specific language—the rhetorics are part of the cultural values. The rich and flattering language forms an inherent part of the genre. The court poets are true "artisans of glory."[7] In the words of Jerome Clinton, they are "gifted but conscious craftsmen, whose work may reflect, represent or may refer to a real event or a fictitious event."[8] Clinton emphasizes the public nature of this poetry: "The qasidah of the court poet was, like a frieze or bas relief, a work for public display whose purpose was to celebrate the virtues and accomplishments of the artist's patron. Its style was monumental, not realistic. Its themes, a blend of stereotypes of praise and images illustrating his unique accomplishments, were not of the artist's own choosing in either case."[9]

The comparison with a frieze is very much to the point, since Persian panegyrical verse was discovered to have been actually inscribed on the walls of royal palaces in the Ghaznavid period.[10]

A *QASIDA* ON THE OCCASION OF *SADA*

One of the major occasions for composing a *qasida* was the celebration of a feast, and the different feasts celebrated at the Ghaznavid court are duly represented in court poetry. The following *qasida*, here given in full in a literal translation, was composed on the occasion of *Sada*, the Feast of Fire, celebrated at the end of January.

Gar na ayin-i jahan az sar hami digar shavad
Chun shab-i tari hami az ruz rawshantar shavad[11]

1. If not the order of the world is changing right all over
   How then can the dark night become brighter than day?
2. Light belongs to the sky, but tonight the brightness of heaven
   comes from the dark earth.
3. The brightness in the sky is from the fire of the Feast of *Sada*
   From the palace of the lord the fire equals the sky in height.
4. The lord has made a fire which from the abundance of miracles
   Takes a form every time, becomes different every moment.
5. Sometimes scattering pearls, sometimes like a pearl itself
   Sometimes raining pearls, sometimes taking pearls away.
6. Sometimes raising its head in the air like a golden tree
   Sometimes looking like a Barbarian puppet dressed in red
   brocade.
7. Sometimes sticking out its face from under a rusty veil
   Sometimes tucking away under a rusty dome.
8. Sometimes like those who drink blood, dragging a blood-
   covered vest
   Sometimes like young girls who walk around in gold and
   ornaments.
9. Sometimes it is as if the fire is a ruby jewel
   Sometimes it is like a censer the colour of amber.
10. Sometimes round and round like a wall around a fortress
    Sometimes like a palace with a cornelian roof and a golden
    door.
11. Sometimes flaring up amidst the eye of a water lily
    Sometimes the smoke around it like leaves of a water lily.
12. Sometimes its rays light up the earth like an anemone
    Sometimes its sparks up in the air like the eye of a narcissus.
13. Silver, washed with gold, is all it illuminates
    Gold, washed with silver, is all that it consumes to embers.
14. Sometimes like a helmet golden and broken to pieces
    Sometimes like a crown troubled and full of jewels.
15. The fire started magic: if not how then can it be
    That sometimes its back becomes its face and its feet its head?

16. Sometimes it is trembling like wine-leaves in autumn
    Sometimes full of fruit and flowers like a garden in spring.
17. Sometimes coming down head over heels from high.
    Sometimes flaming up high from down below.
18. Sometimes covered in saffron, sometimes its body a red willow
    Sometimes a brocade manufacturer, sometimes an artisan of curiosities.
19. Sometimes shifting shapes just like the shapes of Euclid
    Sometimes diffusing light just like the shining sun.
20. Can it be that this fire has a likeness with the fury of the lord?
    That from its heat hard mountain stone becomes ashes?[12]
21. Sayyid, minister of the army-shattering king
    The one whose arrow turns every hour into an army against the enemy.
22. Generosity that became meagre becomes fat by his hand
    Avarice that became fat becomes meagre by his generosity.
23. In the hope that the lord will put it on his head some day
    Red gold in the heart of the rock becomes a crown.
24. In order to cut off the throat of his ill-wishers
    The iron in the mine turns into a dagger without a blacksmith.
25. In desire of having him as a preacher, the tree, not yet chopped
    Becomes a minbar in the midst of the garden every time.
26. Until resurrection day, everywhere they mention his name in the world
    The names of kings become servant because of the greatness of his name.
27. The princes of the seven climes are his lesser servants
    Everyone who is his lesser servant becomes a prince.
28. No land will be empty from his governors
    Even if suddenly seven lands would become seven hundred.
29. He is the prince of religion, and apostasy is not his creed
    Everyone in the world who renounces religion is a heretic.
30. The name of the army, towards which a servant of his servants will advance in war, will be lost to the world.
31. If anyone could find prophethood by generosity and virtue
    Master Sayyid would be suitable to become a prophet.

32. And if someone would make a notebook from counting his excellence
    Everything that answers the law of counting would go into that notebook.
33. How can his generous hand be compared to the sea?
    In comparison to his hand the sea is like a riverbed almost dry.
34. His hand is a cloud and clouds help the sea
    By his hand the world too becomes a wide sea.
35. The one who travels day and night in the depth of the sea
    Walks, hoping for profit, from one pontoon to another
36. If he serves for a while the master, without fear of drowning
    A jewel from one of his treasures will serve him as a bed.
37. As long as the king of time calls him back to the ministry
    By him the ministry will be a companion to prophecy all the time.
38. Oh fortunate minister, by your magnificence it will not take long ere
    The palace of the kingdom will become the king of the east in the east.
39. Byzantium and China he will make pure; his friends will be in Byzantium and China.
    A deputy the emperor of China, a chamberlain Caesar of Byzantium.

