Editor's Introduction: Nāṣir-i Khusraw and Philosophical Poetry

Alice C. Hunsberger

Throughout this earth flows an ocean of meanings sublime:
Precious pearls, as well as Pure Water.[1]

For nearly a thousand years, Nāṣir-i Khusraw (that is, Nāṣir son of Khusraw) has ranked as a leading poet and intellectual in the Persian-speaking world. His verses have appeared in nearly every major anthology of Persian poetry compiled since his death in ca. AH 469/CE 1077, whether these anthologies were written in Iran, Central Asia, India, Czechoslovakia, England or America.[2] A hundred years ago in India, an MA examination on Persian Language and Literature included his works as required texts. His poem of the proud eagle who realises his role in his own destruction has been memorised by decades of Iranian elementary schoolchildren. In addition to his poetry, Nāṣir-i Khusraw's own account in prose of his seven-year journey (*Safar-nāma*) is also studied as a basic text in literature by Persian-speaking schoolchildren today in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan, and wherever else Persian literature is taught. With its language praised as a shining example of elegant, early Persian prose, the *Safar-nāma*'s contents – that is, Nāṣir's descriptions of cities and towns and of the geography and social conditions of Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Iraq and Iran in the fifth/eleventh century, in addition to eastern countries – have been scoured for their informative detail (such as how many steps he counted when mounting to the Dome of the Rock) by European scholars since the 1800s. His philosophical prose works are acknowledged as treasuries of esoteric precepts.

In Western histories of Persian literature (including the *Cambridge History of Iran*), Nāṣir is frequently the only writer to receive an entire chapter to himself, while others are discussed as part of a group or as schools. When debate turns to the 'language of Islamic philosophy', after naming Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), who wrote only one work in Persian, Nāṣir-i Khusraw is always the first to be mentioned in

contradiction of the claim that all Islamic philosophy has been written in Arabic. His importance for the development of Persian as an intellectual language is hard to overestimate. Since the 1880s, leading scholars have recognised his significance and frequently collaborated to edit, analyse and translate his works. Not only as a poet has Nāṣir-i Khusraw been studied and revered, but also as a writer of philosophy.

But beyond these wide-ranging indications of lofty literary stature, other signs reveal a deeper, more personally felt, attachment to Nāṣir-i Khusraw's words. Most educated Persian-speakers of a certain age know entire passages of his poems by heart and will recite them readily, with no more encouragement than the mention of his name. In Kabul in recent years, a cultural centre was named after Nāṣir-i Khusraw; in Tehran there has long been an avenue in his name; and in Tajikistan his name and memory are central to a series of sacred funeral rites and ceremonies, a profound testament to the deep resonance of his religious thought. Citations of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetry in *Amthāl wa ḥikam*, the Iranian scholar Dihkhudā's early twentieth-century compendium of memorable maxims and sayings in the Persian language, far outnumber those of more popular poets, including Ḥāfiẓ, Niẓāmī and ʿAṭṭār. Legends about Nāṣir-i Khusraw's piety, poetry and supernatural powers still enjoy active currency, with some people hailing him as a saint and others puzzling over the aesthetic, emotional or spiritual value of a poetry which extols the virtue of the intellect (*ʿaql*) rather than love (*ʿishq*).

Who was Nāṣir-i Khusraw?

Abū Muʿīn Ḥamīd al-Dīn Nāṣir ibn Khusraw ibn Ḥārith-i Qubādiyānī Marwazī was born in the town of Qubādiyān, then located in the district of Marw (Merv) in the province of Khurāsān, in AH 394 (CE 1004), as he mentions in one of his poems.[3] From a notable family, of which several individuals worked in the Saljūq court administration, Nāṣir was 32 years old in 428/1036 when the Saljūq sultan, Chaghrī Beg, wrested Marw from Ghaznawid control. As a highly placed treasury official for Chaghrī Beg in 437/1045–1046 (a year that he mentions specifically), we can be sure that he had already had experience working in at least one of the courts of the Ghaznawid empire, though probably not in Ghazna itself. The conquest and rule of Persian-speaking and Persian-cultural lands by a series of dynasties of Turkic military men was a bitter source of complaint in Nāṣir's verses, as were the worldly life at court and hypocritical clergy. His poetry is filled with calls for less hypocrisy and more spiritual grounding. His personal search for spiritual clarity led him to accept the teachings of the most vibrant form of Shiʿi Islam in his time, now known in the West as Ismailism, and also to set off on 6 Jumada 437/19 December 1045 on his journey to Cairo, the political, spiritual and intellectual seat of the Ismailis, and the capital of the Fatimid imam-caliphs.[4]

While in his *Safar-nāma* he described events of his seven-year journey, the details of his later years are less clear. What we have been able to piece together is that he returned home to Khurāsān to lead the efforts to propagate the Ismaili faith throughout the eastern Persian-speaking provinces. In the Ismaili mission (*daʿwa*), he was given the title '*ḥujjat* (proof) of the region of Khurāsān', Khurāsān being a vast expanse of the easternmost Persian-speaking lands, stretching far into Central Asia and Afghanistan. Nāṣir also took the title *ḥujjat* as his poetic pen-name and utilised it in most of his *qaṣīda*s. His efforts to attract followers to Ismailism were so successful that his life was in danger from the anti-Ismaili authorities and Sunni persecution. He fled further east and lived out his last years in exile in the midst of the Pamir Mountains under the protection of a sympathetic prince who adhered to Ismailism, Abu'l-Maʿālī ʿAlī b. al-Asad. From his home in the remote village of Yumgān, he spent his time attracting more followers and writing poetry and philosophy, 'sending out a book a year'.[5] His mausoleum in Yumgān can still be seen in Afghanistan today.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw's works – philosophy and poetry

Nāṣir-i Khusraw is the greatest philosophical poet in the Persian language partly because he had complete command of philosophy itself. In addition to his poetry, Nāṣir also wrote highly acclaimed prose works on philosophy. Many have been lost, including a book on mathematics which, he says elsewhere, he produced although he could not find a single scholar in Khurāsān, or all the eastern lands, who could solve the problems it contained. He wrote it instead, 'for those yet to come, in a time yet to come'.[6]

The seven philosophical texts which have been edited and published so far (others remain in manuscript) are evidence of a highly rational mind, rooted and trained in Greek philosophy, particularly the Neoplatonic forms that were taught in Arabic in his day. As varied in structure and format as they are in content, each of these seven published works illuminates Ismaili philosophy through Nāṣir-i Khusraw's unique combination of systematic didactic style, imaginative imagery and a personal sense of imperative. *Gushāyish wa rahāyish* (*Breaking the Bonds and Setting Free*), which has been translated into English as *Knowledge and Liberation* (London, 1998) by one of this volume's contributors, Faquir M. Hunzai, poses and answers thirty key theological questions, mostly concerning the salvation of the human soul, in a brief and accessible way. Another one, *Jāmiʿ al-ḥikmatayn* (*Uniting the Two Wisdoms*), one of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's most important works, is his prose response to an Ismaili philosophical poem written by Abu'l-Haytham al-Jurjānī a few decades earlier.[7] As the title suggests, Nāṣir aimed to show that the 'two wisdoms', specifically Greek philosophy and Islam, are in essence the same and lead to Truth. Responding to the poem allows him to address a wide variety of

topics, ranging from Aristotle's Four Causes to the existence of the divine Creator, the relationship between the body, the soul and the intellect, and the influence of heavenly bodies on human beings and souls.

