

INTRODUCTION

The six or seven stars clustered in the constellation Taurus, brightly visible to the naked eye in the winter sky of the northern hemisphere and in the summer sky of the southern hemisphere, were known in Greek mythology as the Pleiades, the seven sisters born to Atlas and Pleione. In the Islamicate tradition, the Pleiades are sometimes seen as a cluster of grapes, sometimes as pearls or jewels (Imru al-Qays in his *Mu'allaqa* already likens them to a jewel-encrusted sash). The stars of the Pleiades may often appear linked as if by a halo or milky thread and are consequently likened to precious pearls on a string. “Parvin” and “Sorayyâ,” the Persian and Arabic-derived names for the Pleiades (both of which are now used as feminine proper names) are thus thought of as a necklace (*'eqd*) which the heavens may bestow upon a poet in gratitude and reward for composing a beautiful poem. The heavenly gift mirrors the poem itself, which consists of carefully chosen words, bored like unique pearls and threaded in perfect metrical proportion. As Ḥâfeẓ put it:

You've sung a ghazal, pierced the pearls, come and sing it sweetly, Hafez!
The heavens strew the very Necklace of the Pleiades upon your verse.

Heshmat Moayyad (Heshmatollâh Mo'ayyad-e Sanandaji) was born in Hamadan, Iran and traveled widely through the towns and villages of that country in his youth. He earned his B.A. in Persian and Arabic literature from the University of Tehran in 1949 and left for Germany in 1951 to continue his studies in Persian literature, Islamic Studies and German at the University of Frankfurt am Main, where he studied under Hellmut Ritter, completing his Ph.D. in 1958. He began his teaching career in Frankfurt as a Lecturer, and in 1960 moved to the Istituto Universitario Orientale in Naples, Italy, first as a Lecturer, and then as Professore Incaricato, from 1964-65. Heshmat Moayyad first came to the United States as a visiting lecturer at Harvard University in 1962-63, at a time when Persian literature was not yet offered in many universities in this country. In 1966, with his wife Ruth, and daughters Leyli and Shirin, he came as Assistant Professor to the University of Chicago, where he established what would become a vibrant Persian Studies program, and where he has held the position of Professor of Persian Language and Literature in the Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations since 1974.

Heshmat Moayyad's scholarly contributions to the literature, religions and history of Iran include ten books and in excess of one hundred articles and reviews, written in four languages (see the bibliography of his works, below). In addition, he has been an active and influential translator of modern Persian literature to English and German. Professor Moayyad has served on the advisory board of the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, the

quarterly *Chanteh*, *Iranshenasi*, *The Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, and the Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project. He was the book review editor of *Irannameh* from 1983 to 1988, and of *Iranshenasi* from 1988 to the present day. He has been a visiting professor at UCLA (1966) and at the Harvard Summer School (1971-72), as well as at the University of Damascus (1993 – the experience of which he encapsulated in an engaging article, “Safar-nâma-ye shâm”). He has also traveled from Chicago to Iran, Afghanistan and South Asia to lecture and conduct research. In 1988 he visited the rich manuscript collections of the Raza Library (Rampur), Khuda Bakhsh Library (Patna), Abul Kalam Azad Library (Aligarh) in India, and lectured at the Aligarh Muslim University.

Even as he trained students to read classical texts, Professor Moayyad constantly emphasized the importance of modern Persian literature and offered courses on the subject, a fact that is reflected in the range of papers in this volume. At Chicago he was the founder and host of the “Persian Poetry Evenings” (*shab-e she'r*) from 1983 to 1989. He was also one of the founders of the Association of the Friends of Persian Culture, which holds yearly conferences in Persian in the Chicago area, dedicated to promoting knowledge of the arts, culture and religions of Iran. At the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, he organized the weekly Persian Circle (*anjoman-e sokhan*) which for several decades has provided an important forum for readings and lectures by innumerable poets and writers from Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, as well as the Persian-speaking scholars, who have visited Chicago. In addition, the Persian Circle created an invaluable forum for students of Persian as a foreign language to hear and practice the different spoken registers and varieties of the language. In 1988, Professor Moayyad organized a major conference on the classical Indo-Persian poet Amir Khosrow (d. 1325), which was attended by scholars from all over the world. In 1989, he organized a three-day conference on Parvin E'tešâmi, the proceedings of which were published in 1994 as *Once a Dewdrop: Essays on the Poetry of Parvin E'tesami*.