This *qasida* is from the hand of the one of the famous Ghaznavid court poets, Farrukhi Sistani (d. 1037/38?). His *divan*, in a critical edition based on rather late manuscripts, counts 214 *qasidas*, of which this is number 29. This *qasida* was probably composed for the vizier Ahmad bin Hasan Maymandi, in the year 423/1032, on the occasion of *Sada* on 10 Bahman (late January). Maymandi had been Sultan Mahmud's minister from 1013 to 1025 but fell from grace and ended up in prison in India; after Mahmud's death in 1030, he was reinstated as a minister under Mahmud's son Masʿd.[13] A reference to this might be found in verse 37a of the poem (*ta vizaratra bidu shah-i zamana baz khwanad*).[14]

The first nineteen *bayts* (verses) make up the *nasib*, the prelude: it is in this part that Farrukhi vividly describes in many images the shapes,

movements, and colors of the fires of *Sada*.[15] The *matlaʿ* (first *bayt*) is a rhetorical question, captivating as is appropriate the attention of the audience. Fourteen *bayt*s of the *nasib* are marked by the repetitive *gah . . . gah*, "sometimes . . . and then again." Then, in the twentieth *bayt*, the focus is shifted from the fire to the patron—in this transition verse, the *gurizgah*, Farrukhi neatly links the topic of the *nasib* with the person of the patron, as a first introduction to his praise. The ensuing *madih* (praise) part of sixteen *bayt*s is relatively short in comparison to the rather long *nasib*. Common key elements in this praise, as in many other examples of praise poetry, are the patron's prowess in holy war and his generosity, soliciting a fitting reward for the poet. The last three *bayt*s form the typical closure of the *qasida*, a prayer (*duʿa*), often introduced by the conjunction "as long as" (*ta*).

One of the earliest and probably fullest accounts on the life of Farrukhi is included in the *Chahar Maqala*, composed by Nizami Aruzi in the twelfth century for the Ghurid dynasty. In his romanticized report, Nizami Aruzi informs us that Farrukhi was a native of Sistan and served a local *dihqan* (landlord).[16] According to Nizami Aruzi, he composed poetry, played the harp, and earned a modest salary. In search for more income he set off north to the amir of Chaghaniyan, who was away from the court because of the annual branding of the horses. Farrukhi composed a *qasida* describing the *daghgah* (branding ground), which was highly successful and earned Farrukhi a place of honor at the court of the amir of Chaghaniyan.[17] Later he traveled from Chaghaniyan to Ghazna to become a poet in the service of the Ghaznavid dynasty.[18]

Judging from the poetry collected in his *divan*, Farrukhi had many patrons at the Ghaznavid court, but by far his most famous patron was Sultan Mahmud, whose conquests considerably expanded the Ghaznavid empire until his death in 1030. Farrukhi, alongside with ʿUnsuri, who was Farrukhi's senior and the poet laureate at the Ghaznavid court, immortalized Mahmud as a ruler by a number of well-known *qasidas*, such as the *qasida* in which he celebrated the conquering and plundering of the Indian town of Sumnat[19] and the elegy he composed upon Mahmud's death.[20]

In the following, I would like to dwell briefly on *Sada* and some other feasts and festivals as represented in the poetry of Farrukhi and two other Ghaznavid court poets, ʿUnsuri (d. 441/1049–50) and Manuchihri, whose

dates are unknown, but who composed poetry for the Ghaznavid sultan Masʿud (r. 1030–40). Where possible I will try to frame and contextualize the poetry by means of the *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*, composed by the court scribe and chronicler Abu'l-Fazl Bayhaqi (995–1077).[21]

A large number of the panegyric court poems found in the *divans* of the poets ʿUnsuri, Farrukhi, and Manuchihri were composed for a special occasion. This occasion, be it a great feast such *Nawruz* or *Mihrigan* or a celebration of a victory, is often mentioned in the court poems. In most cases, the poet does not say very much about how a specific feast was exactly celebrated, as we saw in the example presented above in full: the *qasida* by Farrukhi on *Sada* contains hardly any information on *Sada*, but it is important as a proof that *Sada* was a feast celebrated as this time. *Sada* is mostly used in Farrukhi's *qasida* as a vehicle for the poet to display his eloquence with a rich and full register of images and comparisons. But what does this tell us about the position of *Sada* at the Ghaznavid court, and how are other feasts celebrated at the Ghaznavid court represented in court poetry?

As far as we can tell from the poetry by ʿUnsuri, Farrukhi, and Manuchihri, at the Ghaznavid court four pre-Islamic seasonal feasts and two Islamic feasts were celebrated. *Nawruz*, the New Year's Feast, was celebrated in spring; *Mihrigan* in autumn; and *Sada* and *Bahmanjana* in winter. *Nawruz* and *Mihrigan* seem to have been the great seasonal feasts of the year. References to the celebration of *Bahmanjana* are quite rare and can be found in the *divans* of Manuchihri and Mukhtari, a poet of the later Ghaznavid period (last quarter of the eleventh century). The Islamic feasts were *ʿId-i Ruza* (also *ʿId al-Fitr*), the feast to celebrate the end of the fasting month Ramazan, and *ʿId-i Qurban*, the Feast of Sacrifice. These feasts were not related to a specific season but celebrated in accordance to the Islamic calendar.