A short prose work entitled *Risāla* (*A Treatise*), published as part of the Taqawī edition of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Dīwān* (*Collected Poetry*) is a summary form of *Jāmiʿ al-ḥikmatayn,* answering ninety-one points raised in the *qaṣīda. Khwān al-ikhwān* (*The Feast of the Brethren*) is comprised of 100 chapters on subjects such as the difference between spirit (*ruḥ*) and soul (*nafs*), how the incorporeal soul will be punished, the different ranks of intellect and Soul, the essence (*jān*) of the rational soul (*nafs-i natīqa*), the necessity of carrying out the precepts and recommendations of religious law, and how the one command of creation (Ar., *kun!,* Be!) resulted in the 'many' of the world. It is a slim volume, compared with Nāṣir's other works, and was perhaps designed for teaching purposes, given its succinct focus on the creation of the world and how the plan for human salvation was built into that act and the ongoing unfolding of creation. *Shish faṣl* (*Six Chapters*) is also known as the prose *Rawshanāʾī-nāma* (*The Book of Illumination*) but should not be confused with a *mathnawī* poem named *Rawshanāʾī-nāma*, which has also been traditionally ascribed to Nāṣir-i Khusraw. Several authors in this volume weigh up this question of authenticity. However, the authenticity of the prose work *Shish faṣl* has not been questioned. In *Wajh-i dīn* (*The Inner Significance of Religion*), Nāṣir-i Khusraw explains the esoteric meanings underlying the exoteric aspects of religion, such as the inner meaning of verses of the Qur'an, rituals and laws. *Zād al-musāfirīn* (*The Wayfarers' Provisions*) lays out the purpose of, and the path and provisions necessary for, the soul's journey through this physical world to illumination and contentment in the spiritual world.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetic works consist primarily of odes (*qaṣīda*s), as well as very few quatrains, couplets and fragments. Two modest-length *mathnawī*s of didactic verse, the verse *Rawshanāʾī-nāma*, just referred to above, and the *Saʿādat-nāma* (*Book of Eudaimonia-Fulfilled Happiness*) have traditionally been ascribed to Nāṣir-i Khusraw, but these ascriptions have been subject to scholarly debate, a debate which continues in this volume. When we look at the content and style more carefully, the claim of those who reject the authenticity of these two *mathnawī*s appears justified. The collected poems, the *Dīwān*, of Nāṣir-i Khusraw have been critically edited twice in the twentieth century, a rather remarkable achievement. The first critical edition of the *Dīwān*, published during 1925–1928, was in fact laboriously achieved through the labours of three of Iran's most distinguished literary scholars of recent times. Edited by Naṣr Allāh Taqawī (1871–1947) from a collation of a number of manuscripts and lithograph editions, the *Dīwān* was given a masterful introduction by Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda (1878–1970), while he was in exile in Berlin for his outspoken opposition to the then newly named shah, Reza Shah Pahlavi, in which he carefully considered centuries

of evidence and assertions for details of the poet's life and works; a second introduction was written by Mujtabā Mīnuwī (1903–1977))in 1307 Sh./1928, describing the texts consulted. Then, at Taqīzāda's request, ʿAlī Akbar Dihkhudā (1897–1956), the peerless scholar who has given his name to the greatest dictionary of the Persian language, went through each line of the *Dīwān*, *Saʿadat-nāma*, *Rawshanāʾī-nāma* and *Risāla* very carefully and made detailed notes of his recommended readings of lines, including comparisons of the usage of terms by other Persian poets and writers, notes which are appended at the back of the *Dīwān*. Dihkhudā's exacting attention to each word is shown by the large number of Nāṣir-i Khusraw citations in Dihkhudā's later publications, *Amthāl wa ḥikam* and the part of his dictionary (*Lughat-nāma*) that he wrote himself. The Taqawī edition was copy-edited and re-released under the direction of Mahdī Suhaylī in Tehran in 1335 Sh./1956. Even though both the *Saʿādat-nāma* and *Rawshanāʾī-nāma mathnawī*s were published with the *Dīwān*, Mīnuwī argued against the latter's authenticity in his introduction and in a later article.[8] This edition of the *Dīwān* is arranged in classic style, in alphabetical order by the rhyme.

The second critical edition of the *Dīwān* was undertaken by Mujtabā Mīnuwī and Mahdī Muḥaqqiq and published by the University of Tehran in 1974; the 'correct (revised)' edition was published in 1978 as part of the Wisdom of Persia Series published by The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Tehran Branch. Mīnuwī's lifelong dedication to Nāṣir-i Khusraw and his connection with both editions has provided a crucial continuity for Nāṣir-i Khusraw scholarship. The Mīnuwī–Muḥaqqiq edition looks completely different from the Taqawī edition because of its non-alphabetical, numerical arrangement. In the course of a conversation with Professor Muḥaqqiq in 2008, I learned that this unusual format reflects the main manuscript on which the edition was based, one of the manuscripts utilised by Hermann Ethé in 1882 for his edition and German translation of the Qaṣīda I examine and translate into English in this volume (see notes on pp. 181–182). The Mīnuwī–Muḥaqqiq edition does not include the verse *Rawshanāʾī-nāma* or the *Saʿadat-nāma*, both of which Mīnuwī had already argued to be spurious. The critical apparatus in the second edition provides variant readings of lines and terms, as well as indices of places, personal names and titles, schools and communities, and titles of works that Nāṣir-i Khusraw referred to or made use of in his poems. These lists are extremely helpful for studying the poet's approach to, for example, other poets (Rūdakī has one mention; Kisāʾī, ten).