Over the course of more than four decades of active teaching, Heshmat Moayyad has trained several generations of students and contributed to the work of many colleagues. The two dozen articles and essays offered here were written by a wide range of internationally respected scholars in the field of Persian literature, Iranian history and Iranian religions, representing colleagues, friends and students who have benefited from Prof. Moayyad's expertise, whether in Frankfurt, Naples, Harvard, Chicago or elsewhere. They are presented to Professor Heshmat Moayyad of the University of Chicago on the occasion of his 80th birthday, in gratitude and recognition for his long and fruitful career as scholar and teacher in the field of Persian and Iranian Studies. We look forward to many more years of his companionship and scholarship!

The topics of the papers range from heretical movements within Sasanian Zoroastrianism and how they may have impacted the *Shâh-nâma* to the imagery, poetics and literary intertextuality of medieval Persian qasidas, ghazals and romances; from the

methodology of editing Persian medieval manuscripts to the politics and sexuality reflected in modern texts; from authors central to the Iranian epic tradition, such as Ferdowsi, to the Indo-Persian poets of the Mughal and the modern era; from a Persian Ismaili writer of the 12th century to a modern Baha'i novelist in Iran. We hope that these papers (three of them in Persian, and the remainder in English) will provide points of interest not only for Persianists, but also those interested more broadly in the literatures of the Middle East and South Asia, and of medieval Europe. As the articles for this festschrift have been collected at different times from scholars working on different periods and subjects, each author was given discretion to choose the transliteration system best suited to their topic. The editors felt it unnecessary to impose a uniform system of transliteration on the articles, as Persianists should encounter no problem reconstructing the original language, and specialists will not need to do so.

The papers are grouped broadly into six sections. The two papers in section one deal with the subject of Persian recitations of the Alexander Romance: J. Christoph Bürgel's "On Some Sources of Nizāmī's *Iskandarnāma*" argues that Nezāmī's adaptation of stories was typically complex, drawing upon multiple sources which he altered to suit his own political circumstances and aesthetic objectives. In the case of the *Eskandar-nāma*, these probably include a variety of Arabic sources, some of them rather obscure, including the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā and geographical literature, etc. Angelo Michele Piemontese's "Sources and Art of Amir Khosrou's 'The Alexandrine Mirror'" provides a detailed précis and analysis of the structure and plot of a complicated poetic work that was inspired by Nezāmī's masterpiece, but has heretofore received scant scholarly attention, despite Amir Xosrow's significance.

Section two, on the Epic Cycle, includes five papers. Rostam is the pre-eminent legendary hero of pre-Islamic Iran, and for this reason there is often a tacit assumption that he is somehow a Zoroastrian hero, or at least an embodiment of pre-Islamic Iranian-Zoroastrian values. As Dick Davis shows in his "Rostam and Zoroastrianism," however, there are a number of indications in the *Shāh-nāma* and in other texts close in time to it, that at least parts of the Rostam legend refer to a committed opponent of Zoroastrianism. Amin Banani's "Reflections on Re-reading the Iliad and the Shahnameh" offers a reconsideration of some of the salient structural affinities, as well as the general points of similarity in cultural ethos, of the great epic of Ferdowsi and Homer (occasioned in part by the new translations of Davis and Fitzgerald). He argues for a (re-)inclusion of the *Shāh-nāma* in the western curriculum insofar as a comparative approach to these two poems would add a different and deeper dimension to the contemporary discourse on "orientalism" and the "clash of civilizations." Kinga Ilona Markus-Takeshita's "Shīrīn and Other Female Archetypes in Firdausī's *Shāhnāmah*" examines chronological and stylistic questions in the mytho-history of the late-Kayanian era, as recorded in the Iranian Book of Kings, and versified by Ferdowsi in the post-Islamic period in the *Shāh-*

