

# CRITICISM

VOLUME

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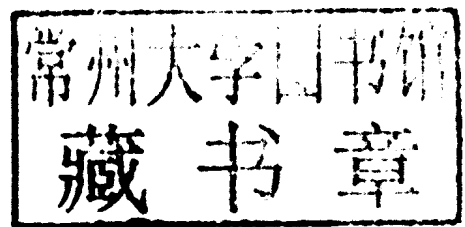


# Poetry Criticism

*Excerpts from Criticism of the Works  
of the Most Significant and Widely  
Studied Poets of World Literature*

**Volume 116**

*Michelle Lee*  
Project Editor



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# Preface

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- The **Introduction** contains background information that introduces the reader to the author and the critical debates surrounding his or her work.
- The list of **Principal Works** is ordered chronologically by date of first publication and lists the most important works by the author. The first section comprises poetry collections and book-length poems. The second section gives information on other major works by the author. For foreign authors, the editors have provided original foreign-language publication information and have selected what are considered the best and most complete English-language editions of their works.
- Reprinted **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over time. All individual titles of poems and poetry collections by the author featured in the entry are printed in boldface type. The critic's name and the date of composition or publication of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. Footnotes are reprinted at the end of each essay or excerpt. In the case of excerpted criticism, only those footnotes that pertain to the excerpted texts are included.
- Critical essays are prefaced by brief **Annotations** explicating each piece.

- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book precedes each piece of criticism.
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Glen, Heather. "Blake's Criticism of Moral Thinking in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*." In *Interpreting Blake*, edited by Michael Phillips. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. 32-69. Rpt. in *Poetry Criticism*. Edited by Michelle Lee. Vol. 63. Detroit: Gale, 2005. 34-51. Print.

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# Hafiz

## c. 1326-c. 1389

(Full name Shamseddin Mohammad Hafiz of Shiraz)  
Persian poet.

in the nineteenth century, the gravesite was restored  
early in the twentieth century.

### INTRODUCTION

Considered the foremost lyric poet of Persia, Hafiz collected more than five hundred short lyric poems, known as ghazals, into a volume published around 1368 called *Divan*. He is known for the simplicity of his style and the universality of his themes—characteristics that have made him popular with readers and scholars alike.

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The poet known by the single name Hafiz was born in Shiraz, Persia, in what is now Iran; his father was a merchant who died when his son was quite young. Very little is known about Hafiz's life, and various dates have been suggested for his year of birth—ranging from 1315 to 1326. He was taught the Arabic language and it is believed that he had committed the entire Qur'an to memory at an early age; in fact, the name Hafiz means one who has memorized the sacred book of Islam. He was also schooled in the Muslim sciences. Employed as a teacher and copyist, he began writing poetry, attracting both attention and admiration for his verse. It is known that Hafiz was supported by a number of important patrons, some of whom were rulers, such as Shah Abu Ishaq and Jalal ud-Din Shah Shuja, the longest reigning ruler during Hafiz's lifetime and a liberal thinker who encouraged the art of poetry. He was immortalized in several of Hafiz's poems. Some scholars believe that Hafiz served as official poet and actually lived at court. It is well known that Hafiz lived through a very tumultuous period in the history of his city—an era marked by war, invasions, and executions, all subjects that found their way into Hafiz's odes. Although it is reported that he was handsomely rewarded for his poetry, he apparently died in poverty. It is generally agreed that Hafiz died in 1389 or 1390 in Shiraz, but was very nearly refused burial rites because his poetry had so offended orthodox religious leaders. Nonetheless, his mausoleum, in a garden in Shiraz, is one of the area's foremost attractions and the poet's admirers continue to visit it. While it fell into disarray

### MAJOR WORKS

Hafiz published only one book, *Divan*, a collection of the more than five hundred individual poems he produced during his lifetime; the majority were written rather late in life and contain a number of references to old age. Most deal with the joys of love and intoxication, matters of faith, and in some cases, criticism of religious leaders guilty of hypocrisy. It is believed that Hafiz prepared this edition himself and published it around 1368, but a posthumous edition, produced by his friend Muhammed Gulandam, is the source of the various transcriptions—which number in the thousands—available today. There are a number of poems from the fourteenth century that have been attributed to Hafiz, but whose authorship has been questioned by scholars. Hafiz's work has been translated into a number of other languages, including English, although translators generally agree that English translations pose special problems in terms of capturing the rhymes and rhythm of the original and are generally less than satisfactory. The principal English translations of Hafiz's poetry are *The Poems of Shemseddin Mohammed Hafiz of Shiraz* translated by John Payne (1901); *Fifty Poems* edited by Arthur J. Arberry (1953); and *The Divan-i-Hafiz* translated by H. Wilberforce Clarke (1997).