Leaving aside the two questionable *mathnawī*s, *Rawshanāʾī-nāma* and *Saʿadat-nāma*, Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Dīwān* (the Mīnuwī–Muḥaqqiq edition) today is filled with over 230 *qaṣīda*s and forty or sixty shorter poems and riddles, making up a total of nearly 11,000 lines (sing. *bayt*) of two hemistiches (sing. *miṣraʿ*) each.

Nāṣir-i Khusraw and the *qaṣīda* genre

The *qaṣīda,* Nāṣir-i Khusraw's favourite poetic format, is one of the classic forms of poetry. Originating in pre-Islamic Arabia, it was adopted and modified, with most of its rules intact, for Persian poetry. Each line (*bayt*) consists of two hemistiches or halves (*miṣrāʿ*), equally balanced in rhythm. Most characteristic of *qaṣīda*s is the final monorhyme of the second hemistitch of *all* the *bayt*s (meaning the entire poem has the same rhyme at the end of each line), while the first line of each poem is announced by the rhyming of both its hemistiches. *Qaṣīda*s can vary in length, from around ten *bayt*s to several hundred. Nāṣir-i Khusraw keeps his to around forty to fifty *bayt*s, although the longest is 131 *bayt*s. Perhaps the rigour of needing to find a different rhyme word for each *bayt* serves to delimit the ultimate length of any particular *qaṣīda*. In contrast, for example, the *mathnawī* form rhymes both *miṣrāʿ*s within one *bayt*, but allows each *bayt* to have a different rhyme, thus making epic length poems possible, extending to thousands of verses.

The double-hemistich structure opens the way for a complex relationship between the two parts – that is, a conversation which can include, question and answer, contrast or opposition, repetition or synonymity, conditional clauses, or providing examples of the main idea. The choice of rhythm is also a critical component of a poem, particularly since Muslim critics understood that the purpose of the poem was to affect the individual soul. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) wrote, 'the melodious intonation and the singing proper to every theme are the basis of moving the soul towards the meaning', and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) concurred: 'The function of tone in poetry is that it prepares the soul to accept the image (*khayāl*) of the thing being represented.'[9]

Additional rules of format and style adhere to the *qaṣīda*, such as having a series of thematic sections, which listeners would attentively critique, attending first to the surprising beauty and conception of the opening line, then the unfolding pace of themes, the unveiling of various meanings of particular vocabulary, and abrupt or subtle transitions between stages.

Persian poets did not retain all the themes from the Arabic tradition (such as opening the *qaṣīda* with a meditation on the traces of a recently abandoned Bedouin camp in order to reflect on the impermanence of this world), but did keep many others, such as the custom of the poet praising himself and his own tribe (*fakhr*, 'the vaunt'), while hurling invective at his enemy (*hijāʾ*), both in the most superlative manner. Since poets in the Islamic era found work primarily in royal courts, and were compensated by the king or ruler, or anyone else whose virtues they sang, many *qaṣīda*s were either entirely or partly panegyric, praising the ruler for humanity's highest virtues, such as justice, generosity, or wisdom. But praise also cloaked advice and admonition. In addition, poems were appreciated for concisely and elegantly stating universal truths revealed by the main actions

in the poem, or in the adages and gnomic verses that the poet inserted as illustration. This type of didacticism is evident in all the various genres, ranging from historical or heroic narratives, to quests for the beloved, or mystical reflections. It is hard to imagine any good poem that can be dismissed as simple 'entertainment' or 'panegyric'.

The *qaṣīda*s of Nāṣir-i Khusraw show how deeply steeped in this tradition he was. His dramatic openings, which are frequently committed to memory, still carry their original punch (*Nikūhish makun charkh-i nīlūfarī rā*, 'Blame not the azure wheel of heaven'; and *Āzurda kard kazhdum-i ghurbat jigar ma rā/gū'i zabūn nayāft zi gītī magar ma rā*, 'The scorpion of exile has stung my heart so, You would think I was the only wretch in the world it could find').[10] He excoriates his enemies, mostly for ignorance and hypocrisy, and praises those he reveres for their fairness, knowledge and wisdom. The only rulers our poet will praise are the Fatimid Ismaili Caliph-Imam of the time, Musṭansir bi'llāh, and Nāṣir's local patron and protector, the Amir of Badakhshān, and he rebukes other poets for wasting their talents on worldly, unworthy lords.

Philosophical poetry and Nāṣir-i Khusraw

The main purpose of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetry, he tells us, is to open the reader or listener's inner eye to universal truths and thereby save their souls from the Hell of ignorance. He is the most important Persian poet to put specifically religious and philosophical ideas into poetry, and not simply universal adages and moral truths.

For his topics, Nāṣir selects from many fields. In some of the Persian language's most beautiful lines, he describes the glories of evening or spring, but always to draw a lesson, either of the world's mutability or of God's power and knowledge. He warns against the seductions of fame, power and wealth, and urges exertion instead towards spiritual strength and riches. But going beyond moral admonition, Nāṣir turns again and again to philosophy to shape and anchor his arguments. He both brings in Qur'anic verses and *ḥadīth*s (accounts of the Prophet Muḥammad's sayings and actions) as evidence or proof, and also expounds Neoplatonic metaphysics. And his argumentative method is also philosophical. Indeed, his penname, *ḥujjat*, although usually translated as 'proof', meaning philosophical or mathematical proof, also means 'argument' in the field of logic. Nāṣir equally draws upon Persian history and literature, liberally referring to famous heroes, texts, poets, cities and kings, as well as pointing accusingly to his contemporaries at court and in the pulpit. His lexicon is refined, erudite and scientific; he does not shy away from technical words, in fact, he revels in brandishing them as proof of his credentials and reliability. But more than a technical virtuoso, Nāṣir-i Khusraw's creative powers in language are evident in his rank through the centuries as one of

the leading poets in the Persian language. This was never held in question until the twentieth century.