nāma. Archetypal heroines of the various epic cycles are compared with parallel data from other early medieval works in prose and poetry, including various traditions preserved by court poets (such as Neẓāmī) and in semi-hagiographical accounts of various neighboring civilizations. Mahmoud Omidasalar's "Editing the *Shāhnāma*: The Interface Between Literary and Textual Criticism" sketches the process of producing and transmitting literary works of art in the classical Persian tradition and illustrates the crucial need for textual scholarship as a preliminary to detailed literary analysis. He argues for an eclectic method of textual editing, noting that while many of the significant rules of textual criticism developed for European classics are also relevant in editing classical Persian texts, some are inapplicable and others must be somewhat modified. Jalal Matini's Persian article "Kuš-e pilguš: pahlavāni degarsân" (Kush the Elephant-eared: a different kind of hero) closes the section with a study of the role and attributes of the champion Kush in the popular verse epic *Kush-nāma*.

In section three, Religious Texts and Contexts, three papers examine various texts of literary and religious import. In "The Creative Compiler: The Art of Rewriting in 'Aṭṭār's *Taḡkirat al-awlīyā*,'" Paul Losensky applies Lefevre's concept of "re-writing" to provide a nuanced analysis of 'Aṭṭār's translation and arrangement of the Persian and Arabic sources he drew upon for his prose collection of the vitae of the Sufīs. Wilferd Madelung sketches the life and offers an analysis of two works by a lesser-known Ismaili missionary active in Fars, Kermān and Yemen during the 11th century CE in his "Shahriyār b. al-Ḥasan: A Persian Ismā'īlī *dā'ī* of the Fatimid Age." A translation of one of the qasidas of Qā'ānī and a discussion of the possibility that it is addressed to Sayyid 'Alī Muhammad Bāb, provides an opportunity to examine Qā'ānī's attitude toward his patrons and their politics in Alyssa Gabbay's "'In Praise of One of the Deeply Learned 'Ulamā': A Mysterious Poem by Qājār Court Poet Mīrzā Ḥabīb Allāh Shīrāzī Qā'ānī."

In "The Poetic Text and Central Motifs," section four, Iraj Afshar discusses a previously unknown manuscript of the *Divān* of the 13th-century poet Emāmi of Herat in his Persian article, "Nosxa'i kohna az *Divān*-e Emāmi-ye Haravi." Julie S. Meisami examines the questions of ambiguity and intertextuality in a famous ghazal of Ḥāfeẓ which may have been deliberately chosen to begin his *Divān*, and which may give valuable clues about the literariness of Ḥāfeẓ' poetic project. Meisami considers this famous poem through a dual lens in "A Life in Poetry: Hafiz's First Ghazal," juxtaposing a modern perspective with that of Sudi's commentary in a way that elucidates the structure and meaning of this and other ghazals. A. Asghar Seyed-Gohrab's "'My Heart is the Ball, Your Lock the Polo-Stick': Development of the Ball and Polo-stick Metaphors in Classical Persian Poetry" traces the rise and wide-ranging development of a central image in Persian poetry and its metaphorical applications, the ball and the polo-stick, from the tenth to the beginning of the sixteenth centuries.