### CRITICAL RECEPTION

Hafiz's poetry has been popular with his countrymen for centuries and it is still appreciated by modern-day Iranians. He has retained his reputation as the greatest lyric poet in Persian history to this day and has gained an audience of admirers outside of the Middle East. Walter Leaf (see Further Reading) reports that "across half a millennium of time and 3,000 miles of space, across the far deeper abyss of thought and faith, of inheritance and aim, of art and language . . . Hafiz still speaks and sings to Western ears." Roger Montgomery refers to Hafiz as "a seeker of wisdom who became a poet of genius, a lover of truth who has transcended the ages." Montgomery reports that Hafiz has been praised by a number of Western writers and philosophers,

including Goethe, Emerson, Nietzsche, and Kipling. In 1988 the “Year of Haféz” was celebrated by UNESCO, which hosted a conference in his honor in an effort to “explore the significance of his teachings for the modern world,” according to Montgomery. Arthur J. Arberry also praises Hafiz, claiming that the poet is “by universal consent the supreme master of the art of the Persian *ghazal*,” which the critic considers the “most delicate of all poetic forms.”

The availability of Hafiz’s poetry to English speakers has been somewhat limited and the results of the various translations have been inconsistent. For example, Parvin Loloi contends that “it is not literally true to say that ‘every translator’ of Hafiz has produced a version of [the poem known as “The Turk of Shiraz”]; what is true is that most of the major translators have done so.” He complains, in his discussion of another of Hafiz’s translated poems, about “inappropriate Edwardianisms” and “sentimental dramatics” all of which are “grotesquely at odds with the original.” Leaf acknowledges that translating Hafiz’s work is challenging to say the least, since form, rather than mood or subject matter, “is of the essence of his poetry.” In addition, according to Leaf, “the text of Hafiz is in a most deplorable state of critical topsy-turveydom” and the many variants introduced by the large number of different copyists also present obstacles to the translator. Arberry reports the transcriptions of Hafiz’s original text “must surely run into many thousands scattered all over the world,” all of which “probably go back ultimately to the edition put out after the poet’s death by his friend Muhammad Gulandām.” Michael C. Hillmann points out how few poems have been studied by scholars as individual compositions. Of the twenty or so *ghazals* that have been examined, only “Turk of Shiraz” and “The Breeze and I” “have been investigated comprehensively, that is in terms of both sound and sense or form and content, including a consideration of theme, imagery, tone, rhythm, rhyme, and figures of speech.”

Hafiz celebrated the joys of wine and love in his odes, which occasionally offended orthodox Muslims, who considered him a “notorious evil liver” according to Leaf. During the reign of Amir Mubarez, “a ruthless and religious fanatic,” in the words of Manoochehr Aryanpur Kashani, taverns were shut down and Hafiz and other poets fell out of favor. Hafiz, in a number of his odes, criticized “the hypocrisy of religious zealots and the tyranny of magistrates and rulers.” Montgomery reports that the poet’s “brilliance is demonstrated by his use of poetry to break through the repressive religious environment of his time in order to express a complete philosophy of the sacredness of the individual within the framework of universal mysticism.”

## PRINCIPAL WORKS

### Poetry

*Divan* 1368?

*The Poems of Shemseddin Mohammed Hafiz of Shiraz.*  
3 vols. [translated by John Payne] 1901

*Fifty Poems* [edited by Arthur J. Arberry] 1953

*The Divan-i-Hafiz* [translated by H. Wilberforce Clarke] 1997

## CRITICISM

Arthur J. Arberry (essay date 1962)

SOURCE: Arberry, Arthur J. Introduction to *Fifty Poems of Hafiz*, edited by Arthur J. Arberry, pp. 1-34. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962.

[In the following introduction, Arberry provides a brief biography of Hafiz and an extensive textual history of the *Divan*.]

### 1

It is two hundred years since the birth of Sir William Jones (1746-1794), the father of Persian studies in the west; one century and three-quarters since the publication of *A Persian Song*, his celebrated translation which introduced Hāfiz of Shīrāz to the literary world of London and Europe. The present is thus a peculiarly opportune time to review what his successors have done in furthering the study and interpretation of this, the greatest lyric poet of Persia; the more so since it has long been desirable to furnish students with a text-book appropriate to their needs as beginners in the appreciation of Persian lyrical poetry. The selection now presented has been made with the double object of exhibiting the various aspects of Hāfiz’ style and thought, and of representing how English scholars have attempted to render his poetry in their own language. Lest it should be supposed that the work of two centuries has exhausted every aspect of the study of Hāfiz, and that the last word on his interpretation has been said, these introductory remarks will suggest fresh approaches to the subject, and propose a number of lines along which future research might with advantage be directed.

Hāfiz is by universal consent the supreme master of the art of the Persian *ghazal*—a literary form generally equated with the lyric; though perhaps the sonnet is in

some respects a closer equivalent. When it is considered that literary critics of undoubted authority have estimated Persian poetry as an important contribution to the art of self-expression in metre and rhyme, and the Persian *ghazal* as a form unsurpassable of its kind, it may be readily conceded that Ḥāfiẓ is a poet eminently worth study; and it may without undue optimism be conjectured that as a master of a splendid art-form he can still teach useful lessons to all who are interested in the evolution of poetic expression. If it is added, as a personal opinion, that Ḥāfiẓ' technique can by modified imitation inspire new developments in western poetry, perhaps a claim so extravagant will not be rejected so summarily as similar claims less solidly founded; for Ḥāfiẓ is as highly esteemed by his countrymen as Shakespeare by us, and deserves as serious consideration.