In 1940, the Egyptian scholar Yahya El-Khachab, writing in French, produced the first full-length biography on Nāṣir-i Khusraw in any language. But after 270 pages on Nāṣir's life, travels and philosophy, he allots only twenty pages to analyse the poet's poetry. Perhaps this is enough, because he opens his first sentence with the judgement that Nāṣir 'is not a pure poet', explaining that, 'the subjects he includes are too political to give rise to flights of the imagination, and therefore there are no lyrical themes worth remembering'. When El-Khachab puts Nāṣir into a respectable genre, that too falls short: 'While Nāṣir is a panegyric poet, it is simply to produce propaganda for the Fatimids',[11] and we have to wonder if the entire enterprise of court poetry is no longer to be considered poetry. What would we do with Rūdakī's famous and beloved *būy-i jūy-i Mūlīyān āyad hamī* poem, whose sole 'purpose' was to praise the king in such a way that he would simply take the army home? It is not clear whether El-Kachab's prejudice is against kings and politics, or faith and creed, or poetry that has purposes other than what he calls 'lyrical'. But he has raised the question of the 'subjects' (contents) and the 'purposes' of poetry, and has classified some as poetic and others not. More recently, Sayyid Jaʿfar Shahīdī mirrored this criticism of the poetry's purpose, saying Nāṣir's poetry is 'a means, not an end', and therefore does not really rank as poetry.[12]

Shiblī Nuʿmānī, another twentieth-century scholar of Persian literature, who wrote a history of poets and literature of Iran in Urdu, included a chapter on 'Philosophical Poetry' (*Shāʿirī-yi fīlsūfāna*) in which he suggested that such a genre might be not only dry and analytical (*khushk wa qābil-i diqqat-i naẓār*) but in fact merely 'verse' – not 'poetry' at all (*naẓm na shiʿr*).[13] After asserting that philosophy entered Persian poetry by way of Sufism, specifically naming Rūmī, Saʿdī and Sanā'ī (all poets later than Nāṣir-i Khusraw), he states, 'Before everyone else, Nāṣir-i Khusraw inserted philosophical ideas and concepts into poetry.' Despite this promising beginning for a chapter on philosophical poetry, he concludes, 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Dīwān* has been published even though there are many philosophical issues in it. However, we have not quoted any of his poems because the style is not poetical (*uslūb bayān-i shāʿirāna nīst*).'

When the eminent twentieth-century Iranian scholar of Persian literature Badīʿ al-Zamān Furūzānfar declares that, since Nāṣir-i Khusraw 'did not really care about being called a poet, and composed poetry to propagate the faith and to pass on his beliefs to others, his verses became a collection of religious and rational arguments, devoid of poetic fervour and thoughts',[14] we know we have entered a new era, with a different set of criteria for excellence. Furūzānfar argues from both the 'purpose' and the 'content' of the poetry to conclude that Nāṣir's verses lack the essence of poetry. That is, he claims that since the poet's purpose was

'to propagate the faith', his compositions must necessarily become devoid of real poetry. Second, because the poetry's content was a mere 'collection of religious and rational arguments', it was not poetry. Yet, to say that Nāṣir-i Khusraw did not 'care about being called a poet' is either to have not read the lines of his boasts of poetic prowess and praising his own poetic talents (so discomforting to modern-day readers) or to equate Nāṣir's criticisms of court poets selling their art for cash, composing poems that only drip with flattery of the patron and sentimental themes of love and gardens, with Nāṣir's assessment of himself.

It will require another study to examine the variety of critical judgements on Nāṣir-i Khusraw over the past millennium. But we do need to briefly notice that something unusual happened in thinking of the purposes of poetry, and not just Persian poetry, in the past few centuries. For example (and far too briefly), I suggest we consider how the dualism of Descartes in the seventeenth century extended to science and poetry, positing them as such opposites that Descartes was accused by a contemporary of 'cutting the throat of poetry'. The rise, in the eighteenth century, of the prestige of reason and the interpretation of Nature and the universe as a mechanical system led to a distrust of 'enthusiasm', 'wit', and 'inspiration', with Samuel Johnson calling for a poetry focusing on 'abstracted' or 'general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same'.[15] The Romantic reaction against such stifling rationalism was complex, especially in Germany and England, where many intellectuals affirmed the essential identification of poetry and philosophy, as in Shelley's assertion that poets are 'philosophers of the very loftiest power'.[16] Then, perhaps falling under the influence of the nineteenth-century Romantics, a sentiment grew that poetry should be concerned only with emotions or feelings. Wordsworth's famous dictum was that poetry must be 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings' and Keats wrote 'we hate poetry that has a palpable design on us'. In the twentieth century, W. H. Auden's assertion that 'poetry makes nothing happen' and Archibald MacLeish's, 'A poem should not mean but be', challenged longstanding assumptions on the affective properties of poetry and even rendered no longer legitimate the reader's question 'What does it mean?' Yet these exercises turn on themselves, contradicting their own call to drop didacticism. This rapid survey is meant to indicate not only that literature develops and changes with the passage of time, but to show that recent centuries have seen major upheavals in the expectations of poetry, and that we need to recognise our place in the timeline. Concomitantly, in order to fully understand and fairly judge a poem, we must employ the rules of the time in which it is written.

The essential question is whether or not poetry can be philosophical. Or, is what I am calling 'philosophical poetry' merely verse? There are two ways a poem may be philosophical, and Persian philosophical poetry exhibits examples of each way. It may simply carry a philosophical idea that could be restated separately from the poem; for example, Abu'l-Haytham al-Jurjānī's philosophical poem that

occasioned Nāṣir-i Khusraw's prose response, the *Jāmiʿ al-ḥikmatayn* (as well as his summary *Risāla*). We might also add the philosophical poem that was written in response to the original poem by al-Jurjānī's student, Muḥammad ibn Surkh al-Nīshāpūrī.[17] Second, philosophy may be so intertwined with language, rhythm and other poetical devices that it could not be restated without dismantling the poem itself, as with Nāṣir-i Khusraw's 'On the Steed of Speech', analysed in my chapter in this volume.[18] Other early examples of Persian philosophical poetry include *qaṣīda*s by Ḥakīm Maysarī (b. 324/986),[19] Abu'l-ʿAbbās Lawkarī (seventh/thirteenth century),[20] and Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 606/1208),[21] and quatrains by the philosopher Afḍal al-Dīn Kāshānī (seventh/thirteenth century).[22] These are only a few of the examples of philosophical poetry in Persian, in the study of which this volume marks a beginning, by examining its leading representative. Of our two types of philosophical poetry, to say the first kind is not poetry is to make a value judgement, not a definition of category, and we cannot judge a category until we have defined it. The first way of putting philosophy into verse still counts as poetry; just as satire and comedy can be poetry, so can philosophy or history or science. Perhaps it is a question of language. English, while sometimes using the terms 'poetry' and 'verse' ambiguously, does not have a problem with calling all sorts of poems 'poetry'; even the phrase 'occasional verse' signifies poetry written for special occasions. As with sculptures or paintings, we may judge poems to be bad, but they are still poems. More recent Persian critics distinguished between verse (*naẓm*) and poetry (*shiʿr*), and in Furūzānfar and Shiblī (to take just two), we see a judgement that relegates Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poems to *naẓm.* Perhaps the problem arises because Nāṣir is Ismaili, or simply because he is a preacher and didactic. But Persian poetry celebrates its sermonisers and it is for its readers to try to follow their lessons. Perhaps, and perhaps most importantly, not only are such critical sentiments influenced by recent centuries, but by the oceans of mystical poetry that flowed through all the fields of Persian literature and culture. Perhaps only mystical poetry now counts as *shiʿr* for some critics. Space will not allow further surmising, but we could look closer at some of the classical critics.

