Indian and Persian Prosody and Recitation

edited by

HIROKO NAGASAKI

English editing by

Ronald I. Kim

Printed in India

Contents

maf-ʿū-lāt. Therefore, these faces of the similarity were settled in a circle which is the repetition of fourfold of *ma-fā-ʿī-lon.* As Najafī expresses, however, many of Persian metrical patterns are not contained in the circles and we have to . struggle with so many "relaxations" ("'Arūż-e qadīm dar barābar-e 'arūż-e jadīd", p. 26).

xxvii He added that 53% of the first one hundred Mowlavī's lyric poems are in these "wave metres" (*Mūsīqī-ye she'r*, p. 399).

xxviii He wrote that 58% of the first one hundred Sa'dī's lyric poems belong to the first four "stream metres", and that 78% of the first one hundred Ḥāfeẓ's lyric poems are in the last four "stream metres" (Ibid., pp. 398-399).

xxix Ibid., pp. 396-397. Shafi'ī-Kadkanī wrote that "clear metres" are especially often seen in Mowlavī's lyric poems because they are based on the poet's samā' (whirling Sufi dancing), heart-beating and pulsation, therefore there are very few "turbid metres" in it (Ibid., p. 401).

xxx There is a very interesting Ph.D. dissertation whose title is: *Bonyān-e moshtarak-e rītm dar mūsīqī-ye dastgāhī-ye īrān va zabān-e fārsī* (a comparative study of cell-like rhythmic patterns in Persian language and the classical music of Iran) by Negār Būbān in 2009.

Metre in Classical Persian Narrative Poetry

Zahra Taheri

The tradition of composing narrative literature has a long history in pre-Islamic Persian culture. After the Islamic conquest of Persia in the seventh century, storytelling went through a relatively long period of silence, before it was eventually revived at the beginning of the tenth century when Ferdowsi composed his monumental national epic, the Shahnameh. Although numerous stories in Persian classical literature have been written in prose, storytelling, specifically during the medieval era, was by and large produced in the form of poetry; therefore the most important historical, heroic, mythical, didactic, and lyrical stories in Persian classical literature have been narrated in the form of poetry.

The significance of poetry in Persian culture led to a flourishing of narrative poetry in Persian classical literature during the medieval era. Learning, memorizing, and reciting poetry, as well as quoting it in sermons and speeches and using it in everyday life, has long been a part of Persian cultural tradition, and many literary figures believed that versifying a story through metres and rhymes made the narration more artistic, delightful, exquisite, and attractive.[i] In general, Persian scholars employed the Arabic language to produce their philosophical and scientific works, while literary figures chose Persian as the language of poetry.

The form 'qāleb' of *maṣnavī* was employed by Persian poets for composing narrative poetry. *Maṣnavī* is a poetry form in which rhymes occur within the verse; therefore, each verse has its own independent rhyme. Although the word *maṣnavī* is an Arabic term, in Arabic prosody a different word, *mozdavaj*, has been used for this poetic genre, and the usage of this specific form has not been common in Arabic classical poetry. By and large, early narrative poetry in Persian literature, has "a consciously archaic and purely Iranian quality,"[ii] whether heroic, as Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*; lyrical, as Gorgānī's *Vis and Rāmīn*; or didactic, as Rumi's *Maṣnavī*. The first poet who

employed this form in Arabic classical poetry was *al-Raqqāshī* (d. 821), who is believed to be Persian in origin. He used the form *mozdavaj*, later called *maṣnavī* by Persian prosodists and poets, in order to versify the famous fable of *Kalīleh va Damaneh*. [iii] The lack of restrictions on rhymes and the independence of each verse in *maṣnavī* have made this genre suitable for Persian narrative poetry. In fact, it would be impossible for a poet to narrate a long story in any other poetic forms, which require a chain of identical rhymes throughout the whole poem.

Baḥr 'ocean' is a technical term in Arabic and Persian prosody which means 'basic rhythmic structure or metrical pattern of a verse' and "signifies one of the various sets of metrical speech." [iv] In Persian literature, the rhythmic structures of *ramal, hazaj, xafīf,* and *moteqāreb* have been employed for composing heroic, lyrical, didactic, and mythical narrative poetry. The most famous *maṣnavī* metres in these rhythmical structures are as follows:

1. *ma-fā-'ī-lon. ma-fā-'ī-lon. fa-'ū-lon.* $\cup - - -. \cup - - -. \cup - -.$
2. *fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'al.* $\cup - -. \cup - -. \cup - -. \cup -.$
3. *maf-'ū-lo. ma-fā-'e-lon. fa-'ū-lon.* $- - \cup. \cup - \cup -. \cup - -.$
4. *fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lon.* $- \cup - -. - \cup - -. - \cup -.$
5. *fa-'e-lā-ton. ma-fā-'e-lon. fa-'e-lon.* $- \cup - -. \cup - \cup -. \cup \cup -.$