The Persians were not greatly interested in the lives of their poets, and consequently we have little reliable information on which to construct a biography of Ḥāfiẓ; though modern scholars have displayed great learning and ingenuity in attempting to recover the salient facts of his career. The student is recommended to consult the charming preface to Gertrude Bell's *Poems from the Divan of Hafiz*; the section on Ḥāfiẓ in E. G. Browne's *Literary History of Persia*; the introduction to Ḥusain Pezhmān's edition of the *Dīvān*; and, above all, the voluminous and profound study of the poet by Dr Qāsim Ghanī (*Baḥṭh dar āthār u afkār u ahvāl-i Ḥāfiẓ*) which is now appearing in Teheran. Not to duplicate what is readily accessible elsewhere, we confine ourselves here to the barest outline of the poet's life.

Shams al-Dīn Ḥāfiẓ of Shīrāz was born at the capital of the province of Fārs about the year 720/1320; some sixty years after the great catastrophe of Islamic history, Hūlāgū Khān's capture and sack of Baghdād; rather less than a century after the death of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240), the greatest theosophist of the Arabs; and fifty years after the death of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273), Persia's most original mystical poet. He grew up in an age when the finest Arabic literature had already been written, and in the shadow of the reputation of his distinguished fellow-citizen, Shaikh Sa'dī (d. 690/1291 or 691/1292). Persian poetry had thus reached its consummation in the romantic epic (Nizāmī probably died in 599/1202), the mystical *mathnavī*, the *rubā'ī*, the *qaṣīda* (Anvarī died between 585/1189 and 587/1191), and gnomic verse; Ḥāfiẓ spent little time on the *qaṣīda* and *rubā'ī*, and none at all on the other classical forms, but elected to specialize in the *ghazal*, no doubt supposing—and not without cause—that he had something to contribute to this most delicate of all poetic forms.

As a student, Ḥāfiẓ evidently learned the Qur'ān by heart (for so his name implies), and his poetry proves that, like other Persian poets, he acquired a competence

in all the Muslim sciences taught in his day; for the Persian poet must have learning as much as original genius. It seems likely that he was a man of no great substance, especially if we admit the evidence of a manuscript of the *Khamṣa* of Amīr Khusrau of Delhi (d. 725/1325) now preserved in the State Library of Tashkent which bears a colophon stating that it was written by "the humblest of God's creatures Muḥammad nicknamed Shams al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Shīrāzī" and completed on 24 Ṣafar 756/9 February 1355 (see A. A. Semenov's note in *Sukhan*, vol. II, pp. 95-6); for only a relatively poor man would seek his bread by transcribing other men's poems for pay. It remained for him therefore to develop and perfect his God-given genius for song, and by soliciting the favour of wealthy and powerful patrons to emulate in the fourteenth century those already legendary figures of the twelfth who had risen in the courts of princes to great eminence and abundant riches, and yet secured the highest prize of all, immortality in the hearts and on the lips of succeeding generations. Wealth, as it seems, was destined to elude Ḥāfiẓ' grasp, for the age in which he lived was an age of insecurity and sudden catastrophe; but he achieved in full measure the ampler portion of eternal fame, even in lands whose very names were unknown in his day and among peoples speaking a language cognate with his own, yet never imagined in his mind.

Shīrāz, "a large and flourishing town with many riches and many inhabitants" (as the anonymous author of the *Ḥudūd al-'ālam* called it, writing towards the end of the tenth century), capital of the province of Fārs from which Persia obtained her name in the West, at the time of Ḥāfiẓ' birth formed part of the dominions of Sharaf al-Dīn Maḥmūdshāh of the Injū dynasty, a fief of the Mongol overlord Uljāitū and his successor Abū Sa'īd. The territories about the city were infested with robber bands, to prevent whose depredations formed no small part of the cares of the ruler. The death of Abū Sa'īd in 736/1335 provided the youthful Ḥāfiẓ with his first personal experience of the transient nature of human glory; for his follower Arpa Khān had Maḥmūdshāh immediately put to death. There followed a struggle for power between his four sons, Jalāl al-Dīn Mas'ūdshāh, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaikhusrau, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad and Abū Ishāq Jamāl al-Dīn; Kaikhusrau was the first to pay the supreme penalty of unwise ambition (739/1339), to be followed to his grave the next year by Muḥammad. Meanwhile Shīrāz passed into the hands of Pīr Ḥusain, the Chupanid princeling with whom Muḥammad had conspired and who requited his confidence by slaying him; but the intruder had little joy of his filched possession; the infuriated populace drove him out, and when he would have returned the following year he fell out with a confederate and met his end. Mas'ūdshāh, the eldest of Maḥmūdshāh's sons, fell victim to an imprudent intrigue in 743/1343; and after a further bout of violence the youngest of the brothers, Abū Ishāq, at



last succeeded in establishing his authority throughout Fārs. We have a fragment of Ḥāfiẓ (Brockhaus' edition of the *Dīvān*, no. 579), written many years after these events, in which the poet recalls the reign of "Shāh Shaikh Abū Ishāq when five wonderful persons inhabited the kingdom of Fārs"—the Shāh himself, the chief judge of Shīrāz Majd al-Dīn Ismā'īl b. Muḥammad b. Khudādād (for whom see no. 50 of this selection), a certain Shaikh Amīn al-Dīn, the eminent theologian and philosopher 'Aḍud al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Ījī (d. 756/1355), and Ḥājī Qiwām al-Dīn Ḥasan, a favourite of the Shāh, whose death in 754/1353 Ḥāfiẓ celebrated with a necrology (Brockhaus no. 610).