Muḥammad ʿAwfī, the earliest Persian critic, in his anthology of Persian poets, *Lubāb al-Albāb* (composed in the seventh/thirteenth century), mentions a poet named Khusrawī Sarakhsī (d. before 383/1005), a veritable 'King of the Realms of Speech Itself' (*khusraw-i mamālik-i sukhan*), in service to the powerful and intellectual Buyid vizier, Ṣāḥib Ibn ʿAbbād (d. 385/1007).[23] ʿAwfī writes that 'while the verse (*naẓm*) of others can be good or bad, Khusrawī Sarakhsī's verse (*naẓm*) is filled with philosophy (*ḥikmat*)'. ʿAwfī includes the title al-Ḥakīm as part of the poet's name (as is the case with Nāṣir-i Khusraw). Khusrawī Sarakhsī became famous and was placed in the highest ranks of Persian poets (*shuʿarāʾ*) and included in the pages of the Arabic literary stylists (*fuḍalāʾ*). 'Awfī cites four lines that begin, 'Know God through the intellect (*ʿaql*)', a sentiment shared by Nāṣir-i Khusraw.

Furūzānfar, citing ʿAwfī and Abū Naṣr al-ʿUtbī (d. 427 or 431/1036 or 1040s) whose Arabic work, *Tārīkh-i Yamīnī*, praises Khusrawī Sarakhsī, declares that he was the first poet (*shāʿir*) who combined philosophical ideas and poetic images, and that after him this genre became a very important feature in Persian poetry.[24] Discussing Nāṣir-i Khusraw, Furūzānfar also asserts that 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw is a master with a powerful poetic nature and a rare style. His poetry is profound and meaningful, and his manner of expression reaches the highest degree of solidity and strength. The versification of scientific laws and arguments that Khusrawī Sarakhsī initiated, Nāṣir-i Khusraw carried to its perfection.'[25] Such a multi-layered assessment (remembering his dismissal of Nāṣir's poetry as 'devoid of poetic fervour and thought') by this major twentieth-century scholar of Persian literature illuminates the complex nature of appreciating the genre of philosophical poetry.

It did not dawn on the earlier generations of critics who included Nāṣir-i Khusraw's philosophical poetry in their poetry anthologies that they needed to defend philosophical poetry as poetry. True, they discussed types of poetry, and what subjects were appropriate for which type and for which occasions, and they distinguished between versification (*naẓm*) and poetry (*shiʿr*). Since Nāṣir was a philosopher, this comes through in his poetry; there are verses that, without any knowledge of the Neoplatonic philosophy he espoused, are indecipherable. According to the classical critics, his poetry was never considered 'verse'; Nāṣir composed poetry both as a philosopher and as a poet. He was not simply putting philosophy into verse. He produced a literary creation, using the language of poetry. For example, the phrase, 'the steed of speech' (*kumayt-i sukhan*) is not of the language of philosophy, but that of poetry. Literature does not propose facts that can be judged by the criterion of truth or falsehood. Literature is a product of the imagination and can only be judged by imaginative consistency.[26]

Chapters in this volume

In his detailed biographical introduction to the first edition of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Dīwān*, Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda wrote that he focused on the poet's biography because he did not have enough time to write a chapter on the philosophical, scientific and literary aspects or on the philological use of words, grammar, metrics, and poetic criticism of the *Dīwān*. The chapters of this present volume begin to address the subject areas that Taqīzāda was not able to complete and are arranged into three main sections: (1) Speech and Intellect; (2) Philosophical Poetry: Enlightening the Soul; and (3) Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poetics; these are completed by an introduction by the Academic editor and a conclusion by Julie Scott Meisami, Lecturer in Persian at the University of Oxford, now retired.

The first section, 'Speech and Intellect', considers the very 'stuff' of poetry and its creation – human intellect, language and speech – and their connection to the

creative Word of God. The Intellect (Ar., *'aql*; P., *khirad*), which is considered God's first creation, as well as the first Neoplatonic hypostasis, is one of the terms that appears most frequently in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetry, along with the word 'speech' (Ar., *kalima*, *nuṭq*; P., *sukhan*, or *sakhun* as it was pronounced in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's time, or *guftār*). The highest activity of a human being's soul is that which occurs when the rational soul (*nafs-i nāṭiqa,* literally, 'the speaking soul') is functioning; and the highest activity of the rational soul, its actualisation, is that which occurs when it becomes one with the Intellect. Faquir Muhammad Hunzai's chapter, 'The Position of *'aql* in the Prose and Poetry of Nāṣir-i Khusraw', first places Nāṣir in historical context and considers his relationship with the Ismaili Muslim faith and *da'wa*. Then, with abundant examples from a variety of Nāṣir's texts on the topic of intellect (*'aql*), Hunzai shows that Nāṣir follows neither the philosophers nor the theologians, but puts himself in another category. In fact, Nāṣir classifies all people 'with respect to the innate intellect vis-à-vis the *tanzīl* (revelation)'. But then after this description and analysis, Hunzai examines the consequences Nāṣir delineates for a person's acceptance or rejection of the edification by the perfect intellect. So central is the topic of intellect that a second chapter on the topic is included: M. J. Esmaeili's 'Ontological and Religious Aspects of the Intellect in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poetry'. Driving straight to the point of this book, Esmaeili suggests that Nāṣir's *Dīwān* is so full of 'philosophical contemplation and exhortation' that one might ask if it is more a 'product of reason than of emotion'. Selecting a limited number of verses for analysis, Esmaeili explains key philosophical methods (such as truncated syllogism) and gives comparisons with Plato, Aristotle, Farābī, Ibn Sīnā and other philosophers. Esmaeili also examines how the poet retains Ismaili views on religion and society, and shows how Nāṣir did not follow the philosophers or the theologians, especially on the topic of the rational soul, but rather forged his own view of human beings, their immortal rational souls. Daniel Rafinejad, in his '"I am a Mine of Golden Speech": Poetic Language and Self-Reference in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *Qaṣīda*s', sees Nāṣir's conception of the *qaṣīda* itself as an epitaph expressing his feelings and beliefs, or as a repository of language connecting the self to God through the doctrine of Oneness (*tawḥīd*). Rafinejad identifies three major modes of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's *qaṣīda*s: emotional/autobiographical, sententious, and reverential, drawing comparisons with the English poet Wordsworth's reflections on himself and the world, and showing how Nāṣir's poetic techniques blend passion and philosophy, with language serving as 'script, diction and structure'. Leonard Lewisohn's chapter, 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Ode to the Universal Soul and Intellect', is a complete literary translation of one of the poet's most important *qaṣīda*s, with extensive notes elucidating the poet's meanings and allusions to other texts, including the Qur'an, Ḥadīth, and other poets and philosophers. In addition, through comparisons with Nāṣir-i Khusraw's own prose philosophical works, Lewisohn shows

how his poetry relates to his prose works on the very central Ismaili philosophy of Universal Intellect and Universal Soul.