As is well known, Arabic and Persian belong to two distinct language families and are completely different in their linguistic structure. This difference, as Elwell-Sutton observes, "has led to serious confusion among prosodists, both ancient and modern, as to the true source and nature of the Persian metres, the most obvious error being the assumption that they were copied from Arabic. This misconception arises solely from the use of the Arabic terminology to describe the Persian metres." [v] Although the Persian metrical system has adopted the rhythmic structure of Arabic prosody, the major structural differences between the two languages have led to substantial divergences in their poetic traditions. Furthermore among the approximately 300 metres used in Persian poetry, many are of Persian origin, and even some of the metrical regulations are Persian in origin. [vi] For instance, *radīf* [the word which is repeated after the rhyme in *qazal, qaṣīdeh,* or *robā'ī*] is originally Persian and has been a major characteristic of Persian poetry from the oldest surviving poems, whereas in Arabic poetry the usage of *radīf* cannot be found earlier than the 12th century. [vii] Rare cases are also found in which a Persian term was employed to describe the regulation of metres. Vaḥīd Tabrīzī (d. 1590) in his treatise on Persian prosody, *resāle-ye jam'-e mokhtaṣar*, mentions the Persian term '*shāygān*' which was used to describe the category of plural rhymes. [viii] Nevertheless, in Persian prosody the old Arabic terminology is still commonly used for scanning and classifying the metres of Persian classical poetry. [ix] The pronunciation and meaning of the technical Arabic terms used in Persian prosody are often complicated and confusing for students of Persian poetry, even if some modern Persian

prosodists believe that the usage of such terms might cause difficulties, no Persian terms have yet been created to replace them. The terms used to name the chosen metres of Persian narrative poetry are respectively as follows:

1. *Hazaj-e mosaddas-e maḥzūf* (three metrical feet): The most famous Persian narrative love stories, such as Gorgānī's *Vīs va Rāmīn,* and Nizami's *Khosrow va Shīrīn,* are composed in this metre.
2. *Moteqāreb-e moṣamman-e maḥzūf* (four metrical feet): The most celebrated heroic narrative poem in Persian literature, Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh,* as well as Nizami's *Iskandar nāmeh,* a historical fiction on Alexander's life, are composed in this metre.
3. *Hazaj-e mosaddas-e 'axrab-e maqbūż-e maḥzūf* (three metrical feet): Nizami's *Leylī va Majnūn* is composed in this metre.
4. *Ramal-e mosaddas-e maḥzūf* (three metrical feet): The most famous didactic works in Persian literature, Rumi's monumental *Maṣnavī* and 'Aṭṭar's *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr,* are composed in this metre.
5. *Xafīf-e maxbūn-e maḥzūf* (three metrical feet): Nizami's *Haft Peykar,* the historical fiction of the Sassanid king Bahrā's life, is composed in this metre.

The Book of Kings, Shahnameh *(5,500 verses, composed between 997 and 1010 by Ferdowsi (d. 1020)),* the monumental Iranian national epic, was composed by Ferdowsi in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries to narrate the mythical and historical past of Persia and its people's civilization from the creation of the world to the Arab conquest of the country in the seventh century. Ferdowsi composed his epic based on a written source, *Shāhnāme-ye 'Abūmanṣūrī,* a prose collection of mythical narratives and historical accounts of the Persian past brought together a few decades earlier in the court of Samanid by *'Abūmanṣūr Mo'amerī. Shahnameh* consists of three main sections, which represent three successive ages:

1) *Mythical.* Narrated in a powerful language, this short section begins with the account of the creation of the world and the first mortal man, *kayūmarṣ,* who is also believed to be the first king.
2) *Heroic.* As the longest section of *Shahnameh,* narrated in a rich poetic language, this section is dedicated to the life and death of the heroes who played a significant role in building and defending the Persian kingdom. The principal character of the heroic age is *Rostam,* who stands in the middle of the most magnificent scenes of battles, victories, defeats, love stories, tragedy, and loss.
3) *Historic.* This section starts with a short account of the Parthian dynasty, and mainly narrates the rise and fall of the Sassanid dynasty before the Arab conquest of Persia.

The metre of *Shahnameh* is: *Moteqāreb-e moṣamman-e maḥzūf : fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'al.* ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.

کزین برتر اندیشه برنگذرد   به نام خداوند جان و خرد

ka/zin/bar. ta/ran/dī. še/bar/nag. za/rad.   *be/nā/me. xo/dā/van. de/jā/no. xe/rad.*

∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.

خداوند روزی ده رهنمای   خداوند نام و خداوند جای

xo/dā/van. de/rū/zī. de/ho/rah. ne/māy.   *xo/dā/van. de/nā/mo. xo/dā/van.de/jāy.*

∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.

ز دانش دل پیر برنا بود   توانا بود هر که دانا بود

ze/dā/neš. de/le/pī. ro/bor/nā. bo/vad.   *ta/vā/nā. bo/vad/har. ke/dā/nā. bo/vad.*

∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−.

Translation:

1. *In the name of the Lord of both wisdom and mind / To nothing sublimer can thought be applied.*
2. *The Lord of whatever is named or assigned / A place, the Sustainer of all and the Guide.*
3. *Observing His commands. Thy source of might / Is knowledge; thus old hearts grow young again.*[xi]

Vīs va Rāmīn *(8,985 verses, composed between 1050 and 1054 by Fakhr al-Dīn As'ad Gorgānī).* One of the most famous lyric narrative poems composed in Persian. This great ancient legend is skillfully narrated in romantic, adventurous, and poetic scenes based on one of the oldest Persian romances, which can be traced to the era of the Parthian dynasty (3rd c. B.C to 3rd c. A.D). As Yarshater observes, "Once the consternation and confusion caused by the rapid Islamic conquest in the seventh century subsided and the normal pursuit of the arts was resumed, the old romances, which had for centuries entertained kings and nobles and had relived the tedium in the lives of the common folks, began to reappear."[xii]