SADA

Sada was the most important Iranian winter festival, celebrated by lighting fires on the 10th of Bahman, which corresponds to the end of January in the Gregorian calendar.[22] Biruni described the feast as follows:

> People used to make great fires . . . and were deeply engaged in the worship and praise of God; they also used to assemble for feast and merriment. They maintained that this was done for the purpose of banishing the cold and dryness that arises in winter-time, and that the spreading of the warmth would keep off the attacks of all that which is obnoxious to the plants in the world. In all this, their proceeding was that of a man who marches out to fight his enemy with a large army.[23]

In court poetry, the fires are described, but no information is presented on the religious background of the feast and its rituals. Farrukhi's senior contemporary, the poet laureate ʿUnsuri, presents *Sada* in a similar way as Farrukhi in the prelude of one of his *qasidas*, dedicated to Nasr bin Sabuktigin (d. 412/1021), commander in chief of the army in Khurasan and brother of Sultan Mahmud.[24]

sada jashn-i muluk-i namdar ast
zi afridun u az jam yadgar ast[25]

1. *Sada* is the feast of famous kings
   A remembrance of Afridun and Jam.
2. You would say the earth tonight is the Mount Sinai
   From which the light of illumination shines clear.
3. If this is day, we should not call it night;
   And if the night has become day the times are pleasant.
4. Or are these lands in paradise?
   For it is a place full of light, a spiritual realm.
5. With the earth, heaven got himself a companion:
   The habits of the two bodies are very much alike.
6. All the heavenly bodies of the one are pillars of light
   All the solid bodies of the other are parts of fire.
7. If the celestial globe is not a mine full of rubies
   Why then do wind and air bring forth rubies?
8. What kind of thing is that tree of brightness
   With a hundred thousand branches on one root?
9. Now a high cypress, then a flaming pomegranate,
   The cornelian dome of a golden idol.

10. If it appeared in a bright form,
    Why then is it from now on dark and pitch-coloured?
11. If Bahman belongs to the season of winter
    Why then is tonight like a field of tulips?
12. This looks like a tulip but it is not a tulip
    These are the sparks of Nimrod and of fire.
13. It is burning the waves of the sea;
    It looks like the fury of the prince.

In this prelude again the all-illuminating fires of *Sada* are described. ʿUnsuri first connects *Sada* with the pre-Islamic kings of the world, Faridun (Afridun) and Jamshid (Jam), both figures from the Iranian epic tradition, whose stories are told in detail in Firdausi's *Shahnama*, composed in the same period. The references to Faridun and Jamshid position *Sada* as a royal feast of ancient times. In the second verse, ʿUnsuri introduces the notion of fire, the "keyword" of *Sada*, by making use of the biblical and Quranic tradition, with a reference to Mount Sinai, the place where Moses received a message through the burning bush. At the end of the prelude, in verse 12, another biblical figure connected to fire is mentioned, Nimrod, the king who ordered Abraham to be cast into fire. The verses in between play with the images evoked by the fire of *Sada*, the fire that turns night into day, creates fanciful shapes, such as a tree with 100,000 branches, and causes the sky to rain rubies. In verse 11, the paradox of having tulips in the winter month of Bahman leads to the final verse of the prelude, in which the tulips are explained to be sparks of Nimrod's fire. In the following transition verse, the omnipotent fire that can burn waves is likened to the fury of the patron.

The *Sada* feast is not necessarily only described in the prelude of a *qasida*; it is mentioned in other parts too, such as in the case of another *qasida* by ʿUnsuri, in which *Sada* is again connected to the fury of the patron, who will catch anyone who is secretly insincere.[26] ʿUnsuri declares that the wrath (*kina*) of the king is too strong to leave secret hate unnoticed, and his enemies, from Sarandib to ʿAdan, will be brought to him by God's hand. Having made this ominous statement, the poet turns to the feast of *Sada* and refers to its background as the feast of the *dihqan* (noble landlords), celebrated in the month of Bahman:

19. Oh lord, I said I would praise [*tahniyat guyam*]
    the feast of the noble landlords [*jashn-i dihqan*], the custom
    honouring Bahman.
20. During which people illuminate a festive gathering
    With a jewel delved from stone and iron.
21. Strong as your attack, faultless as your justice
    High as your ambition, clear as your wisdom.

In the following verses. ʿUnsuri makes clear that the ancient feasts of a class that has long lost its power cannot compete with the customs of the new king, Sultan Mahmud.

23. As I have seen it, your customs were stronger
    In governing than the customs of Khusraw and Bahman.
24. You are a man of religion [*mard-i dini*] and these habits are the
    habits of the pagan fire-worshippers [*gabran*];
    You do not allow to follow the customs of fire-worshipping.
25. The people of the world praise your customs;
    I will not praise you by means of the customs of the Kayanids.
26. Not *Sada* is fire, but the fire is your fire
    Of which one flame hits West [*Tazi*] and the other East [*Khutan*].

In this customary display of poetic exaggeration (*mubaligha*), ʿUnsuri positions *Sada* as a feast of old, which has a marginal role in an empire guided by the principles of Islam. Here pre-Islamic *Sada* serves as a device to praise the Islamic piety of the patron. However, by bringing up *Sada*, ʿUnsuri places the patron at the same time in a broader royal context, and implicitly describes the patron as a continuator of ancient glory. Pre-Islamic kings and heroes, such as Alexander (Iskandar), are customarily brought forward in praise poetry, mostly as symbols of virtue and prowess. Despite all their magnificence, the poet is eager to "prove" in his poetry that they still fail to impress in comparison to poet's own patron.[27] Though no court poet seems to really condemn a feast such as *Sada*, a certain discomfort toward pre-Islamic traditions might be present in his verses, in the same way as the drinking of wine is sometimes (pretended to be) almost apologetically dealt with.[28]

This is, however, markedly not the case in another *qasida* composed on the occasion of *Sada*, by a third Ghaznavid court poet, Manuchihri Damghani. Many of his *qasidas* are dedicated to Sultan Masʿud (r. 1030–40), as is the following *qasida*, which has a prelude describing the feast of *Sada*:

saqi biya ki imshab saqi ba kar bashad
z-an dih mara ki rangash chun julnar bashad[29]