Abū Ishāq was an ambitious man; having secured the mastery of Shīrāz and Fārs he sought to extend his dominion to embrace Yazd and Kirmān, and so brought himself into conflict with the neighbouring dynasty of the Muẓaffarids. This house, founded by Sharaf al-Dīn Muẓaffar (d. 713/1314) the fief successively of the Mongol Īlkhāns Arghūn, Ghāzān, and Uljāitū, had its capital at Maibudh near Yazd. Muẓaffar was succeeded by his son Mubārīz al-Dīn Muḥammad, at that time a lad of thirteen; he grew into a resolute and ruthless ruler, taking Yazd in 718/1318 or 719/1319 and holding his petty empire in the face of bloody rebellion; profiting by the chaos that resulted from the death of Abū Sa'īd, in 740/1340 he annexed Kirmān. Twice Abū Ishāq essayed to wrest Kirmān from the grasp of its new master, and twice he failed; in 751/1350-1 he tried his hand against Yazd, but was speedily repulsed; a third attempt at Kirmān ended in a signal defeat (753/1352). Mubārīz al-Dīn, encouraged by this final verdict, now took the offensive into the enemy's camp, and in 754/1353 he captured Shīrāz; he pursued his triumph, took Iṣfahān, and put his stubborn foe to death in 757/1356 or 758/1357.

It appears that Shīrāz did not greatly enjoy its change of rulers, for Mubārīz al-Dīn was a Sunnī zealot; the story of the closing of the wine-taverns, and Ḥāfiẓ' supposed reference to the event, may be read in Browne (*Literary History of Persia*, vol. III, pp. 277-5). However, the conqueror did not long prevail in his new empire; for in 759/1358, while on a military expedition that had won for him the temporary possession of Tabrīz, he was made prisoner by his own son Shāh Shujā' and, after the barbarous fashion of those days, blinded; he died in 765/1364. Ḥāfiẓ does not appear to have esteemed it profitable to solicit the favour of the austere Mubārīz al-Dīn, though he has two poems in praise of his chief minister Burhān al-Dīn Faṭḥ Allāh (Brockhaus, nos. 400, 571).

Shāh Shujā' enjoyed a relatively long reign, though he saw his share of fraternal envy and neighbourly rivalries. His brother Shāh Maḥmūd, who ruled over Abarqūh and Iṣfahān, in 764/1363 seized Yazd; to be in

turn besieged in Iṣfahān until the two princes came to an understanding. The reconciliation was short-lived; the following year Maḥmūd allied himself to Uwais, the Jalā'irid ruler of Baghdād since 756/1355, and after laying siege to Shīrāz for eleven months captured the city, only to lose it again in 767/1366. Shāh Maḥmūd died in 776/1375, and thereupon Shāh Shujā' possessed himself of Iṣfahān. Uwais succumbed suddenly in the same year; and the lord of Shīrāz thought the moment opportune to enlarge himself towards Ādharbāijān at the expense of Ḥusain, the new sovereign of Baghdād. However, what success Shāh Shujā' achieved was soon undone when he found his nephew Shāh Yaḥyā conspiring against him; he renounced his spoils, made peace with Ḥusain, and married his son Zain al-'Ābidīn to the Baghdādī's sister. This was far from the end of trouble between the two neighbours; and when Ḥusain was murdered by his brother Aḥmad in 783/1381 the latter, confronted by the inevitable succession of hopeful pretenders, was glad to solicit the friendly support of Shāh Shujā', and to repudiate it as soon as his throne seemed secure. But meanwhile a cloud was gathering on the horizon that would presently grow into a storm sweeping all these petty conspiracies into ruin and oblivion. Tīmūr Lang, born at Kash in Transoxiana in 736/1336, had won his way through blood to the throne as "rightful heir" to Chaghatāi and true descendant of Chingiz; after ten years' wars of consolidation, he invaded Khurāsān in 782/1380-1, and within two years mastered Gurgān, Māzandarān and Seistān. Shāh Shujā', recognizing the portents, bought the favour of the mighty conqueror with rich gifts and a daughter; death spared him further anxieties in 786/1384.

The reign of Shāh Shujā' saw the full blossoming of the flower of Ḥāfiẓ' genius. Being a man of more liberal views than his predecessor, he created the conditions indispensable to the free display of poetic talent; and though it is said that relations between the poet and his royal patron were at times lacking in cordiality (see Browne, *op. cit.* vol. III, pp. 280-2), Ḥāfiẓ immortalized him by name in four poems (cf. no. 28 of this collection and Brockhaus, nos. 327, 344, 346) and wrote a noble necrology for his epitaph (Brockhaus, no. 601); it is as certain as such conjectures can be that very many other poems in the *Dīvān*, though not naming Shāh Shujā' directly, were composed for him. Future researchers may recover much from the obscure hints scattered up and down the poet's verses to shed new light on the dark history of these years in the chequered fortunes of Shīrāz.