    In the story, King *Mūbad* falls in love with Princess *Šahrū*, and when asking for her hand, *Šahrū* says that she is not young enough for him and makes a promise to marry her daughter to him if she ever gives birth to a girl. After many years, *Šahrū* gives birth to a beautiful girl, *Vīs*. In her youth, *Vīs* is forced by King *Mūbad* to marry him and taken by force to the king's palace, where she falls in love with the king's youngest brother, *Rāmīn*. *Vīs*'s nurse, who follows her to the palace of King *Mūbad*, helps her to put a spell on the king to render him impotent with *Vīs*. The love story between *Vīs* and *Rāmīn* begins in the King's palace, and soon the king discovers the secret relationship between the two young lovers. The poetic portrayal of this passionate romance is reflected in the numerous letters written between the two lovers, who believe in themselves as the treasure of loyalty and are ready to lay down their lives for their love.[xiii] The destiny of the relationship between *Vīs* and *Rāmīn* in this romantic adventure is marked by passion, union, separation, exile, reunion, anger, suffering, and secret meetings. At the

end of the story, King *Mūbad*'s day finally comes to an end, and *Rāmīn* ascends the royal throne as his successor and marries *Vīs*. This romantic legend had an enormous influence on Persian poetry and is also believed to be the source for the Celtic story of Tristan and Isolde, "following the diffusion in Europe of the traditions of Persian minstrels during the Crusades or earlier."[xiv] The metre of *Vīs* and *Rāmīn: Hazaj-e mosaddas-e mahzūf : ma-fā-'ī-lon. ma-fā-'ī-lon. fa-'ū-lon* ∪−−−. ∪−−−. ∪−−.

که بر رامین سر آید شادمانی   چو تنگ آمد قضای آسمانی

ke/bar/rā/mīn. sa/rā/yad/šā. de/mā/nī.   *čo/tan/gā/mad.qa/zā/ye/'ā.se/mā/nī.*

∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.

بر آتش عقل و صبرش را بسوزد   ز عشق اندر دلش آتش فروزد

ba/rā/taš/'aq. lo/ṣab/raš/rā. be/sū/zad.   *ze/'eš/qan/dar. de/laš/'ā/taš.fo/rū/zad*

∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.

یکایک پرده بربود از عماری[xv]   بر آمد تند باد نوبهاری

ye/kā/yek/par. de/ber/bū/daz.'a/mā/rī.   *ba/rā/mad/ton. do/bā/de/now.ba/hā/rī.*

∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−−.   ∪−−.

Translation:

1. *Thus ran the decree of Providence / that Ramin's days of happiness were to come to an end.*
2. *The fire of love was to blaze in his heart / reason and patience to burn on the fire.*
3. *A fresh spring breeze arose / and stirred the curtains on the litter one by one.*[xvi]

The Conference of Birds, Manṭeq al-Ṭayr *(4,724 verses, composed in 1177 by Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d. 1230)).* In search of their king, the birds of the world gather together. Their king, *Sīmorgh*, lives in the farthest territory of the world, *Qāf* Mountain, and the path to his place is full of dangers. Birds eagerly decide to begin their journey, but, realizing the hardship and suffering along the way, one by one they start to make excuses. In a long conversation with the birds, Hoopoe opposes their excuses and advises them with anecdotes and tales. The birds who begin their journey chose the wise Hoopoe as their leader, and he advises them about the seven stations of the path they have to go through. When, at the end of a deadly journey, the thirty surviving birds arrive at *Sīmorgh*'s place, they realize that the king they have been searching for is none other than themselves.

    In Persian *sī* means 'thirty' and *morgh* means 'birds', therefore, the thirty surviving birds are the true king, the *sī-morgh* themselves. In this allegorical mystical story, the birds' journey symbolizes the stages of human beings' search for the true Self. The most famous Sufi tale in this book is the story of *sheikh Ṣan'ān*, a Sufi master who falls in love with a Christian girl. The following verses are from *sheikh Ṣan'ān*'s chapter, given as an example

of the metre of *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr*, which is: *Ramal-e mosaddas-e maḥẓūf* : *fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lon.*   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.

دختر ترسا چو برقع برگرفت   بند بند شیخ آتش درگرفت

dox/ta/re/tar. sā/čo/bor/qa'.bar/ge/reft.   *ban/do/ban/de. šey/xo/'ā/taš. dar/ge/reft.*

— ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.

چون نمود از زیر برقع روی خویش   بست صد زنارش از یک موی خویش

čon/no/mū. daz/zī/re/bor. qa'/rū/ye/xiš.   *bas/to/ṣad/zon. nā/ra/šaz/yek. mū/ye/xiš.*

— ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.

عشق دختر کرد غارت جان او   کفر ریخت از زلف بر ایمان او [xvii]

'eš/qe/dox/tar. kar/do/ḡā/rat. jā/ne/'ū.   *kof /ro/rix/taz. zol/fo/bar/'ī. mā/ne/'ū.*

— ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ — —.   — ∪ —.