1. Cup bearer, come, for tonight we need a cup bearer
   Give me from what has a colour like pomegranate.
2. Give wine, four cups, that it may taste well
   After all, the temperaments of the world are four.
3. Wine brings light for the one who shares these temperaments,
   so that there will be no trouble, so that there will be no drowsiness.
4. Oh no, I told a lie, what is this for kind of counting?
   was wine-drinking ever less than thousand?
5. Let us drink bright wine, as long as we can
   Especially since it is done with Bakhtiyar.[30]
6. Especially since the time of ruling is Masʿud's
   Especially now that a moon-faced beauty is close by.
7. The most glorious emir whose work is in battle
   or in the midst of festive gatherings, or in hunting.
8. As long as this world exists, let him be dignified
   let him be with joy, let him be with abundance.
9. Let him be the ruler of the army, let him be the hunter of the enemy
   let him be dinar-giving, let him be dinar-pouring.
10. Let him know justice and let him carry out justice
    let him be grateful, in good and in bad.
11. Let him be with God regarding the afterlife
    let him be with authority in the business of the world.
12. May his thanks be dear, may it be dinar-consuming
    may pride come of pride, may disgrace come of disgrace.
13. It is the feast of *Sada*, oh amir! Let the custom of the nobles be
    This is the custom of Kayumars and of Isfandiyar.

14. Set it on fire so that tonight in the fortress
    It will have a fortress, oh amir; there will be wood, easy to kindle.
15. Fire that looks like a fruit-bearing palm-tree
    its root of light, its branche of pomegranate.
16. When you look at his width, it is a mountain-range
    when you look at his length, it is a cypress and a plane-tree.

This *qasida* has thirty-one verses; the amir is addressed once again in verse 23. There does not seem to be a clear boundary between prelude (*nasib*) and praise (*madih*); the description of a festive gathering in connection to the fires of *Sada* alternates and is intertwined with the praise of the patron. Here *Sada* is described as "the custom of the nobles" (*rasm-i kibar*) and connected to two pre-Islamic kings: Kayumars, the first man and king on earth in the Iranian tradition; and the prince Isfandiyar, the unfortunate son of the Kayanid king Gushtasp. In the *qasida* discussed above, ʿUnsuri connected *Sada* with Faridun and Jamshid, like Kayumars belonging to the *pishdadiyan*, the dynasty of ancient kings who ruled the world in its entirety and who are credited with the invention of many traditions. However, the choice for kings or princes as symbols in *qasidas* seems often quite random: Isfandiyar might be mentioned here because his name suited the rhyme of this particular *qasida*.

Manuchihri was a major poet under Sultan Masʿud, yet he is not mentioned once in the extant part of the history of Bayhaqi, which deals with the rule of Masʿud. In the history of Bayhaqi, we find however a description or the *Sada* feast for Masʿud in January 1035 (426 AH). It is not impossible that Manuchihri's *qasida* in celebration of *Sada* was composed for the same occasion, but there is no way to verify this.

SADA IN BAYHAQI

According to the *History* of Bayhaqi, the sultan and his army were preparing an expedition to Marv in January 1035. Bayhaqi writes the following on *Sada* as it took place in that year:

> The festival of Sada was approaching. The royal camels and those of the entire army were brought into the open plain, and they began

> gathering tamarisk branches so that Sada could be celebrated before they set out on the journey. They brought the tamarisk branches they had gathered to the plain, where there was a large stream, filled with snow, and piled snow up on it until it became as high as a citadel. They constructed quadrangular arched edifices (*chahār-ṭāq*) of great height, out of wood and filled them up with tamarisk branches, and they collected more tamarisk branches for there was an abundance of it which grew on a huge mountain [nearby]. They also provided many eagles and pigeons and whatever would add to the glitter and splendour of this night.
>
> . . . .
>
> Sada came along. On the first night the Amir installed himself under an awning which had been put up on that river bank. The boon-companions and musicians and singers came along, and the wood pile was set on fire. (I heard later that the flames of that fire could be seen from about ten parasangs away.) They released pigeons smeared with naphtha, and began to let run wild beasts smeared with pitch and set alight. It was a Sada whose like I never saw again, and the whole affair ended up in joyful celebration.[31]

The practice of driving birds and wild beasts into the fire is described in a number of Persian and Arabic sources; it was condemned by Biruni.[32] No traces of this practice seem to be present in the poetry of Farrukhi, ʿUnsuri, and Manuchihri. Rather, the great piles of wood set on fire are central to their descriptions, in the case of ʿUnsuri perhaps placed on a platform in the river, as is described above.[33] In contrast to the court poets, Bayhaqi does not refer to *Sada* as a symbol of a glorious past.

A FEW WORDS ON *BAHMANJANA*

There is ample evidence that the feast of *Sada* was still celebrated and well known under the Ghaznavids and their successors, the Saljuqs, but the feast of *Bahmanjana* seems to have been less current in the eleventh century. *Bahmanjana* was a minor festival close to *Sada*, celebrated on the second day (Bahman) of the month of Bahman, a feast dedicated originally to the deity Bahman. Apparently it was already confused with *Sada* in

Ghaznavid times.[34] There are a few references to the celebration of *Bahmanjana* in Ghaznavid and Saljuq court poetry.[35] The poets Mukhtari and Manuchihri connect *Bahmanjana* to feasting and wine-drinking in the heart of winter. Winter is the season for the celebration of *Sada* and *Bahmanjana*, and an opportunity for the poet to revel in descriptions of winter.