The second section of the volume, 'Philosophical Poetry: Enlightening the Soul', considers the effect of the poetry on the poet's and the reader's soul and life. In his chapter 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw, Imagination and the Poetics of Enlightenment', Muhammad Azadpur focuses on the two movements in a prophetic moment, *tanzīl* (revelation) and *ta'wīl* (esoteric interpretation), called 'movements' because first the message 'comes down' (from the Arabic root, *n-z-l*) for a wide audience and then through interpretation the audience gains enlightenment by returning (from the Arabic root *'-w-l*) to the spiritual source of the message. Going beyond the conclusion of the French scholar Henry Corbin that Islamic philosophy is primarily prophetic philosophy, Azadpur explains Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetics in relation to Ibn Sīnā's theory of the imagination (*al-mutakhayyila*) in the prophetic moment, showing that *ta'wīl*, for our poet, requires the cultivation of the imaginative capacity. But not only does Nāṣir require this training, Azadpur argues, he builds it into his poetry, so that the reader is prepared for illumination. Azadpur shows that Nasir utilises the process of poetry to open the reader's imagination, preparing the way for *ta'wīl*. Mehdi Aminrazavi argues that Nāṣir-i Khusraw uses poetic licence to construct an ethical paradigm complete with instructions for the journey of the soul. While his chapter, 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poetics of the Moral Journey and the Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals', takes its title from the work of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, it is not strictly a Kantian reading of Nāṣir. Aminrazavi analyses the metaphysical foundations of two levels of morality (bodily and spiritual actions) which, he argues, constitute Nāṣir-i Khusraw's plan for the journey on which each individual soul is guided. As one of the most frequently quoted authors of verses of advice, Nāṣir's background in ethics merits special study. Mohsen Zakeri addresses Nāṣir-i Khusraw's extensive use of proverbs, contending that a great number of them derive from Pahlawi sources, such as the *Bundahishn, Denkart* and *Rawshan-nipik,* whose teachings had been absorbed into Arabo-Islamic traditions. In his chapter, 'The *Rawshanā'ī-nāma* and the Older Iranian Cosmogony', Zakeri applies new documentary evidence, his recent discovery and analysis of an early Arabic translation of a Middle Persian text, to Nāṣir-i Khusraw's controversial verse *Rawshanā'ī-nāma* and concludes that the poet made thorough and good use of this Arabic material in moralising epithets and his cosmogonic elaborations. Arguing against Iranian scholars such as Sajjadī and Mujtaba Mīnuwī (and Pourjavady in this volume), who assert the inauthenticity of the *mathnawī Rawshanā'ī-nāma*, Zakeri uses this poem to show how Nāṣir's poetry constitutes a critical link between pre-Islamic and Islamicised Iranian ideas of morals and cosmogony.

The third section of this volume, 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poetics', analyses the poetry as poetry. Michael Beard's chapter, 'Also a Poet', takes its title from a common clause tacked on to the end of many an English biographical notice of intellectuals, in order to challenge the assumption that philosophy and poetry must be considered as mutually exclusive. After showing a commonality between poetry and philosophy – both are based on linguistic precision – and drawing comparisons with other poets such as Spenser, Milton, 'Umar Khayyām and Esma'il Kho'i, Beard unpacks the poetic technique of one of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's best-known poems, about the eagle who learned the meaning of pride. But Beard suggests the poem is about more than this, about more than morality, it is about the dangers of *not* perceiving (no matter how sharp the eyes) one's own depths, one's own power. The chapter by Nasrollah Pourjavady, 'Hearing by Way of Seeing: *Zabān-i ḥāl* in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poetry and the Question of Authorship . . .', presents this poetic technique as new evidence in a longstanding debate. Pourjavady traces the broad use of this literary device, *zabān-i ḥāl*, in which the poet has any animate or inanimate being 'speak' in what may be called 'fabulous language' or 'personification'. Against a backdrop of examples from Plotinus, 'Umar Khayyām and 'Aṭṭār, he proffers many verses from Nāṣir-i Khusraw in which things such as Nature, the World, Heaven and Time, as well as plants such as the sycamore and squash, speak. To be understood, this special speaking requires an intuitive perception, which the poet sometimes refers to as 'hearing' or 'seeing' with your heart. Then, through an examination of *zabān-i ḥāl* in *Rawshanā'ī-nāma*, as well as arguments by others, he concludes that this *mathnawī* cannot be ascribed to Nāṣir-i Khusraw.

Each poem is a work of art, designed by the poet with a beginning, middle and an end. *Qaṣīda*s in particular are constructed according to an overall plan, not just line by line. Alice Hunsberger's chapter, '"On the Steed of Speech": A Philosophical Poem by Nāṣir-i Khusraw', analyses in its entirety a single *qaṣīda* in which the poet subjects his philosophy of Speech to his literary imagination. Using Ibn al-Mu'tazz's list of poetic devices, Hunsberger examines each line poetically and philosophically; she demonstrates how the poet structures his work and how the words relate to each other in image, meaning and sound, as well as explaining philosophical concepts and background. A second complete *qaṣīda* is analysed in Julie Scott Meisami's 'Symbolic Structure in a Poem by Nāṣir-i Khusraw', previously published in the journal *Iran* and reprinted here by kind permission of the author and publisher. In this chapter, Meisami methodically reveals that the inner structure Nāṣir has employed in his *qaṣīda* is a poetic structure mirroring, and even driving, the meaning of the poem. That is, the structure is not a lifeless shell in which meaning is carried, but an organic part of the meaning. For example, in this poem about changing the direction of one's life, the poet has chosen as the last word for each line (*radīf*) the first-person form of the Persian verb 'to make or do', thus *kunam*, 'I make, I do', and in this

way indicating that first-person action verbs will populate each and every line in the poem. Furthermore, with ample references to Nāṣir's philosophical works in prose, Meisami shows how the structure in the poem, as well as its meaning line by line, embodies his philosophy. One critical component of poetry is rhythm. Finn Thiesen's 'Rhythm in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Poems' is a watershed in Nāṣir-i Khusraw poetics, quantitatively assessing the use of poetic metres in the poet's *Dīwān*. Thiesen asserts that the poet 'liked to experiment and use rare metres', in contrast to Ḥāfiẓ, for example, who used the same metre for a quarter of his poems. Thiesen then conducts a statistical analysis of nine linguistic elements in forty poems of Nāṣir, providing the first such thorough grammatical study of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's rhythmical technique.