Translation:

1. The Christian turned, the dark veil was removed / A fire flashed through the old man's joints; he loved.
2. One hair converted hundreds; how could he/ Resists that idol's face show openly.
3. Love sacked his heart; the girls bewitching hair/ twined round his face impiety's smooth snare.[xviii]

Khosrow and Shīrīn *(6,500 verses, composed between 1177 and 1180 by Miami (d.1202))*. One of the most beautiful love stories ever told in Persian literature. In this glorious combination of history and romance, Nizami narrates the adventurous life of *Khosrow Parvīz* II (r. 591-628), the last powerful Sassanid king who falls in love with the princess of Armenia, *Shīrīn*, by hearing about her beauty and charm from *Shāpūr*, his master painter friend. Upon *Khosrow*'s request, *Shāpūr* travels to Armenia with the intention of wining *Shīrīn*'s heart for him by using his magical skill in drawing. *Shīrīn* falls in love with the King of Persia upon seeing his depiction and secretly escapes from the territory of Armenia, galloping towards Persia to meet her beloved. *Khosrow*, not being aware of *Shīrīn*'s decision, also impatiently starts his trip to Armenia to meet *Shīrīn*. In the middle of the way, *Shīrīn*, tired of riding, stops at a spring to take a bath and give a rest to her favorite horse *Shabdīz*, and *Khosrow* also stops at the same spot to take a rest. *Shīrīn* takes off her clothing to take a bath, and *Khosrow*, amazed by her beauty, watches her, not knowing that she is the beloved whom he is looking for. Both of them turn away, remembering the one they are pursuing, and go in opposite directions. *Khosrow* heads to Armenia and *Shīrīn* continues her journey to Persia without recognizing each other and the story goes through a convoluted process of separation, longing, and political wars. *Khosrow* and *Shīrīn* ultimately meet, but their relationship goes through an up-and down road of hardships caused by the king's playful nature and unfaithfulness. All the same, *Shīrīn* with her patient and faithful nature does not give up, and gracefully leads the events to the final stage of reunion and marriage.

Nizami has interwoven another love story into the mainstream of the events by narrating *Farhād*'s tragic destiny after he falls madly in love with *Shīrīn*. As a celebrated master sculpture, *Farhād* accepts the laborious project of digging a canal from the top of the legendary stone mountain *Bīstūn* to *Shīrīn*'s castle, so that fresh milk would flow to her palace every morning from faraway villages. The story continues through the narration of *Farhād*'s devotion and love and *Khosrow*'s jealousy and conspiracy, which leads to the tragedy of *Farhād*'s suicide and *Shīrīn*'s grief. After *Farhād*'s death, the relationship between the two lovers, *Khosrow* and *Shīrīn*, continues in a series of conversations and letters over their wondrous journey to the glorious point of the lovers' final reunion. At the end of the story, prince *Shīrūyeh*, *Khosrow*'s son from his previous marriage, falls in love with his step mother, *Shīrīn,* and kills his father in the hope of winning *Shīrīn's* heart, but *Shīrīn*, who cannot surrender her heart to anyone other than *Khosrow*, kills herself on her beloved's funeral day and rests with him forever.

The metre of *Khosrow va Shīrīn: Hazaj-e mosaddas-e maḥẓūf* : *ma-fā-ī-lon. ma-fā-ī-lon. fa-'ū-lon.*   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.

عروسی دید چون ماهی مهیا   که باشد جای آن مه بر ثریا

'a/rū/sī/dī. do/čon/mā/hī. mo/hay/yā.   *ke/bā/šad/jā. ye/'ān/mah/bar. ṣo/ray/yā.*

∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.

در آب نیلگون چون گل نشسته   پرندی نیلگون تا ناف بسته

da/rā/be/nī. lo/gon/čon/gol. ne/šas/teh.   *pa/ran/dī/nī. lo/gon/tā/nā. fo/bas/teh.*

∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.

چو بر فرق آب می‌انداخت از دست   فلک بر ماه مروارید می بست [xix]

čo/bar/far/qā. bo/mī/'an/dā.xo/taz/dast.   *fa/lak/bar/mā.ho/mor/vā/rī.do/mī/bast.*

∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — — —.   ∪ — —.

Translation:

1. He saw a bride glittering like the full moon / Her beauty's throne deserving of heavens.
2. She sat like a flower in the azure waters / A blue silken cloth wrapped around her waist.
3. When she poured water on her head / It was like the sky pouring pearls on the moon.

Leylī va Majnūn *(4,700 verses, composed in 1192 by Nizami)*. Nizami created this story based on a popular Bedouin love tale. The original is believed to be the true story of a boy who lived in the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century. *Qeys*, the son of a wealthy tribal ruler, falls in passionate love with his classmate *Leylī*, a beautiful girl from another tribe. He composes love poems in the name of his beloved, and his poetry soon becomes popular. When the boy asks for *Leylī*'s hand in marriage, her father refuses, since what *Qeys* has done by mentioning *Leylī*'s name in love poems goes against the tribal traditions and is considered a shame to the girl's family. *Leylī* marries

another man, and the madness of love destroys *Qeys's* life. He flees to the wilderness, writes his poetry in the sand, talks to animals about his love, and becomes to be called *Majnūn* 'madman'. *Leylī* falls ill and dies in her husband's home, and *Majnūn* also dies soon after his beloved's death. Nizami shaped the story of *Leylī* and *Majnūn* into a great narrative poem with illustrative details which goes far beyond the narrow framework of the original.[xx]

The metre of *Leylī and Majnūn*: *Hazaj-e mosaddas-e 'axrab-e maqbūž-e maḥzūf* : *maf-'ū-lo. ma-fā-'e-lon. fa-'ū-lon.*   – – ∪. ∪ – ∪ –. ∪ – –.