In section five, “Center and Periphery”, Franklin Lewis’s “Sincerely Flattering Panegyrics: The Shrinking Ghaznavid Qasida” re-examines the question of sincerity and truthfulness in poetry with respect to the panegyric tradition, considering how poets at the Ghaznavid court might have modulated their praise to reflect changing political circumstances; the length of the qasida itself may be one way in which poets regulated the dynamic of encomiastic sincerity. Sunil Sharma’s “Novelty, Tradition and Mughal Politics in Nau’ī’s *Sūz u Gudāz*” introduces a verse romance written by an Iranian émigré poet at the Mughal court in which the poet narrates an “exotic” Indian tale about sati; his analysis recovers the strong political subtext of the poem. Shifting from literary to linguistic concerns, Youli Ioanessyan’s “The Position of the Khorasani Dialects within the Persian-Dari-Tajiki Linguistic Continuum” provides a comparative study of a variety of specific linguistic features in different regional dialects, arguing that the earlier geographical division of the Persian dialects into Western and Eastern, with the Khorasani dialects being classified (along with Afghano-Tajiki) as one of the two major subdivisions of the Eastern group, does not adequately reflect linguistic realities. Rather, the Khorasani dialects should be seen as a distinct group of their own, reflecting features of both the Western (Tehrani) and Eastern (Kabuli) groups.

For the Modern Period, Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti’s “The Political Realm’s Literary Convention: The Examples of ‘Ishqī and Iqbāl” provides a comparative study of two modern Persian poets (one Iranian and the other Indian) whose departures from tradition led to the forging of a new poetics. In her “Re-memembering *Amrads* and *Amradnumās*: Re-inventing the (Sedgwickian) Wheel,” Afsaneh Najmabadi documents the gendered nature of the debate over modernity and the nineteenth century preoccupation with the westernized male dandy (*farangi-ma’āb*) as an emasculated, beardless man, arguing that the discourse of desire was feminized in an effort to replace male homoerotic affectivities, a marker of backwardness. Michael Hillman reviews the critical writing on Ṣādeq Hedāyat in his “The Title of Hedāyat’s *Buf-e Kur* [(The) Blind Owl],” and explores the etymological and cultural significance of the two elements of the title of Hedāyat’s most famous work, as part of an evaluation of the European translation and understanding of the novel. Claus Pedersen’s “Sadeq Hedāyat, a Writer Ahead of Time” examines the strong elements of modernity in Hedāyat’s work, particularly the science fiction story, “Serum Gegen Liebes-Leidenschaft” from the collection, *Sāyeh-rowshan* (Chiaroscuro), and the ultimate synthesis of Iranian/American and male/female perspectives it offers. Mohammad Zarrin’s short story “A Fenceless Garden,” in Sholeh Quinn’s English translation, tells the story of an Iranian office worker grappling with issues in her marriage, her relationships, and her place in life. Her idealized image of one of her co-workers forces her to reassess some of the assumptions she had made about her own life. Fereydoun Vahman’s Persian article on the short story writer, Fayzi, “Fayzi: nevisanda-ye nā-šenās,” introduces the life and works of a

twentieth century Baha'i short-story writer who deserves to be better known. Paul Sprachman's "Refuting Rushdie in Persian" parses several translations of passages of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, which can only appear in Iran within the polemical context of refutations. Yet not all refutations are quite alike or perform the same cultural function. Michael Bylebyl, in "From *Dawn's Art*," offers a personal narrative recollecting his early encounter with the *Ishrāqī* philosophy of Shehâb al-Din Sohravardi, describing in a creative and sensitive manner the experiences of an American graduate student engaged in dissertation research in Tehran in 1976; it brings the volume to a close with a reminder of a time when American students and faculty could more easily travel to Iran to conduct or conclude their research.

This volume would never have appeared if not for the timely intervention and assistance of a number of individuals. Chief among them are Michael Hillmann, who initiated the idea and the project of this festschrift, and Asghar Seyed-Gohrab, who played a decisive role in the final stages. Without their intervention, the volume would never have been possible. Others have also had a hand, including Siavash Samei, who turned the Persian articles into electronic text. Thanks are also due to Hossein Samei and Foruzan Lewis, and to Mr. Auke van den Berg of Rozenberg Publishers, and Purdue University Press for publication of these papers and shepherding the volume into print.

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