Manuchihri has a *qasida* with the rhyme *–ana*, in which *Bahmanjana* is used as a rhyme-word in the first two verses.[36] In the first hemistich, Manuchihri encourages the unnamed patron, probably Sultan Masʿud,[37] to revive *Bahmanjana*:

Rasm-i bahman gir-u az naw taza kun bahmanjana
Ey darakht-i mulk! Barat ʾizz-u bidari tana
Urmazd-u bahman-u bahmanjana farrukh buvad
Farrukhat bad urmazd-u bahman-u bahmanjana[38]

Take up the customs of Bahman and renew Bahmanjana
Oh tree of the kingdom! Your fruit is magnificence, your trunk is wakefulness
May Ahura Mazda and Bahman and Bahmanjana be fortunate
May Ahura Mazda and Bahman and Bahmanjana be fortunate for you.

A second *qasida* by Manuchihri, composed for an unnamed patron[39] on the occasion of *Bahmanjana*, contains a reference to a *dig-i bahmanjana*, a kind of hotchpotch dish typically sold and eaten on the day of *Bahmanjana*, and also described by Gardizi and Biruni.[40] Mukhtari only mentions the feast as a cause for wine-drinking and celebration (*bahmanjana ast khiz-u may aray charagh-i ray*) in the first hemistich, and he wishes his patron a happy Bahmanjana (*bahmanjana-at mubarak-u masʿud-u nikpay*) in the last hemistich of a *qasida* clearly composed for this occasion.[41]

OTHER FEASTS, IN PARTICULAR *MIHRIGAN* AND *ʾID-I RUZA*

We find references to *Nawruz*, the New Year and spring festival, and *Mihrigan*, the autumn feast, originally a feast in honor of Mihr or Mithra, much more frequently than *Sada* or *Bahmanjana*.[42]

Qasidas composed for *Nawruz* usually contain exuberant descriptions of spring, but *qasidas* composed for *Mihrigan* describe the falling leaves in autumn, the harvest, and the making of wine. The decay of nature in autumn was often associated with the sufferings of love: the poet as the lover, separated from his beloved would compare himself with the tree that has to separate from its leaves.

Sada, *Bahmanjana*, *Nawruz*, and *Mihrigan* were by nature related to the seasons of the year, the Islamic feasts have no such connection with a specific time of the year, and could coincide with the seasonal feasts, depending on the course of the Islamic moon calendar. Farrukhi has a few *qasidas* in which he mentions the coincidence of *Mihrigan* and *Ramazan*. It may well be that these *qasidas* were composed in the year 1031 AD (422 AH) or the year before, since Bayhaqi refers to the fact that *Mihrigan* took place on 28 or 29 Ramadan 422, equaling September 18 or 19, 1031. Farrukhi presents this in his poetry as a great misfortune:

> One day is left of the honourable month
> So the customs of *Mihrigan* cannot take place
> When will harp, lute and the smell of sweet wine
> Ever go with the month of fasting?
> And since no one thinks of *Mihrigan*, he becomes sad.
> Give him my message and see how he answers.
> Tell him: Last year you came as well in the month of fasting
> Did anyone look at you last year?
> When the time of fasting arrives, no one will honour you—
> Why don't pay attention to the fasting, flatterer?
> You do not know your place and time, and that is why
> You are despicable in the eyes of king and minister.[43]

This *qasida* was dedicated to Sultan Masʿud's minister Shams al-Kufat.

For another minister, the unfortunate Hasanak, who was executed after Masʿud became sultan, Farrukhi wrote on the same topic, probably in the year before:

> *Mihrigan* is busy fasting this year—
> Perhaps the king wanted him to repent Fire Worshipping?[44]

This verse makes clear that at the court the people were conscious of the fact that the ancient Persian customs observed with so much splendor at the court were not compatible with the rules of Islam. The Ghaznavid rulers were first and foremost champions of Islam in the frontier lands of the caliphate, and as such observing Ramazan was certainly more important than *Mihrigan*.

Bayhaqi does not refer very explicitly to a *Mihrigan* not observed because of Ramazan; he has, however, a passage on the eve of the Feast of Sacrifice coinciding with *Mihrigan*, in September 1038 (Dhu'l-hijja 429):

> On Wednesday, 9 Dhu'l-Hejja [September 12, 1038] the Amir sat in state for the festival of Mehragan, and people brought large numbers of presents. It was the day of Arafa. The amir fasted, and no one dared to indulge in any feasting or drinking, whether clandestinely or openly. The next day they celebrated the Festival of the Sacrifice; and the Amir had made great efforts, both in laying out a spread as well as in regard to the troops, since two armies had come together, and it had been some time since he himself had indulged in any drinking.[45]

In a *qasida* to Amir Yusuf, the young uncle of Sultan Masʿud, and the governor of Khurasan, Farrukhi stresses the importance of the feast of *Mihrigan* for the safeguarding of the "tradition of the Persians":

> *Mihrigan* kept the tradition of the Persians [*rasm-e ʿajam*] alive.
> His feast was needed, just as eyes are needed [?].
> Wherever I came, from the early morning onwards
> I was welcomed with wine, flute and lute
> Until the Month of Fasting came in between
> The whole tradition came to an end.
> Narrow-minded Fasting got hold entirely of *Mihrigan*.[46]

From these examples it becomes clear that at the time of the Ghaznavid dynasty, various pre-Islamic feasts were celebrated with much splendor. These feasts occur with some regularity as a topic in *qasidas* and as an apparent reason for the composition of these *qasidas*. A recurrent motif, as we have seen, in this kind of festive *qasida* is the emphasis on the "Persianness" of these feasts; the poets use the term *ʿajami*, which contrasts with *ʿarabi*, "Arabness."