ای نام تو بهترین سرآغاز
'ey/nā/me. to/beh/ta/rīn. sa/rā/ğāz.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

بی‌نام تو نامه کی کنم باز
bī/nā/me. to/nā/me/key. ko/nam/bāz.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

از قسمت بندگی و شاهی
'az/qes/ma. te/ban/de/gī. va/šā/hī.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

دولت تو دهی بهر که خواهی
dow/lat/to. da/hī/be/har. ke/xā/hī.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

از ظلمت خود رهانیم ده
'az/ẓol/ma. te/xod/ra/hā. 'ī/yam/deh.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

با نور خود آشنائیم ده[xxi]
bā/nū/re. xo/dā/še/nā. 'ī/yam/deh.
– – ∪.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ – –.

Translation:
1. O your name the most rightful beginning / How can I open my story without your name?
2. For the share of the king and the servant / you are the divider of fortunes.
3. Release me from my inner darkness / open my heart to your divine light.

Iskandar-nāmeh (10,500 couplets, composed in 1194 by Nizami). Nizami composed the story of Alexander's life based on sources such as Islamic myths and the Alexander romances written by Pseudo Callisthenes. In the first part of the story, *Sharaf-nāmeh*, Alexander is portrayed as the conqueror of the world in search of knowledge and wisdom, who ultimately claims his prophecy. The second part of the book, *Iqbāl-nāmeh*, is the story of Alexander's growth into a powerful ruler, and also the narration of his discussion with seven Greek sages.

The metre of *Iskandar-nāmeh*: *Moteqāreb-e mosamman-e maḥzūf* : *fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'ū-lon. fa-'al*   ∪ – –. ∪ – –. ∪ – –. ∪ –.

خدایا جهان پادشاهی تو راست
xo/dā/yā. Ja/hān/pā. de/šā/hī.to/rāst.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

ز ما خدمت آید خدائی تو راست
ze/mā/xed. ma/tā/yad. xo/dā/'ī. to/rāst.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

پناه بلندی و پستی تونی
pa/nā/he. bo/lan/dī. yo/pas/tī.to/'ī.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

همه نیستند آنچه هستی تونی
ha/meh/nī. so/tan/dan. če/has/tī. to/'ī.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

خرد را تو روشن بصر کرده‌ای
xe/rad/rā. to/row/šan. ba/ṣar/kar/de/'ī.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

چراغ هدایت تو بر کرده‌ا ی[xxii]
če/rā/ğe.he/dā/yat. to/bar/kar/de/'ī.
∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ – –.   ∪ –.

Translation:
1. O God, World-Sovereignty is Thine / From us (slaves, or creatures) adoration comes; God-head (Lordship) is Thine!
2. Thou art the shelter of height (the upper world) and of depth (the lower world) / All things are non-existent; whatever is, Thou art.
3. Thou hast made the vision of wisdom luminous (to recog-nize Thee) / Thou hast lighted up the lamp of guidance (to the road of Salvation).

Haft Peykar (5,136 couplets, composed in 1197 by Nizami). This story relates the adventurous life of the Persian prince *Bahrām Gūr*, who was born to the Sassanid royal family after twenty years of their supplication to *Ahurā Mazdā*, the Zoroastrians' highest deity and the creator of truth, goodness, and light. In his youth, he discovers a locked room while wandering through the legendary palace of *Khovarnaq*, in which the portrait of seven beautiful princesses (*Haft Paykar*) from seven climes of the earth has been hidden. He falls in love with them and begins an adventurous search to win the seven beauties as his brides. Later, after he became a powerful king, *Bahrām* orders seven domes to be built in a legendary palace for his wives. The seven domes in seven colors which symbolize not only the different colors of different nations, but also the seven spheres and seven days of the week. The king visits the Indian princess in the Black Pavilion, symbol of Saturn, on Saturday; the Greek princess in the Yellow Pavilion, symbol of the Sun, on Sunday; the Moorish princess in the Green Pavilion, symbol of the Moon, on Monday; the Russian princess in the Red Pavilion, symbol of Mars, on Tuesday; the princess of Khawarazm in the Turquoise-Blue Pavilion, symbol of Mercury, on Wednesday; the Chinese princess in the Sandal-wood Pavilion, symbol of Jupiter, on Thursday; and the Persian princess in the White Pavilion, symbol of Venus, on Friday. The main body of this magnificent narrative poem contains seven stories from these seven different nations, narrated by the seven queens of *Bahrām*.

The metre of *Haft Peykar*: *Xafīf-e maxbūn-e maẓẓūf* : *fa-'e-lā-ton. ma-fā-'e-lon. fa-'e-lon.*   – ∪ – –. ∪ – ∪ –. ∪ ∪ –.

ای جهان را ز هیچ سازنده
'ey/ja/hān/rā. ze/hī/čo/sā. zan/deh.
– ∪ – –.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ ∪ – (– –).

هم نوا بخش و هم نوازنده
ham/na/vā/bax. šo/ham/na/vā. zan/deh.
– ∪ – –.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ ∪ – (– –).

تو سپردی به آفتاب و به ماه
to/se/por/dī. be/'ā/fe/tā. bo/be/māh.
– ∪ – –.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ ∪ –.

دو سرا پرده سپید و سیاه
do/sa/rā/par. de/yeh/se/pī. do/se/yāh.
– ∪ – –.   ∪ – ∪ –.   ∪ ∪ –.

بر در خویش سرفرازم کن
br/der/xvīš. sar/fa/rā/zam. kon.

وز در خلق بی نیازم کن[xxiii]

vaz/da/reh/xal. qo/bī/ne/yā. zam/kon.   bar/da/reh/xī. šo/sar/fa/rā. zam/kon.

─∪──.   ∪─∪─.   ∪∪─(──).   ─∪──.   ∪─∪─.   ∪∪─(──).