Shāh Shujā' shortly before dying nominated his son Zain al-'Ābidīn 'Alī to rule over Shīrāz, and his brother 'Imād al-Dīn Aḥmad to govern Kirmān. 'Alī was immediately opposed by his cousin Shāh Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Dīn Muẓaffar (Ḥāfiẓ courted him by name in five poems) who although subsequently reconciled lost his

command of Iṣfahān and fled to Yazd. In 789/1387 'Alī, learning that his nominee at Iṣfahān, Muẓaffar-i Kāshī, had yielded before the approach of Tīmūr, abandoned Shīrāz for Baghdād and left it to Shāh Yahyā to make what terms he could with the formidable invader. The people of Iṣfahān were so imprudent as to kill Tīmūr's envoys, and expiated their rashness in a fearful massacre. Tīmūr declared Sulṭān Aḥmad the governor of Fārs, as well as Kirmān; then followed a bewildering series of events, characteristic of the kaleidoscopic nature of the destinies of those times. Zain al-'Ābidīn 'Alī on quitting Shīrāz had secured the friendship of his cousin Shāh Maṣṣūr b. Sharaf al-Dīn Muẓaffar at Shūshtar, but was almost immediately attacked and imprisoned by him. Shāh Maṣṣūr (whom Ḥāfiz complimented in a number of poems, including, according to some manuscripts, no. 37 of this selection) now walked into undefended Shīrāz; and when 'Alī, released by his jailers, made common cause with Shāh Yahyā and Sulṭān Aḥmad against him, Maṣṣūr defeated the coalition and occupied all 'Irāq. 'Alī fled, but was captured by the governor of Raiy and handed over to Shāh Maṣṣūr, who ordered him to be blinded. Flushed with these successes, Maṣṣūr thought to match his fortunes against the dread Tīmūr's. It was an unlucky speculation. The mighty conqueror marched to the gates of Shīrāz, and there, after a desperate resistance, Maṣṣūr fell. The rest of the Muẓaffarids immediately declared their submission to Tīmūr; but their tardy realism secured them only a week's further lease of life, and in Rajab 795/March 1393 they were all executed.

Ḥāfiz had not lived to see the final ruin of the house that had patronized his genius and been immortalized in his songs. In the year 791/1389 (or, according to some authorities, 792/1390) he passed to the mercy of God, and discovered at last the solution to the baffling riddle of human life. His death took place in the beloved city that had given him birth; he lies buried in the rose-bower of Muṣallā, on the banks of the Ruknābād, so often celebrated in his poems; his grave is marked by a tablet inscribed with two of his songs.

Such, in brief outline, were the main events of fourteenth-century Fārs, so far as they affected Ḥāfiz' life. The legends of his relations with distant rulers, of his intended journey to India, of his debate with Tīmūr Lang, may be read in Gertrude Bell and the other biographers, for what they are worth; it is sufficient to say that we have no contemporary evidence for them, and that they rest in all likelihood upon no securer basis than the intelligent speculation of his readers in after times; modern criticism is perhaps entitled to make its own guesses with equal measure of certainty and uncertainty. What is indisputable is that these were the times in which the poet lived, and these the verses (or as much of them as are genuine, of which more hereafter) in which he expressed his reactions to the

world about him. Being a near and interested witness of many transactions of great violence, and the incalculable destinies of kings and princes, he might well sing:

"Again the times are out of joint; and again  
For wine and the loved one's languid glance I am  
fain.

The wheel of fortune's sphere is a marvellous thing:  
What next proud head to the lowly dust will it bring?  
Or if my Magian elder kindle the light,  
Whose lantern, pray, will blaze aflame and be bright?  
'Tis a famous tale, the deceitfulness of earth;  
The night is pregnant: what will dawn bring to birth?  
Tumult and bloody battle rage in the plain:  
Bring blood-red wine, and fill the goblet again!"

## 2

It is said that in the year 770/1368-9 Ḥāfiz prepared a definitive edition of his poems. What truth there is in this tradition it is impossible now to decide; in any case we possess no manuscripts based upon this archetype; for all our transcriptions—they must surely run into many thousands scattered all over the world—probably go back ultimately to the edition put out after the poet's death by his friend Muḥammad Gulandām with a florid but singularly uninformative preface. Unless therefore the unexpected should happen, and beyond all reasonable hopes a manuscript or manuscripts turn up representing a tradition anterior to Gulandām's edition, we cannot get any nearer to the poems as Ḥāfiz himself wrote them than the text authorized after his death by a friend whose piety is unquestionable, but concerning whose scholarship and accuracy we are not in a position to form any judgement. The only other slight chance of escaping from this impasse, a slender one indeed, is to examine all the commentaries on the *Dīvān* (four in Persian and three in Turkish are known), every *takhmīs* or *tasdīs* (poems incorporating an ode of Ḥāfiz) composed by later poets, and every *jung* (commonplace book) and *tadhkira* (biographies) in which Ḥāfiz is quoted, as well as every poem written since his time in which his verses are introduced by the figure known as *taḍmīn*; and it might well be found, at the end of all these labours, that we had still not progressed far beyond Gulandām.

