



GOLESTĀN-E SA'DI

GOLESTĀN-E SA'DI, probably the single most influential work of prose in the Persian tradition, completed in 656/1258 by Mošarref-al-Din Mošleḥ, known as Shaikh Sa'di of Shiraz (for the confusion about his name, see Šafā, III/1, pp. 584-614). It was dedicated to the Salghurid Atabeg in Fārs, Moẓaffar-al-Din Abu Bakr b. Sa'd b. Zangi (G51), and his son, Sa'd (G54), as well as the vizier Fakr-al-Din Abu Bakr b. Abi Naṣr (G55; concerning these dedicatees see Qazvini, pp. 721-31, 747-49). Sa'di hoped his work would also cause future readers to remember the "dervishes" in their prayers. He evidently did not appear at court in person to present the *Golestān*, feeling it inappropriate to the station of the dervishes with whom he associated (*tā'efa-ye darvišān*), though this group did feel an obligation to acknowledge their benefactors (*šokr-e ne'mat-e bozorgān wājeb*). Sa'di apologizes for the delay in presenting a token of service to the court, perhaps suggesting that he had not submitted any work since the dedication of the *Bustān* (q.v.) in the previous year.

As these dual allegiances might lead us to expect, striking the proper balance between the exercise of efficacious power and of enlightened moral authority in political relations, and the assertion of self-interest versus humane altruism in interpersonal relations, are central concerns throughout the *Golestān*. Written in prose liberally sprinkled with verse in a variety of forms and meters, the *Golestān* follows the general themes and organization of the *Bustān*, but is grouped under eight (rather than ten) chapter rubrics, like the eight gates to paradise (G57): "On the Conduct of Kings" (41 stories), "On the Morals of Dervishes" (48 stories), "On the Excellence of Contentment" (29



stories), “On the Benefits of Silence” (14 stories), “On Love and Youth” (21 stories), On Frailty and Old Age (9 stories), On the Effects of Education (*tarbiat*, 20 stories), On Manners (non-narrative aphorisms and maxims).

In the epilogue, Sa’di describes the *Golestān* as primarily entertaining, a feature he predicts may lead moralist critics to dismiss it, but explains his purpose as delivering sermons (*maw’ēza*) and counsel (*naṣiḥat*) in a palatable form (G191). He does this with deliberate terseness and concision (*be ʿariq-e eḳteṣār*, G56; *ijāz-e soḳan-rā maṣlaḥat did*, G57) through anecdotes and witticisms (*nawāder*), parables (*amṭāl*), tales (*hekāyāt*), and reports about the conduct of the kings of the past. With few exceptions (e.g., chap. 2:40), Sa’di narrates these in prose, typically reserving verse to punctuate the narrative with commentary or draw a moral from it. The narratives range in length from jokes delivered in a short sentence or two (e.g., chaps. 1:12, 3:25), to stories which unfold over several pages (e.g. chaps. 3:28, 5:19, 7:20). Sa’di hopes the crown prince will read the book and not find it tiresome, and that the vizier will likewise approve (G54-55). As Adam Olearius (p. xviii) remarked in 1654, Sa’di’s way of speaking deep truths in terse words was likely to make its impression on kings and potentates.

In several vignettes, Sa’di gives a highly stylized account of the circumstances which inspired him to write the *Golestān*, telling us of his conviction, reached after contemplating one night how he had wasted his life, that one should strive to capture the prize of righteousness (*guy-e niki*; G52). He therefore decided to withdraw from society, erase the delirious things he had written, and take a penitent vow of silence for the rest of his life. However, an old friend comes to visit and is vexed by this unsociable behavior. The friend insists that it would contravene propriety and good sense for ‘Alī’s sword to remain in its scabbard or for Sa’di’s tongue to stay silent in his mouth. Lacking the heart to act churlishly with his comrades, Sa’di’s resolve melts, and they venture out together into the warmth of mid-spring (1 Ordibehešt, or late April; G53).

That same evening, Sa’di encounters another friend in a garden, where they stay the night. Preparing to return to town the next morning, the companion begins gathering rose petals to take back as souvenirs, whereupon Sa’di comments that ephemeral things make unsuitable objects of affection (a line Victor Hugo later borrowed for *Les Orientales*). Sa’di promises instead to compose a roseate book whose leaves would never fall to the tyranny of the autumn winds; that very day he completed a portion (*faṣl*) of the book on



social graces and the etiquette of conversation (*dar ḥosn-e mo'āšarat wa ādāb-e moḥāwarat*, G54). This does not correspond precisely to any of the chapter (*bāb*) rubrics provided in the table of contents of the *Golestān*, but if the eighth chapter (*dar ādāb-e šoḥbat*) is intended, this would mean that the book began as a series of maxims and admonitions rather than as a collection of anecdotes.