This motif serves to emphasize the double legitimacy of the Ghaznavids: they are Islamic rulers, but at the same time they are portrayed as the heirs and continuers of the pre-Islamic kings of the past.[47] This is illustrated in verses such as the following by Farrukhi:

> The feast of the Arabs [*'id-i 'arab*] opened the banner in joy
> may the feast of the Arabs be joyful for the king of the Persians [*shah-i 'ajam*].[48]

The Breaking of the Fast (*'Id-i ruza*, *'Id-i ramazan* or *'Id al Fitr*, abbreviated sometimes to *'id*) appears to have been the reason quite often for composing *qasidas*. An example is the following *qasida* of Manuchihri:

> The month of Ramazan is gone and for me his going is all the better
> the feast of Ramazan came, thank God [*al-minnatu'llah*]
> The one who has to come had better come
> the one who has to go had better go
> To the coming of the feast and the leaving of the fast
> give me some wine, cup-bearer, to the garden and in the green
> I will break the fast with this reddest water
> give me some of this reddest water and do not dispute
> Put in the palm of my hand that cup like the Kausar
> get another cup, and put it in my other hand
> I will not drink wine, until in both hands I have a cup
> or why not place three large bowls on my table-cloth?
> When you give wine, keep saying "drink!" and stay here
> when I drink wine, take the cup and leap
> And if the Lord resists and says: "I do not drink wine"
> then administer an oath to him on the soul and the head of the sultan
> And if the grand statesman wants a smaller cup
> by God you will give him more wine and also a larger cup![49]

Farrukhi has a *qasida* that opens in the same vein:

> Last night Fasting [*ruza*] went out of our tent in a hurry
> the happy feast came with a cup of wine
> I asked the people how are you having wine
> they all said it is right, right, right! [*sawab*]

What can we do if Fasting turned away from us
we cannot say to him do not turn away from us
What will be if he goes? Say go and walk nicely
his going liberates us all from torture
Fasting is looking for freedom, what can I do for him?
you cannot bind him with a rope like you do with prisoners
The feast is offering us pleasant wine
The Fast gives us a little bit water like misers having mercy
If the face of the whole world has become yellow because of the troubles of the Fast
Thank God now that I will make my face red because of pure wine
You see now in the corner of the tavern drunken because of wine
the Mufti of the city, who was continually in prayer in the *mihrab*
Never-ending Fast muddled and burnt our brains—
Now it is us and this honourable feast with music and pure wine
We pick up harp and lute and tune the strings
When these two are tuned they are going to the amir
and from the amir they are coming to us in a hurry[50]

BAYHAQI ON *MIHRIGAN* AND THE BREAKING OF THE FAST

The descriptions found in Bayhaqi's history show that the feasts to celebrate the ending of the Fast were grand occasions, full of ceremony, wine, music, and poetry-reciting. In the passage below, Bayhaqi describes both *Mihrigan* and the Breaking of the Fast, which took place in the same week in the year 1031:

> On Monday, 28 or 29 Ramazan 422 [September 18 or 19, 1031], he [Masʿud] sat in state for the festival of Mehragan, and several showerings of coins, presents and luxury goods and beasts, of unlimited numbers and extent, were brought forward as offerings. Suri, the head of the Divan [of Khorasan] had sent an endless array of things through his personal representative at court as presents. In the same way, the representatives of the great men in charge of outlying provinces, like the Khwarazmshah Altuntash, the Amir of Chaghaniyan,

the Amir of Gorgan, the governors of Qosdar and Makran, and others, brought many things. It was a memorable day.

On Wednesday, the Festival [of the Ending of the Fast] was celebrated. The Amir had ordered an army review on a scale such as I had seen in the time of the late Sultan his father, on those occasions when it happened that the envoys or notable and eminent men from Western Persia and Turkestan presented themselves at the royal court. When the appropriate hour for the start of the Festival had arrived, the Amir went from the main square to the great dais. A magnificent spread of food had been laid out, and the Amir sat down there. The courtiers and retainers, and the great men, were seated there; poets came forward and recited verses, followed by musicians and singers who began to play and sing. Wine was handed round, both where the Amir sat and at another spread where the sarhangs, the swift-riding cavalrymen and the various ethnic groups of the army sat. There were great vessels filled with wine, so that people staggered back from the table drunk. Having drunk several goblets at the feast, the Amir left the table and mounted the main great throne on the dais of the court. A reception had been prepared the like of which no one could remember. The Vizier, the Head of the Army Department, the Head of Chancery and the boon-companions came forward for it. The court musicians and singers, and those from outside, struck up, and such merry-making got under way that all possible traces of gloom and melancholy were banished from the very edifice. The amir ordered that the less well-known poets should receive 20,000 dirhams; 50,000 dirhams were conveyed to the house of Alavi Zeynabi on an elephant; Onsori was given thousand dinars; and the musicians and singers and the clowns received 30,000 dirhams.

Those poems that were recited have all been set down in poetical divans; if I were to record them here too, it would take up too much space, since the masters of poetry had recited a great deal of verse therein describing the court session and the wine, welcoming in the Festival and in praise of the monarchs.[51]

This rather long passage has been quoted here in full because it gives an idea of celebrating at the court from another point view than court poetry. Moreover, Bayhaqi offers here a quite detailed description of the

role of the poets at courtly celebrations. Bayhaqi does not present the coincidence of the two feasts as an annoying matter, but he is much more elaborate on the Breaking of the Fast than on *Mihrigan*. The court poets' lamentations on Ramazan standing in the way of *Mihrigan* seem first and foremost poetic topoi rather than reflections of an actual situation.