Translation:

1. *O Maker of the universe from naught / giver of sustenance and cherisher.*
2. *Unto the sun and moon / Thou hast consigned two (lofty) tents in color white and black.*
3. *Make me by being at Thy door unpraised / make me dependent not on peoples' doors.*[xxiv]

The Maṣnavī (24,650 verses, composed between 1258-1273 by Rumi (d. 1273)). As a collection of interwoven didactic stories, Jalal al-Din Rumi's *Maṣnavī* is the most celebrated mystical masterpiece of Persian literature. The term *maṣnavī* which is a 'form' or 'genre' of poetry and literally means "double-rhymed verses" (see above) has been used specifically, as a proper name, for this monumental poetic collection of narratives and anecdotes. In the Maṣnavī, Rumi is a majestic Sufi mystic who narrates colorful folk anecdotes, traditional Sufi tales, Koranic myths, and other mythical stories to illustrate the different dimensions of his spiritual teaching and clarify his mystical doctrine. The Maṣnavī consists of six books in which Rumi discusses the evil of the lower self or 'nafs,' the virtuousness of love, the meaning of reason and knowledge in human life, and human beings' path to detachment from the earthly body in order to reunite with the source of existence, light, and Truth.

The metre of *The Maṣnavī* is *Ramal-e mosaddas-e maḥzūf: fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lā-ton. fā-'e-lon.* ─∪──. ─∪──. ─∪─.

از جداییها شکایت می‌کند   بشنو از نی چون حکایت می‌کند

'az/jo/dā/ 'ī. hā/še/kā/yat. mī/ko/na   beš/no/vaz/ney. čon/ḥe/kā/yat. mī/ko/nad.

─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─.   ─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─.

در نفیرم مرد و زن نالیده‌اند   کز نیستان تا مرا ببریده‌اند

dar/na/fī/ram. mar/do/zan/nā. lī/de/and.   kaz/ne/yes/tān. tā/ma/rā/bob. rī/de/and.

─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─   ─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─.

از درون من نجست اسرار من[xxv]   هرکسی از ظن خود شد یار من

'az/da/rū/ne[e]. man/na/jos/tas. rā/re/man.   har/ka/sī/'az. ẓan/ne/xod/šod. yā/re/man.

─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─.   ─∪──.   ─∪──.   ─∪─.

Translation:

1. *Listen to the reed how it tells a tale / complaining of separation.*
2. *Saying, "ever since I was parted from the reed-bed / my lament hath caused man and woman to moan.*
3. *Every one became my friend from his own opinion / none sought out my secrets from within me.*[xxvi]

****

Based on the number of syllables used in each verse in the popular metres of classical Persian narrative poetry, we can categorize them into two groups. The first group has twenty two syllables in each verse, or eleven syllables in each hemistich:

1. *Moteqāreb-e moṣamman-e maḥzūf:* Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* and Nizami's *Iskandar-nāmeh.*
2. *Hazaj-e mosaddas-e maḥzūf:* Fakhr al-Dīn 'As'ad Gorgānī's *Vīs and Rāmīn* and Nizami's *Khosrow and Shīrīn.*
3. *Ramal-e mosaddas-e maḥzūf:* Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr* and Rumi's *Maṣnavī.*

The second group has twenty syllables in each verse, or ten equal syllables in each hemistich:

1. *Hazaj-e mosaddas-e 'axrab-ę maqbūż-e maḥzūf:* Nizami's *Leylī and Majnūn.*
2. *Xafīf-e maxbūn-e maḥzūf:* Nizami's *Haft Peykar,*

The relationship of the rhythmic structure, metre, musical characteristics of letters, expressional mode, and images to the theme and subject of the poems in classical Persian poetry has drawn the attention of several contemporary Persian metricians and literary figures.[xxvii] However, no one has yet investigated the issue independently, and one can say that there is no major research available on this subject. It is an accepted fact that the metre of a poem is a reflection of the poet's mood and emotions, and has a great impact on transferring the images from the poet's to the reader's mind.[xxviii] In the conclusion to this preliminary study, I would like to point out some facts regarding the harmony between the metrical pattern and the themes and subjects employed in classical Persian narrative poetry.

In the classical Persian literary tradition, the chosen metrical pattern for versifying heroic narrative poetry is *moteqāreb,* which is believed by prosodists to be Persian in origin. All known Persian heroic stories are versified according to this metrical pattern, except for Mas'oudī Marvzī's *Shahnameh,* which is composed in *hazaj.*[xxix]

Therefore, we can assume with a high degree of likelihood that *moteqāreb* was considered suitable for the poetic narration of epics and historical stories dealing with wars, victories, and defeats. In the *Shahnameh,* Ferdowsi skillfully portrayed the past of Persia, from myth to history, and narrated the glory of heroic acts, the wisdom of sages, the suffering of lovers' separation and the joy of their reunion, and the hero's tragic death in this metrical pattern. His indepth knowledge of the value of words, and the music and sounds of the Persian alphabet, and in particular his mastery in playing with the short and long vowels, enabled him to create a masterpiece in which a single metrical pattern founds the capacity to portray many different, and in some cases paradox, themes.