Sa'di frequently introduces his anecdotes as things he saw or heard about during his travels, and while some of the anecdotes obviously draw upon literary tradition, relatively few have been traced to specific written sources (Massé, pp. 257-59). The form of expression, at least, seems unique to Sa'di, and the elaborate conceit (see above) of the *Golestān* as rose petals/florilegium pages gathered as souvenirs of a sojourn out of town reinforces the impression that the *Golestān*, like the *Bustān*, was offered as lessons learned in the course of the author's travels beyond Shiraz. Much of what Sa'di presents as personal experience in both these works has, however, been shown to be greatly embellished or wholly fabricated. Sa'di himself warns us that "he who has seen the world tells many lies" (chap. 1:32), but the temptation to cull biographical details has nevertheless proved irresistible (e.g., Massé). However, a more skeptical consensus about Sa'di's historical reliability has been building (see most recently, Davis and Purpirār), and it has been shown that the "Sa'di" who appears as protagonist in over 40 stories in the *Golestān* should be understood primarily as a poetic persona, rather than as a chronicler of events (Matini, 1973).

Despite these inherent dangers, the *Golestān* affords some of what little we know first-hand about Sa'di. The epilogue alludes (G190) to the Mongol sack of Baghdad and the toppling of the Caliphate, which occurred only months before the completion of the work in 656/1258. Sa'di comments about one poem in the introduction, in which a fifty year-old persona reflects upon his life, that it mirrors his own personal situation (G52). Based upon this topos of age, it has generally been inferred that Sa'di was about fifty years old at the time the *Golestān* was written, thus placing his birth in the year 606/1209, though 'Abbās Eqbāl (pp. 641, 644) argues for a later date, between 610/1213 and 615/1218.

The *Golestān* includes over forty direct quotations from the Qur'ān and the Hadith, and Sa'di tells us he was of pious and ascetic bent in childhood, performing devotions well into the night (chap. 2:7). Sa'di shares much in common with the tradition of popular homily, but seems uninterested in the



literal or legalistic exegesis of traditional *feqh*, asserting that “the purpose of the revelation of the Qur’ān is the acquisition of a good character, not the recitation of the written characters” (G184). His concerns revolve around pragmatic situational ethics and personal integrity rather than religious law and systematic theology, reflecting the values of the social milieu of the *kānaqāh* and *rebāṭ* more than the *madrasa*. Sa’di casts numerous dervishes (*darviš*), pious men (*pārsā*, *‘ābed*), and ascetics (*zāhed*) in the role of protagonist in the *Golestān*, and one of the longest chapters is devoted to the dervishes. Though “dervish” often designates a stock Sufi character, Sa’di sometimes uses it to refer more generally to the poor or meek (Haḳāmaneši, pp. 170-75; e.g. chap. 2:15). The dervishes and pious men of the *Golestān* are mostly anonymous characters, with few of the heroes of the Sufi tradition being celebrated by name. ʿUṭ-l-Nun Meṣri appears once (chap. 1:29) and Sa’di does make ‘Abd-al-Qāder Gilāni (d. 561/1165; see Qazvini, pp. 786-88; Eqbāl, p. 637) the hero of one story (chap. 2:3); he also describes the grandson of Abu’l-Faraj b. Jawzi (killed in 656/1258), who taught in the Mostanṣeriya *madrasa* and became the *moḥtaseb* in Baghdad from 633/1235 (Eqbāl, pp. 640-41; Qazvini, pp. 780-84), as one of his own teachers (chap. 2:18). In the *Bustān* (chap. 2), Sa’di also mentions learning from the “knowledgeable Shaikh” Šehāb-al-Din ‘Omar Sohravardi (d. 1234), who had promoted a *fotowwa*-inspired order among the merchant classes on behalf of the caliph. Sa’di’s connection to the Sufi tradition seems, however, to have been loose and informal. He seems unconcerned with strict adherence to all its principles (Foruzānfar, pp. 704-5), and the breaking of his vow of silence to compose the *Golestān* perhaps implies that he never completed the rites of seclusion that would constitute initiation into a Sufi order.

While Sa’di often counsels tolerant and altruistic humanism in the *Golestān* (e.g., “mankind are all members of one body,” chap. 1:10), his principles sometimes derive from conventional mores, or from simple comfort and convenience (chap. 2:29), and sometimes betray the prejudices of the day against black Africans (chap. 1:40), Jews (chaps. 3:21, 4:9), and women (G179), etc. (Southgate).

Style and Criticism. Modern observers have independently remarked upon the perceived deficiencies of organization and consistency in the *Golestān* and in another work completed within fifteen years of it, the *Maṭnawī* of Jalāl-al-Din Rumi, both of which illustrate religious, political and socio-ethical values through entertaining and edifying tales. Remarks have been made about the



“careless” and “hasty nature of the composition” (Arberry, pp. 12, 20) of the *Golestān*, and how it “sags a bit in the middle” (Yohannan, 1987, p. 59), or how it is “more superficial and elaborately ‘devised’” than the more earnest and carefully organized *Bustān* (Wickens, 1974, pp. xv-xvi; Dašti, p. 277). Indeed, though Sa’di sometimes relates two or three consecutive stories with a similar theme or moral in the *Golestān*, there is no easily discernible progression or logical relationship between the successive tales within a chapter, leaving the overall impression of a mosaic of tiles juxtaposed unsystematically. A few stories even seem to clash with the theme of the chapter in which they are set.