CONCLUSION

Bayhaqi only mentions *Mihrigan*, *Sada*, and *Nawruz* a few times in his work, and often just in passing. The passages quoted here belong to the most extensive sections on these feasts. Bayhaqi mentions the Fast and the Breaking of the Fast more often, but not as extensively as in the passage above. Bayhaqi is quite sparse with his information on feasts, in comparison to the wealth of information he provides on state affairs. That the poets present a different image is not surprising, since some of the occasions for them to shine in performance were specifically the festivities described here.

Notwithstanding the importance of the Islamic feasts, the court poets seem to focus more on the pre-Islamic feasts, that is to say, more references can be found to the seasonal, non-Islamic feasts. The fact that these feasts can easily be associated with ancient traditions of kingship is of course played out in the *qasidas*, but it seems specifically their connection to the seasons that marks them as ideal topics for court poets. The pre-Islamic feasts are clearly associated with a fixed moment in the year, associated with certain repertoires of images; besides, certain features of these feasts, such as the fires of *Sada*, appeal to the poetic imagination. The Islamic feasts lack this component, and thus *qasidas* composed on the occasion of an Islamic feast are not always as readily recognizable as such, and also because the generic term *'id* can also be used for non-Islamic feasts, such as *Nawruz*. *Qasidas* composed on the occasion of an Islamic feast usually have a prelude on love or on wine: the poets often refer to the month of abstinence and their gladness that this is over and that they can indulge themselves in wine again.

The excerpts of court poetry presented here demonstrate how the art of celebrating as displayed in a number of *qasidas* of Farrukhi, ʿUnsuri, and Manuchihri is connected to the representation of the pre-Islamic past.

Moreover, the examples may serve to indicate that court poetry, reflecting ideals and images of rulership, can serve as a rich source for the study of numerous aspects of court culture in medieval Central Asia and Iran.

NOTES

1. Tetley 2009, 2.
2. Glünz 1996, 189.
3. Meisami 1996, 137.
4. Gurgani [1314] 1935, *Vis-u Ramin*, 20.43.
5. On this problem, see de Blois 2004, 498–502, and de Blois 1995.
6. Sperl and Shackle 1996, 2:36.
7. Compare Ranum 1980.
8. Clinton 1972, 127.
9. Clinton 1972, 130.
10. See Bombaci 1966 and Allegranzi 2017.
11. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 29, vv. 1–29 (951–990), 48–51. These are my own translations, unless otherwise indicated.
12. For an Italian translation of verses 1–20 of this *qasida* in the framework of a discussion on *Sada* in poetry, see Cristoforetti 2002, 221–23.
13. Yusofi 1984.
14. On this kind of possible allusions to political incidents, see Meisami 1990.
15. Another example of a *qasida* on *Sada* in Farrukhi's *Divan* is no. 190, 363–65.
16. Nizami ʻAruzi 1927, *Chahar Maqala*, 41–4; Browne 1921, 58–66.
17. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 8, 175–80.
18. De Bruijn, 1999.
19. Farrukhi[1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 35, 66–74.
20. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 41, 90–93.
21. Bayhaqi [1350] 1971, *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*; Bosworth and Ashtiany, tr., 2011, *The History of Beyhaqi*.
22. Krasnawolska 2009.
23. As quoted by Boyce 1983, 800–801.
24. For this *nasib* by ʿUnsuri, see also Cristoforetti 2002, 290–91.
25. ʿUnsuri [1323] 1944, *Divan*, 8–10.
26. ʿUnsuri [1323] 1944, *Divan*, 122–24.
27. Compare Farrukhi's famous Sumnat *qasida*, in Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 41, 90–93.
28. On the notion of caution toward *Sada* in this specific example, see Cristoforetti 2002, 223–24.

29. Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, no. 12, 1–16 (298–313), 21–22; Jerome Clinton briefly dwells on the repetitive use of *bashad* in this *qasida*, not only as a *radif* but also as a "divider" in the majority of the *misra*'s (Clinton 1972, 95).

30. According to Muhammad Dabir Siyaqi, this *qasida* is dedicated to Abu Harb Bakhtiyar, about whom not much is known. See Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, 244–45.

31. Bosworth and Ashtiany, tr., 2011, *The History of Beyhaqi*, 2:98–99; see Bayhaqi [1350] 1971, *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*, 571–72.

32. On this, see Krasnawolska 2009 and Cristoforetti 1995, 310.

33. Compare the rather vague allusion in ʿUnsuri [1323] 1944, *Divan*, no. 8, verse 13a of the *qasida*: *hami mar mawj-i darya ra bisuzad*.

34. On the possible dates of *Bahmanjana* and its confusion with *Sada*, see Cristoforetti 2002, 190–91.

35. For a brief description, see Safa 1988, "Bahmanjana." Safa refers to verses in Farrukhi, Manuchihri, Mukhtari, and Anvari, as quoted in dictionaries.

36. Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, no. 36, 86–88.

37. According to Dabir Siyaqi, in Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, 254.

38. Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, no. 36, vv 1–2 (1192–93), 86.

39. Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, no. 31, 66–69, attributed by Dabir Siyaqi to Manuchihr bin Qabus, but see the discussion on the patron in Clinton 1972, 24.

40. As referred to in Safa 1988.

41. Mukhtari [1341] 1962, *Divan*, 509–10.

42. Boyce 1983, 801–2.

43. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 73, vv. 1–6 (3048–53); see also Cristoforetti 2002, 165–66.

44. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 96, v. 1 (3891).

45. Bosworth and Ashtiany, tr., 2011, *The History of Beyhaqi*, 2:235–36; see Bayhaqi [1350] 1971, *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*, 734–35.

46. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 204, 1–4 (7860–63).

47. On this, compare Peacock 2018 and Mottahedeh 2015.

48. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 114, verse 1 (4502).