Certainly well over a hundred printed or lithographed texts of Ḥāfiz have appeared, since the *editio princeps* issued by Upjohn's Calcutta press in 1791. Of these all but a very few represent a completely uncritical approach to the task of editorship. The best European edition is no doubt that of H. Brockhaus (Leipzig, 1854-63) which is based on the recension of the Turkish commentator Sūdī (d. 1006/1598) and includes a considerable part of his commentary. Several critical texts have been prepared in recent years by Persian scholars; of these the most reliable is that published at Teheran in 1320/1941 under the editorship of Mīrzā

Muḥammad Qazvīnī, E. G. Browne's friend and the *doyen* of modern Persian studies, and Dr Qāsim Ghanī, whose valuable and comprehensive monograph on the life and times of Ḥāfiz has already been mentioned. The most serious drawback to this otherwise admirable and beautiful text—it is a reproduction of an excellent original written in calligraphic *nasta'liq*—is its deficient critical apparatus. As this text—referred to hereafter as MQ—is based on a comparison of no fewer than seventeen manuscripts, several of them exceedingly old, and has been made by two of the most eminent Persian scholars now living, I have not hesitated to use it in editing these selections. At the same time I have mentioned in the notes such textual variants as are to be found in the editions of Brockhaus (B), V. R. von Rosenzweig-Schwannau (3 vols., Vienna, 1858-64), called hereafter RS, Ḥusain Pezhmān (=P, Teheran, 1318/1939), and (for a few poems, all so far published by this editor), Mas'ūd Farzād (=F).

The first and most fundamental problem attending the task of editing Ḥāfiz is to decide which of the poems attributed to him in the various manuscripts are genuine products of his pen. An indication of the complexity of this problem is provided by the following figures. The Calcutta 1791 edition contains 725 poems; Brockhaus printed 692; Pezhmān has 994 items, many of them marked as doubtful or definitely spurious. The editors of MQ have admitted 495 *ghazals* as unquestionably genuine, beside 3 *qaṣīdas*, 2 *mathnavīs*, 34 occasional pieces (*muqatta'āt*) and 42 *rubā'īs*—a total of 573 poems. Their austere editorship causes a number of popular favourites (popular rather in India and Europe than in Persia) to disappear, perhaps the best known of them being the jingle *tāza ba-tāza nau ba-nau* which E. H. Palmer and Gertrude Bell made into pleasant English verses.

When the supposititious poems have been rejected, the next task is to determine what lines of each genuine poem are authentic; for very many of them have been inflated in the manuscripts, sometimes by as much as four or five couplets. This labour accomplished, it yet remains to establish the correct order of the lines of each poem—there is sometimes the wildest variation in this respect between the manuscripts. Finally, and in many ways most troublesome of all, we have to settle the innumerable problems of verbal variants.

There are a number of different reasons for this wide inconsistency between the manuscripts. To consider the spurious poems first: the explanation of this phenomenon is fairly simple; no doubt the prevailing cause is the desire of copyists at one stage or other of the transmission of the text to secure for their own inferior versifying an unmerited immortality by signing their products with Ḥāfiz' name. This is the conclusion reached by all scholars who have looked at the problem,

and not only in connexion with Ḥāfiz; for it is a very prevalent malaise of Persian literature. But it seems reasonable to suppose that this does not tell the whole story. It may well be, in the first place, that other poets, possibly in Ḥāfiz' lifetime even, used the same pen-name as the great master; and that lyrics by them, quite innocently confounded with the poems of the supreme Ḥāfiz, have been diligently incorporated into the *Divān*. Again, it is not an impossible conjecture that, just as painters of great eminence in Persia are known to have signed the work of their pupils after making a few masterly retouches, so a celebrated poet would add to his income by teaching the craft to promising aspirants and would permit their "corrected" exercises to bear his name; he would be able during his lifetime to exclude such school specimens from the canon, but if they survived into later times there would be nothing but consummate literary taste to distinguish them from the poet's own work; and literary taste declined lamentably in the generations that followed Ḥāfiz, if indeed it ever existed to any marked extent among professional copyists. Lastly we have perhaps to reckon with a third group of spuria: poems written by Ḥāfiz himself—juvenilia and such-like—but rejected by him in the fastidiousness of his mature judgement. It would interest the scribe who worked for pay, especially if he had in prospect a wealthy but ill-educated patron, by dint of drawing on all these subsidiary sources to impress and please his master with "the largest and completest copy of Ḥāfiz' poems yet assembled"; and so the evil tradition of an inflated text, once securely founded, would continue into later times and ultimately gain the deceptive respectability of age.

The phenomenon of obtrusive lines calls for a rather different diagnosis. The chief causes of this blemish seem to be twofold. First, we may conjecture that men of parts, while reading a good and uninflated manuscript of Ḥāfiz, might amuse themselves by noting in the margin verses of other poets, in the same metre and rhyme, which seemed to them comparable and apposite; these annotations would of course be incorporated by a later scribe into the body of the text. Secondly, it is highly likely—and there are numerous passages in the *Divān* which lend support to this supposition—that a considerable number of these extra lines go back to Ḥāfiz himself, and represent stages in his workmanship.