In contrast, the metrical pattern of *hazaj* is believed to have been originally more fitting for poems which were sung in a joyful manner.[xxx] Nizami's *Khosrow va Shīrīn* and Gorgānī's *Vīs va Rāmīn*, the most celebrated love stories in classical Persian narrative poetry are composed in this metrical pattern. Both of these magnificent love stories portray numerous colorful scenes of nature and human beings' beauty and glamour, joyful feasts, and lovers' conversations and love making, before eventually arriving at a happy ending of reunion for the major characters. However Nizami also masterfully narrated the sorrowful moments of the lovers' separation as well as the tragedy of *Farhād*'s death in the same metrical pattern, and was able to successfully create the necessary mood and feeling of sorrow in *hazaj*. In *Vīs and Rāmīn,* the two lovers reunite after a long period of secret romaance to live happily ever after. The final chapter of *Khosrow and Shīrīn* also narrates the passionate reunion between the two lovers after a long separation, but here the joy of reunion in this world shortly turns tragic, and ends up with the two lovers reuniting in the eternal world.

Rumi composed his monumental didactic work, the Maṣnavī in *ramal* metrical pattern, having been inspired by his gnostic master predecessor 'Attār, who had versified his mystical tale, *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr,* in the same metre a few decades earlier. It is worthy of mention that 'Attār composed almost all of his famous works in *hazaj* metrical pattern except the *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr.* All the same, Rumi preferred and, consciously or unconsciously, chose *ramal,* the metrical pattern of *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr,* to compose his didactic masterpiece. This indicates that Rumi recognized the suitability of this metrical pattern for expressing his mystical teaching and spiritual doctrines.

Further examination and exploration of the inner harmony and relationship between the metres and themes of classical Persian narrative poetry on the one hand, and the adabtibility of one metre for different moods of narration in a versified story on the other, can undoubtedly open a new chapter in the field of Persian prosody.

References

'Aṭṭar, Farīd al-Dīn, 1377/1998, *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr*, ed. Ṣadeq Gowharīn, Tehran.

'Aṭṭar Nīshabūrī, 1383/2004, *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr*, ed. Mohammad Reza Shafi'i Kadkanī, Tehran.

——, 1984, *The Conference of the Birds*, trans. Dick Davis, USA.

Blochmann, H., 1969, *Prosody of the Persians,* Michigan.

Encyclopedia Iranica, ed. 'Ehsān Yārshāter, vol. II, fascicle. 6, New York.

Ferdowsi, Hakīm 'Abolqāsem, *Shahnameh*, ed., 1325/ 1946, Mohammad Dabīr Seyāqī, Tehran.

Gorgānī, Fakhr al-Dīn, 1337/1958, *Vīs and Ramīn*, ed. Mohammad Ja'far Mahjūb, Tehran.

Gorgānī, Fakhr al-Dīn 'As'ad, 1972, *Vīs and Ramīn*, trans. George Morrison, New York.

Jalāl al-Dīn Balkhī, *Maṣnavī*, ed., 1375/1996, Mohammad 'Este'lāmī, Tehran.

Keshavarz, Fatemeh, 1998, *Reading Mystical Lyric*: The Case of Jalal al-Din Rumi Colombia (South Carolina).

Khānlarī, Parvīz Natel, 1345/1966, *Vazn-e she'r-e Farsi*, Tehran.

Najafī, 'Abolhasan, 1386/2007, *Tabaqeh Bandī-ye Vaznhāye She'r-e Farsi*, Tehran.

Nizami, 1966, *The Story of Layla and Majnun*, trans. Dr. R. Gelpek, London.

Nizami Ganjeh-e, 1366/1987, *Khosrow va Shīrīn*, ed. Behrūz Ṣervatīyān, Tehran.

——, [n. d.], *Kullīyāt-e Nizami Ganjavī*, ed. Dr. Mo'īnfar, Tehran.

——, 1924, *The Haft Paikar*, trans. C. E. Wilson, London.

——, 1835, *Laili and Majnun*, trans. James Atkinson, London.

Nizami Ganjeh'e, 1363/1984, *Leylī va Majnūn*, ed. Behūz Ṣervatīyān, Tehran.

Nizami Ganjavī, *Sharafnāmeh*, ed. 1335/1956, Vahīd Dastgerdī, Tehran.

Rumi, Jalāl al-Dīn, 1989, *The Mathnavi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi*, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, Vol. 1, Lahore.

Tabrīzī, Vahīd, 1959, *resāle-ye jam'-e mokhtaṣar*, ed. Andre Burtles, Moscow.

Shafi'I Kadkanī, Mohammad Reza, 1358/1979, *Ṣovar-e Khīyāl dar She'r-e Farsi*, Tehran.

Shamīsā, Sīrūs, 1386/2007, *'Ashnā'ī bā 'Arūż va Qāfīyeh*, Tehran.

——, 1375/1996, *Farhang-e 'Arūżī*, Tehran.

——, 1370/1991, *'Anvā'-e 'Adabī*, Tehran.

Warner, Arthur George and Warner, Edward, 1905, *Shahnama of Firdausi*, vol. 1, London.

---

[i] Shamīsā, Sīrūs, *'Anva'e 'Adabī*, Tehran, 1370/1991, p. 225.

[ii] Clinton, Jerome, 'Court Poetry at the Beginning of the Classical Period', *Persian Literature*, ed. Ehsān Yārshāter, New York, 1987, p. 87.

[iii] Shamīsā, *'Anvā'-e 'Adabī*, p. 331.

[iv] Blochmann, H., *Prosody of the Persians*, Michigan, 1969, p. 24.

[v] Sutton, L. p. Elwell, 'Aruz', *Encyclopeadia Iranica*, ed. 'Ehsān Yārshāter, vol. II, fascicle 6, New York, p. 670.