49. Manuchihri [1347] 1969, *Divan*, no. 37, vv. 1–9 (1212–20).

50. Farrukhi [1349] 1970, *Divan*, no. 8, vv. 1–11 (297–307).

51. Bosworth and Ashtiany, tr., 2011, *The History of Beyhaqi*, 2011, 1:382; see Bayhaqi [1350] 1971, *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*, 359–60.

REFERENCES

Allegranzi, Viola. 2017. "Les inscriptions persanes de Ghazni, Afghanistan: Nouvelles sources pour l'étude de l'histoire culturelle et de la tradition épigraphique

ghaznavides (Ve–VIe/XIe–XIIe siècles).” PhD diss., Université Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle.

Bayhaqi, Abu’l-Fazl. (1350) 1971. *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*. Edited by ʿAli Akbar Fayyaz. Mashhad: University of Mashhad.

———. 2011. *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi*. English translation: *The History of Beyhaqi (The History of Sultan Mas'ud of Ghazna, 1020–1041)* by Abu’l-Faẓl Beyhaqi. Translated with a historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural commentary and notes by C. E. Bosworth. Fully revised and with further commentary by Mohsen Ashtiany. Boston and Washington, DC: Ilex Foundation and Center for Hellenic Studies, Trustees for Harvard University.

Blois, François de. 1995. “Dīvān, iii, Collected Works of a Poet.” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. VII, Fasc. 4, 432–38.

———. 2004. “Textual Problems of Early Persian Dīwāns.” Included as appendix IV in François de Blois, *Persian Literature: A Bio-bibliographical Survey*, Vol. 5, *Poetry of the Pre-Mongol Period*, 498–502. London: The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

Bombaci, Alessio. 1966. *The Kūfic Inscription in Persian Verses in the Court of the Royal Palace of Mas'ūd iii in Ghazni*. Rome: Instituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente.

Boyce, Mary. 1983. “Iranian Festivals.” In *Cambridge History of Iran* III, 2, edited by Ehsan Yarshater, 792–815. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clinton, Jerome. 1972. *The Divan of Manūchihrī Dāmghānī*. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica.

Cristoforetti, Simone. 1995. “Sul *sade* di Biruni e di ʿOnsori.” *Annali di Ca’ Foscari* 34, no. 3: 309–17.

———. 2002. *Il natale della luce: Il Sada tra Baghdad e Bukhara tra il IX e il XII secolo*. Milan: Mimesis.

de Bruijn, J. T. P. 1999 “Farroḵī Sīstānī.” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Online Edition.

Farrukhi Sistani. (1349) 1970. *Divan*. Edited by Muhammad Dabir Siyaqi. Tehran: Zavar.

Glünz, Michael. 1996. “Poetic Tradition and Social Change: The Persian *qasida* in Post-Mongol Iran.” In *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa*, Vol.1, *Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, edited by Stefan Sperl and Christopher Shackle, 183–203. Leiden: Brill.

Gurgani, Fakhr al-Din. (1314) 1935. *Vis-u Ramin*. *Yak dastan-i ‘ashiqana-yi Iran-i bastan*. Edited by Mujtaba Minuvi. Tehran.

Krasnawolska, Anna. 2009. “Sada.” *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. Online Edition.

Manuchihri Damghani. (1347) 1969. *Divan*. Edited by Muhammad Dabir Siyaqi. Tehran: Zavar.

Meisami, Julie Scott. 1990. “Ghaznavid Panegyrics: Some Political Implications.” *Iran* 28:31–44.

———. 1996. "Poetic Microcosms: The Persian *qasida* to the End of the Twelfth Century." In *Qasida Poetry in Islamic Asia and Africa*, Vol.1, *Classical Traditions and Modern Meanings*, edited by Stefan Sperl and Christopher Shackle, 137–82. Leiden: Brill.

Mottahedeh, Roy P. 2015. "Finding Iran in the Panegyrics of the Ghaznavid Court." In *Medieval Central Asia and the Persianate World: Iranian Tradition and Islamic Civilisation*, edited by A. C. S. Peacock and D. G. Tor, 129–42. London: I.B. Tauris.

Mukhtari, ʿUthman. (1341) 1962. *Divan*. Edited by J. Homa'i. Tehran: Bungah-i Tarjuma va Nashr-i Kitab.

Nizami ʿAruzi Samarqandi. 1927. *Chahar Maqala*. Edited by M. Qazvini. Berlin: Iranshahr.

———. (1921) 1978. *Chahar Maqala*. English translation: *Chahár Maqála (The Four Discourses) of Nidhámi-i-ʿArúdí-i-Samarqandí*, translated by E. G. Browne. London: EJW Gibb Memorial Trust.

Peacock, Andrew C. S. 2018. "Firdawsi's *Shahnama* in Its Ghaznavid Context." *Iran* 56, no. 1: 2–12.

Ranum, Orest. 1980. *Artisans of Glory: Writers and Historical Thought in Seventeenth-century France*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Safa, Z. 1988. "Bahmanjana." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. III, Fasc. 5, 499.

Sperl, Stefan, and Christopher Shackle. 1996. *Qasida in Islamic Asia and Africa*. Vol. 2, *Eulogy's Bounty, Meaning's Abundance, An Anthology*. Leiden: Brill.

Tetley, G. E. 2009. *The Ghaznavid and Seljuk Turks: Poetry as a Source for Iranian History*. London: Routledge.

ʿUnsuri Balkhi. (1323) 1944. *Divan*. Edited by Yahya Qarib. Tehran: Ibn Sina.

Yusofi, Gh. H. 1984. "Aḥmad Maymandī." *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Vol. I, Fasc. 6, 650–52.