In keeping with the philosophical method of dialogue, the volume ends with a concluding chapter, 'Nāṣir-i Khusraw: A Poet Lost in thought?' by Julie Scott Meisami. Meisami discusses some of the problematics of Nāṣir's poetry (such as, whom was he addressing, who was the intended audience), as well as the outstanding features of his poetic style. But she goes beyond questioning the conventions of style and structure to highlight the imaginative power and verve of Nāṣir's poetry which grips the audience, such as the use of extended metaphors throughout an entire *qaṣīda*. Meisami also lays out suggestions for fruitful areas of research in the future.

* * *

The present volume is based on the conference 'The Philosophical Poetry of Nāṣir-i Khusraw', convened in 2005 by the editor of this volume in collaboration with Doris Behrens-Abouseif at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London, as part of international commemorations of the 1,000th anniversary of the birth of Nāṣir-i Khusraw. Primarily funded and organised by the Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF), the conference was also generously supported by The Institute of Ismaili Studies, in association with SOAS, all London-based institutions. I thank Doris Behrens-Abouseif for vital institutional assistance with the venue. I am very grateful to all the supporters and members of the Board of Trustees of IHF for their dedication to Persian culture and their support of this conference, and especially to Farhad Hakimzadeh, former Managing Director of the IHF, for bringing my original idea to fruition. I would like to thank the other members of the Conference Advisory Committee, Mehdi Aminrazavi, Farhad Daftary, Leonard Lewisohn and Julie Scott Meisami, who helped shape the conference and solve many problems. I would also like to thank Sahar Rad for her very able administration during the conference itself. To all the conference participants who presented papers and served as advisers, panel chairs, and discussants, I would like to express my deep appreciation.

One of the first items we examine in poetry is words. In poetry, the economy of language, an almost ironic scarcity of words, means that each word sits poised in its fullness, each level of meaning vibrating in anticipation of possible relevance to the next word, next line or next page, or to previous ones. The reader must keep each possible meaning actively alive while waiting to see what the poet will do next. This is especially true in the *bayt* format of Persian poetry, where the second hemistich of a line (the second *miṣrāʿ*) often responds to the first. Nāṣir's use of a technical vocabulary further increases the power of the poetry because it keeps the reader's intellect highly challenged and engaged, thus providing some of the energy that propels meaning and sentiment through the progress of the poem. Given this centrality of vocabulary, the conference was fortunate to have the participation of Professor Maḥdī Muḥaqqiq, who has spent decades in minute study of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetic vocabulary, publishing several works dealing with this topic, most recently the multi-volume *Comprehensive Commentary of the Dīwān of Nāṣir-i Khusraw* (Tehran, 1386 Sh./2007). The paper he presented at the conference explained the meaning of a number of technical terms in Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetry. Since these definitions are useful for specialists who read the poetry in Persian and are available in other works he has published in Persian, we will list them here only briefly. Professor Muḥaqqiq spoke about five specific areas: Logic, Ismaili Terminology, Philosophical Terms, Theological Terms and Persian Translations of Arabic Originals. With Nāṣir-i Khusraw liberally loading his verses with such technical terms, we are indebted to scholars such as Muḥaqqiq for clarifying key examples of the poet's vocabulary.

Far more than the proceedings of a conference, however, this volume contains several completely new works of scholarship resulting from subsequent discussions. I would like to express my thanks for everyone who has helped to bring this volume to publication. Foremost I would like to thank the contributors to this volume for their fine chapters, but also for the patience they have shown in the publication process, demonstrating a graciousness equal to their fine scholarship. I am very grateful to Farhad Daftary, Director of The Institute of Ismaili Studies and the Head of its Department of Academic Research and Publications, whose extensive knowledge of Ismaili thought and history has done so much for the field and for all of us, for agreeing to support the conference and for carefully overseeing the editing and publication of this current volume. Thanks are due to the editorial staff of The Institute of Ismaili Studies, including Marjan Afsharian for cross-checking details in the typescript, Rahim Gholami for typing out and proof-reading the Persian text of three *qaṣīda*s in the appendix, Dagi Dagiev, Isabel Miller, and finally Tara Woolnough, the editorial co-ordinator, for her help in guiding the editorial process. Thanks are also due to Tom Milo at Decotype for typesetting the three *qaṣīda*s. For reading parts of the book and offering abundant comments, I would like to thank Michael Beard. I would also like to warmly acknowledge my appreciation

to Nasrollah Pourjavady for his generous help with this volume; he meticulously reviewed many drafts of several articles and made many valuable suggestions which improved the book immensely. I would like to thank Julie Scott Meisami for giving permission for her article to be republished here; I am delighted to have her turn her attention once again to Nāṣir-i Khusraw, after her decades of study of the *qaṣīda*, and to write the concluding chapter. Finally (in the sense of fulfillment), I would like to say how grateful I am to The Institute of Ismaili Studies, including my former colleagues and the students I taught there, for the support and encouragement of this publication, for helping to bring to new readers the art and philosophy and spirituality of Nāṣir-i Khusraw. On a personal note, I would like to thank my daughter for her witty, intelligent support of her mother through this endeavour.

Although this volume takes us a step closer in bringing to light Nāṣir-i Khusraw's philosophical poetry, it still marks only a beginning. The entire field of philosophical poetry in Persian itself needs more study, along with Nāṣir-i Khusraw's poetry in particular. We need more understanding of his vocabulary and his philosophy in order to grasp the meaning of each line. But we must also develop a more learned appreciation of the uses of his poetry, what it was for, as well as of his poetic technique – with individual words, sounds, lines, conventions, and the structural sections within a particular *qaṣīda*. It is our hope that others will join in this endeavour. The quality and variety of topics of the chapters here bear testimony to Nāṣir-i Khusraw's continuing power to incite imagination and intellect, stringing pearls of wisdom into elegant creations.