[vi] Shamīsā, Sīrūs, *'Ashnā'ī bā 'Arūz va Qāfīyeh*, Tehran, 1386/2007, pp. 39, 87-88.

[vii] Shafi'I Kadkanī, Mohammad Reza, *Ṣovar-e Khīyāl dar She'r-e Farsi*, Tehran, 1358/1979, pp. 221-233.

[viii] Tabrīzī, Vahīd, *resāle-ye jam'-e mokhtaṣar*, ed. Andre Burtles, Moscow, 1959, p. 116-118.

[ix] Khānlarī, Parvīz Natel, *Vazn-e she'r-e Farsi*, Tehran, 1345/1966, P.168.

[x] Ferdowsi, Ḥakīm 'Abolqāsem, *Shahnameh*, ed., Mohammad Dabīr Seyāqī, Tehran, 1325/ 1946, p. 1.

[xi] Warner, Arthur George and Warner, Edward, *Shahnama of Firdausi*, vol. 1, London, 1905, pp. 100-101.

[xii] Eḥsān Yārshāter's note to the translation of *Vīs and Rāmīn* by George Morrison, 1972, New York, p. vii.

[xiii] Gorgānī, Fakhr al-Dīn 'As'ad, *Vīs and Ramīn*, trans. George Morrison, New York, 1972, P. 137.

[xiv] Yārshāter's note to the translation of *Vīs and Rāmīn*, p. vii.

[xv] Gorgānī, Fakhr al-Dīn, *Vīs and Rāmīn*, ed. Mohammad Ja'far Mahjūb, Tehran, 1337/1958, p. 65.

[xvi] Gorgānī, p. 32.

[xvii] 'Attar Nīshabūrī, *Manṭeq al-Ṭayr*, ed. Mohammad Reza Shafī'i Kadkanī, Tehran, 1383/2004, p. 287.

[xviii] 'Attar, Farīd al-Dīn, *The Conference of The Birds*, trans., Dick Davis, 1984, p.59.

[xix] Nizami Ganjeh'e, *Khosrow va Shīrīn*, ed., Behrūz Ṣervatīyān, Tehran, 1366/1987, pp 190-191.

[xx] Nizami, *The Story of Layla and Majnun*, trans. Dr. R. Gelpek, London, 1966, p. 215.

[xxi] Nizami Ganjeh'e, *Leylī va Majnūn*, ed. Behrūz Ṣervatīyān, Tehran, 1363/1984, pp. 25-26.

[xxii] Nizami Ganjavī, *Sharafnāmeh*, ed. Vahīd Dastgerdī, Tehran, 1335/1956, p. 2.

[xxiii] Nizami, *Kullīyāt-e Nizami Ganjavī*, ed. Dr. Mo'īnfar, Tehran, [no date], pp. 497-498.

[xxiv] Nizami, *The Haft Paikar*, trans. C. E. Wilson, London, 1924, pp. 1-3.

[xxv] Jalāl al-Dīn Balkhī, *Maṣnavī*, ed. Mohammad 'Este'lāmī, Tehran, 1375/1996, p. 9.

[xxvi] Rumi, Jalāl al-Dīn, *The Mathnavi of Jalalu'ddin Rumi*, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, vol. 1, Lahore, 1989, p. 5.

[xxvii] Shamīsā, *'Ashnā'ī bā 'Arūz va Qāfīyeh*, pp. 83-86. See also Shafī'I Kadkanī, *Ṣovar-e Khīyāl dar She'r-e Farsi*.

[xxviii] Shafī'I Kadkanī, *Ṣovar-e Khīyāl dar She'r-e Farsi*, p. 37.

[xxix] Shamīsā, *'Anvā'-e 'Adabī*, p. 140.

[xxx] Blochmann, p. 26.

Verbal Rhythm and Musical Rhythm:
A Case Study of Iranian Traditional Music

Masato Tani

Introduction

In Iranian music there are, of course, various genres. According to the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Iranian music may roughly speaking be divided into two categories, "art music" and "folk music". "Folk music" refers to religious recitation, narrative and didactic song, lyric song, popular entertainment and dance music, whereas "art music" refers to the music based on the modal system called *dastgāh*[1], which was organized mainly at the royal court during the Qajar dynasty, and in which the Persian mystic poems of Rumi, Ḥāfeẓ , and the like are usually sung. In this article, we will be concerned with this *dastgāh* music in order to observe the relationship between verbal rhythm and musical rhythm, and the term "Iranian traditional music" will refer to this *dastgāh* music.

In the field of Iranian traditional music studies, much has been written about the relationship between verbal rhythm and musical rhythm (Zonis 1965:645, Tsuge 1970, Miller 1999). In Iranian traditional music, the *żarbi* (literally, rhythmic), meaning the parts with a fixed rhythm, and *bi-żarbi* or *āvāz*[2], meaning the parts without a fixed rhythm, usually alternate in succession. However, compared to the music of neighboring countries, Iranian music is characterized by having less measure in rhythm. For this reason, past studies have mainly focused on the *bi-żarbi* or *āvāz* parts, which cannot be divided into measures in a Western sense, from the viewpoint of how the Persian poetic meter is incorporated in those sections (See, for example, Tsuge 1970). In addition, *bi-żarbi* or *āvāz* is basically improvised in free rhythm and performed based on poetic meter, whereas *żarbi* is basically composed music in which the musical rhythm has already been established. For this reason, *bi-żarbi* or *āvāz* has been considered to be an

Contents