

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments 9

PART ONE

Chapter One The Eloquent Mute

Structure of the book 11

Previous Studies on Riddles 14

Chapter Two Inimitable Simplicity

The development of riddle poetry 20

The riddle as defined in Persian rhetorical manuals 23

The appearance of early literary riddles 29

From description to riddling 32

Riddles and metaphors 64

PART TWO

Chapter Three “Words Covered in Veils”

Riddles in romances 71

Riddles in Firdowsī’s *Shāh-nāma* 76

Chapter Four
“A Nightingale without feathers”
Riddlers of the Late Ghaznavid and Early Seljuq Periods

Introduction	85
Mas‘ūd Sa‘d Salmān	86
Riddles on fire	90
Musical instruments	101
Amīr Mu‘izzī	113
Sanā‘ī of Ghazna	133

Chapter Five
The Virtues of the King:
Riddles in Mukhtārī’s Hunar-nāma

‘Uthmān Mukhtārī Ghaznavī	145
The Book of Excellence (<i>Hunar-Nāma</i>)	146
Riddles in the <i>Hunar-nāma</i>	158
The Pen, as a symbol of administrative power	177
Symbols of military power	182
Conclusion	200
References	203
Index	215