Verbal variants have their own variety of causes. Primarily there is the well-known carelessness of scribes, and, what is perhaps even more deplorable, their dishonesty; failing to understand a word or a phrase, they sometimes did not hesitate to bring their archetype within the range of their own limited comprehension. In the second place, these variants in many instances doubtless perpetuate the poet's first, second, third, or even fourth thoughts.

The foregoing analysis is not, the reader must believe, mere speculation; it is based upon a wide experience of manuscripts and a considerable apprenticeship in the trade of editing oriental texts; and chapter and verse could readily be quoted to illustrate every variety of contrariety and corruption. But this book is not the place to assemble materials of that nature; and we will leave the subject with a recommendation that future editors of Ḥāfiz should exercise their scholarship, not unprofitably, by classifying according to their causes the outstanding variants in the codices.

It will be useful to conclude this section of the preface by giving a few notes on the more important of the manuscripts used in the edition of MQ, and described fully in the introductory remarks of Mīrzā Muḥammad. From these details it may be easier for the future editor of Ḥāfiz, when he comes to collate the best copies in Europe, to compare their merits with those of the finest manuscripts in Persia.

KH. MS. belonging to Saiyid 'Abd al-Raḥīm Khalkhālī, of Teheran. Dated 827/1424. Reproduced (with numerous errors) in Khalkhālī's edition of 1306/1927. Contains 495 *ghazals*; no preface or *qaṣīdas*. (Note: This is the oldest dated copy of the *Dīvān* hitherto reported. The next oldest are B = Bodleian copy dated 843/1439 and CB = Chester Beatty copy dated 853/1449. The British Museum has a *jung* dated 813-4/1410-1 which is reported by M. Minovi to contain about 110 *ghazals* of Ḥāfiz.)

NKH. MS. belonging formerly to Hājī Muḥammad Aqā-yi Nakhjawānī of Ādharbāijān, presented by him to Dr Qāsim Ghanī. Undated, ca. 850/1446. Contains 495 *ghazals*; no preface or *qaṣīdas*.

R. MS. belonging formerly to Aqā-yi Ismā'īl Mir'āt, presented by him to Dr Qāsim Ghanī. Undated, "very near the time of Ḥāfiz". No preface or *qaṣīdas*.

[Note. Other old MSS. include the following. TM<sup>1</sup> = copy dated 854/1450 in Majlis Library, Teheran. BM = British Museum copy dated 855/1451. BN = Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, copy dated 857/1453. TM<sup>2</sup> = Majlis Library, Teheran, copy dated 858/1454.]

## 3

"I am very conscious that my appreciation of the poet is that of the Western. Exactly on what grounds he is appreciated in the East it is difficult to determine, and what his compatriots make of his teaching it is perhaps impossible to understand." So, fifty years ago, wrote Gertrude Bell, Ḥāfiz' most felicitous translator; and nothing has appeared in print in the West since to give a clearer picture to the inquirer. It is unfortunately true that in classical Persian literature, literary criticism

never progressed beyond a certain stage; and while we have some admirable analyses of the tropes and figures that are accounted elegant in Persian poetry, and intricate accounts of the numerous metres, of appreciation in the Western sense we possess practically nothing. When it comes to assessing the respective merits of the poets, and explaining in what their particular virtues consist, the *tadhkira*-writers, our principal informants, are all too prone to indulge in a mixture of fulsome applause and verbal nebulousity, and that naturally does not take us very far.

Modern Persian writers have, however, gone a good way towards supplying the deficiencies of their predecessors; they have essayed to apply the canons of Western criticism to their national poets, so far as these can be applied; and we know now at least what Ḥāfiz' compatriots six centuries after think of his poetry. To help forward this aspect of our study within the limits proper to our present purpose, we offer a translation of extracts from the writings of two contemporary scholars, of undoubted authority, and thoroughly representative of the best modern Persian criticism.

(1) Riḍā-zāda Shafaq, *Tārīkh-i adabīyāt-i Īrān* (Tehran, 1321/1942), pp. 332-6.

"With the fine sensitivity and acute susceptibility which irradiate the Khwāja's poetry, it is remarkable how this liberal-hearted poet preserved the strength and serenity of his poetic imagination in the face of the bloody events of his time. All Persia was in the throes of insurrection and conflict; Fārs, and Shīrāz itself, did not escape this battle; and Ḥāfiz with his own eyes witnessed the slaying of kings, the devastation of houses, the wars of pretenders, even the quarrels between members of a single family, such as for instance the Muẓaffarids; yet he seems to have regarded these events from some spiritual eminence as if they were the little waves of an ocean; his gaze was rather fixed on the unity of the ocean of nature, the meaning and purpose of the world. It is true that on occasion his mind rebelled, and in deep emotion he would say:

'What is this anarchy that I see in the lunatic sphere? I see all horizons full of strife and sedition.'

But he always returned to his mental composure, and sought for tranquillity of heart in a world tumultuous beneath the wings of his broad, celestial thoughts.