Notes

1. *Dīwān-i ashʿār-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw*, ed. M. Mīnuwī and M. Muḥaqqiq (Tehran, 1353 Sh./1974; repr. 1357 Sh./1978), poem number 242:76: *daryā-i maʿīn ast dar īn khāk maʿnā / ham durr-i girānmāya u ham āb-i muṭahhar.*

2. For a review of some of the most important of these anthologies, see Alice C. Hunsberger, *Nasir Khusraw, The Ruby of Badakhshan: A Portrait of the Persian Poet, Traveller and Philosopher* (London, 2001), pp. 17–32; published in Persian as *Nāṣir-i Khusraw, Laʿl-i Badakhshān* (Tehran, 1380 Sh./2001), pp. 49–62.

3. *Dīwān*, ed. Mīnuwī and Muḥaqqiq, poem number 242:27.

4. *Dīwān*, ed. Mīnuwī and Muḥaqqiq, poem numbers 26:31 (with the first hemistich reading *Fāṭimī-am, Fāṭimī-am, Fāṭimī-am* (I am Fāṭimid, I am Fāṭimid, I am Fāṭimid) and 43:47.

5. *Dīwān*, ed. Mīnuwī and Muḥaqqiq, poem number 103:26. See also F. Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 2007), pp. 205–207.

6. Nāṣir-i Khusraw, *Jāmiʿ al-ḥikmatayn: Le livre réunissant les deux sagesses*, ed. H. Corbin and M. Muʿīn (Tehran and Paris, 1953), pp. 307–308. See also ʿAzīz Allāh Juwaynī, "Ulūm wa riyāḍī dar kutub-i naẓm wa naṣr-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw', in *Nāma-i maʿnā*, ed. Bihrūz

Imānī (Tehran, 1383 Sh./2004), pp. 355–363. See also F. Daftary, *Ismaili Literature* (London, 2004), pp. 134–140.

7. Now translated into English by Eric Ormsby as *Between Reason and Revelation: Twin Wisdoms Reconciled* (London, 2012).

8. Mujtaba Mīnuwī, '*Rawshanā'ī-nāma-yi* naṣr-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw wa *Rawshanā'ī-nāma-yi* manẓūm mansūb bi ū', in the published proceedings of the Conference held in Mashhad (1976) for the Millenium of Nāṣir-i Khusraw's death, *Yādnāma-yi Nāṣir-i Khusraw* (Mashhad, 1355 Sh./1976), pp. 576–580.

9. Ismail M. Dahiyat, *Avicenna's Commentary on the 'Poetics' of Aristotle: A Critical Study with an Annotated Translation of the Text* (Leiden, 1974), p. 90. See also, for instance, Ibn Sīnā, *Poetics*, v. 8.

10. *Dīwān*, ed. Mīnuwī and Muḥaqqiq, poem number 64:1.

11. Yahya El-Khachab, *Nāṣir è Ḫosraw: son voyage, sa pensée religieuse, sa philosophie et sa poesie* (Cairo, 1940), pp. 271, cf., 284.

12. Sayyid Jaʿfar Shahīdī, 'Afkār wa 'aqā'id-i kalām-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw', in *Yādnāma-yi Nāṣir-i Khusraw* (Mashhad, 1355 Sh./1976), p. 316, cited also in Raḥīm Musalmāniyān Qubādiyānī, *Pāra-yi Samarqand* (Tehran, 1378 Sh./1999), pp. 59–60.

13. Shibli Nuʿmānī, *Shiʿr al-ʿAjam ya tārīkh-i shiʿr wa adabiyāt-i Īrān*, tr. Muḥammad Taqī Fakhr Dāʿī Gīlānī, vol. 5 (2nd ed., Tehran, 1363 Sh./1984), pp. 177–179.

14. Badiʿ al-Zamān Furūzānfar, *Sukhan wa sukhanwarān* (4th ed., Tehran, 1369 Sh./1990), p. 154, note 1.

15. Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas*, chapter 10, quoted in James Sutherland, *A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry* (London, 1948), p. 23.

16. Philip Wheelwright, 'Philosophy and Poetry', *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. Alex Preminger (Princeton, 1974), p. 616.

17. Both commentaries have been studied in H. Corbin and M. Muʿīn, eds., *Commentaire de la qasida ismaelienne d'Abu'l-Haitham Jorjani* (Tehran and Paris, 1955); see also F. Daftary, *Ismaili Literature*, pp. 106, 141.

18. Wheelwright, 'Philosophy and Poetry', p. 615. He presents Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* and Pope's *Essay on Man* as examples of the first, and Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Keats' *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, and Eliot's *Four Quartets* as examples of the second.

19. Ḥakīm Maysārī, *Dānish-nāma*, a scientific and medical poem written for a governor of Khurāsān under the Sāmānids. See Gilbert Lazard, *Les premiers poètes persans (IXe–Xe siècles)* (Tehran and Paris, 1964), pp. 36–40; partial French tr., pp. 163–180.

20. See Alice C. Hunsberger, 'Cosmos into Verse: Two Examples of Islamic Philosophical Poetry in Persian', in Omar Alí-de-Unzaga, ed., *Fortresses of the Intellect: Ismaili and Other Islamic Studies in Honour of Farhad Daftary* (London, 2011), pp. 343–367, which compares a poem by Lawkarī with one by Nāṣir-i Khusraw. For detailed background on Lawkarī, see Roxanne D. Marcotte, 'Preliminary Notes on the Life and Work of Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Lawkari (d. ca. 517/1123)', *Anaquel de Estudios Arabes*, 17 (2006), pp. 150–152.

21. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, 'Manẓūma-yi manṭiq wa falsafa', in Nasrollah Pourjavady, *Du Mujaddad* (*Two Renewers of Faith: Studies on Muhammad-i Ghazzālī and Fakhruddīn-i Rāzī*) (Tehran, 2002), pp. 551–564.

22. William C. Chittick, *The Heart of Islamic Philosophy: The Quest for Self-Knowledge in the Teachings of Afdal al-din Kashani* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 127–131.

23. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Khusrawī al-Sarakhsī al-Hakīm, entry with several poetry selections, in Muḥammad ʿAwfī, *Lubāb al-Albāb*, ed. Edward G. Browne (London and Leiden, 1903), Part II, pp. 18–19.

24. Fūrūzānfar, *Sukhan wa sukhanwarān*, p. 37.

25. Fūrūzānfar, *Sukhan wa sukhanwarān*, p. 154.

26. 'Verse and Prose', in *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry*, p. 885.