"This mystical steadfastness of Ḥāfiz is apparent even in his *qaṣīdas*; he belongs to that class of poets who rarely indulged in panegyric, was never guilty of hyperbole. He was not the man to flatter for flattery's sake; he never surrendered his steadfastness of purpose. Though every prince in his turn was powerful and all-conquering, Ḥāfiz never debased his language, nor



transgressed the bounds of legitimate applause. He did not hesitate on occasion to proffer counsel, reminding them in penetrating and moving verses of the truth that every man in the end gets his deserts, that fate rewards and punishes every act, and reckons king and beggar equal and alike.

“Hāfiz’ spiritual greatness and mental power proceeded from that mystical consciousness which in him attained perfection. That path of life of which Sanā’ī, ‘Aṭṭār, Jalāl al-Dīn and Sa’dī had spoken each in turn and in his own way, was by Hāfiz described in language that plumbs the depths of feeling and soars to the heights of expression. Subjects of which others had spoken in detail, in his choice, brief lyrics found better and sweeter treatment. So deeply immersed was he in the mystic unity, that in every ode and lyric, whatever its formal subject, he included one or more verses expressive of this lofty theme. This indeed is perhaps the greatest individual feature of Hāfiz’ poetry; and it was by reason of this very immersion in the Unity that he had no time for the world’s plurality, for differences of faith, and all vain disputes and enquiries:

‘Excuse the war of all the seventy-two sects; as they have not seen the truth, they have plundered on the highway of legend.’

“Because he loved truth, sincerity and unity, Hāfiz railed against every manner of conflict and discord. He was especially pained and distressed by trifling quarrels and superficial differences, by the hypocrisy and imposture of false ascetics. He criticized bitterly those hypocritical Ṣūfīs who claimed to be following his own path but were in reality worldly men, parading their rags and making a display of their poverty. He had no desire to be numbered among them:

‘The fire of deceit and hypocrisy will consume the barn of religion; Hāfiz, cast off this woollen cloak, and be gone!’

Perhaps in this respect, namely in detestation and revolt against hypocrisy and imposture, no other Persian poet has equalled Hāfiz.

“His true mastery is in the lyric (*ghazal*). In Hāfiz’ hands the mystical lyric on the one hand reached the summit of eloquence and beauty, and on the other manifested a simplicity all its own. As we have already said, in short words he stated ideas mighty and subtle. Quite apart from the sweetness, simplicity and conciseness which are apparent in every lyric of Hāfiz, a spirit of genuine sincerity pervades every line. It is evident that the master’s lyrics come straight from the heart; each poem is a subtle expression of the poet’s innermost thoughts. It was by virtue of this same faith that the poet turned away and shrank from every kind of superficiality, that he rent to pieces the snare of trickery

and deceit, and rejected the outward ornaments of the faiths and sects, upbraiding in his verses all hypocrites—shaikh, ascetics and Ṣūfīs alike.

“Especially in his lyrics, Hāfiz in addition to the spark he borrowed from the fire of the *ghazals* of ‘Aṭṭār and Rūmī, also took something from the style of his own age. In this respect he shewed himself a disciple particularly of the style of such predecessors and contemporaries as Sa’dī, Khwājū, Salmān-i Sāvajī, Auḥādī and ‘Imād-i Faqīh; many of the master’s verses and lyrics are parallel to theirs. [The author here quotes a few examples of such parallelisms.] Yet for all this Hāfiz was by no means content to be a mere imitator: he had his own style, and imparted a new lustre to the words. If his poetry is more often quoted than that of Khwājū and Salmān, this is due not solely to his spirituality, his greatness and his mystical influence; its celebrity is explained in part by the sweetness of his melody and the fluency and firmness of his verse. The poet himself, with that fine talent, that subtlety of taste and gift of revelation which he indisputably possessed, was well aware of the merit of his own composition, and it was in full and sure belief that he said:

‘O Hāfiz, I have not seen anything lovelier than thy poetry; (I swear it) by the Qur’ān thou hast in thy bosom.’

Indeed Hāfiz, with that high talent, spiritual subtlety, natural gift of language, minute meditation, mystical experience and passionate gnosis which were vouchsafed to him, evolved such a construction of words and a mingling of varied expressions and ideas that he created an independent style and characteristic form of mystical lyric; so much so that connoisseurs of Persian literature can immediately recognize his poetry and identify his accent.

“In addition to his inventive gift of weaving words together and giving ideas expression, Hāfiz used special words and technical terms which he himself innovated, or which, if already used by others, find ampler display in his vocabulary. Examples of these are the words *tāmāt* (idle talk), *kharābāt* (taverns), *mughān* (Magians), *mughbachche* (young Magian), *khirqā* (mystic’s cloak), *sālūs* (hypocrite), *pīr* (elder), *hātīf* (heavenly voice), *pīr-i mughān* (Magian elder), *girānān* (weighty ones), *raṭl-i girān* (bumper), *zannār* (girdle), *ṣauma’a* (monastery), *zāhid* (ascetic), *shāhid* (beauty), *tilasmāt* (talismans), *dair* (abbey, tavern), *kinisht* (church).

“In composing his poetry Hāfiz used various rhetorical figures such as *ihām* (amphibology), *murā’āt-i nazīr* (parallelism), *tajnīs* (play on words), *tashbīh* (simile) and the like, though he had a special partiality for *ihām*. [Some examples are quoted.] He borrowed some of the similes common to the poets, such as comparing the