While acknowledging the *Golestān* as one of the three most important books in Persian literature, next to the *Maṭnawī* and the *Šāh-nāma* (p. 229), ‘Ali Dašti (q.v.) has been its most vocal critic. He argued that many of its stories lack significance (pp. 238, 246) and development (p. 271), and that the verse summations are not always pertinent to the tale (pp. 269-71). Many have attempted to defend the *Golestān* from these charges (e.g., Haḳāmaneši, pp. 202 ff.). Henri Massé (p. 208) had already proposed that the semi-disorder might be Sa’di’s deliberate effort to avoid the appearance of dogmatism or methodical rigor. Even though judging it unsuitable as a manual of ethics (pp. 248, 252), Dašti does allow that the exactitude of its aphorisms (esp. in chap. 8) exhibits the concision of mathematical formulas (p. 272). It also provides us with a unique document of the daily life, customs, and attitudes of the common people of Sa’di’s day (Dašti, p. 249), to which its success can in large part be attributed (Maḥjub, pp. 596-97).

The *Golestān* assumes a good knowledge of Arabic, but while erudite, is rarely recondite. It addresses a general audience, though some few passages have caused confusion for copyists and provoked debate among commentators (e.g., *qaṣab al-jayb*, G53, a verse in Shirazi dialect, chap. 6:8, etc.; see Yusofi, 1989, pp. 205-8, 473-74, and Rahbar, 1973). Sa’di seems to have conversed in Arabic with facility (chap. 6:1), and throughout the work intersperses original Arabic verses, about the merit of which opinion has been divided. A few of the Persian phrases seem to follow the grammatical structures of Arabic (Hādizāda), but Sa’di assumes a Persian audience and provides Persian translations where the Arabic passages are essential to an understanding of the narrative (e.g., chap. 7:8).

Some European commentators found the bawdier passages in shocking contrast to the wisdom and moralistic intentions of the work, but generally excused this apparent vulgarity as a difference in occidental and oriental



manners (de Sacy, p. 162). Critics have faulted the *Golestān* for its “Machiavellian” ethics (Browne, p. 526; Massé, pp. 195, 245-6; Dašti, pp. 248, 252; Yohannan, 1987, p. 60), with commentators objecting in particular to the moral of the first story—“Better a white lie that is constructive than a truth unleashing what’s destructive” (chap. 1:1)—and to the advice that kings should suppress enemies and strike preemptively at those who fear them. Such criticism overlooks the fact that Sa’di’s comments on statecraft do not depart from the principles reflected in prior examples of the Mirror for Princes genre in Persian. Others have defended him from the charge of practical or utilitarian ethics (Bahmanyār), pointing out similar views among European thinkers like Victor Hugo (Yusofi, 1990, pp. 230 ff.; one might also adduce Blake’s line: “The truth that’s told with bad intent/Beats all the lies you can invent”). The appropriateness of Sa’di’s counsel to the political circumstances after the Mongol invasion and his strong sympathy for the vulnerable and oppressed have also been emphasized (Davis). Already in 1847 we find Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his poem “Saadi,” advising our poet not to heed “what the brawlers say,” and urging critics not “to vex with odious subtlety/The cheerer of men’s hearts.”

Many have seen the *Golestān* as the continuation of the *Maqāmāt* tradition (Bahār, III, p. 126, Kaṭibi, etc.), though others have also linked it with the prose tradition of Sufi literature (Ebrāhimi-Ḥariri, pp. 393, 403) and the essays of Jāḥeẓ. Sa’di adorns his prose with parallel rhymed phrasing (*sajʿ*) and various types of paronomasia (*jenās*). While several works of rhyming prose might have provided inspiration for Sa’di (e.g., the *Monājāt* of Anṣārī, the Meccan *suras* of the Qurʾān), the style of adorned prose (*naṭr-e mosajjaʿ* or *maṣnuʿ*), as distinct from plain prose (*naṭr-e morsal*) on one end of the continuum and verse (*naẓm*) on the other, was a defining characteristic of Ḥamidi’s Persian adaptation (551/1156) of the Arabic *Maqāmāt* of Ḥariri and Hamadāni. But whereas Ḥamidi’s rather mechanical use of *sajʿ* and recherché Arabic lexemes and morphemes can result in obscure and purple passages, Sa’di usually does not strain for rhymes or employ parallelism to excess (Homāʾi, 1967, pp. 19-34); in fact, some stories do not rely upon it at all (e.g., chaps. 3:12, 4:14).

Very few stories in the *Golestān* take episodes in the *Maqāmāt* genre as explicit models, though at least one (Sa’di’s debate with a dervish about wealth and poverty, chap. 7:20), clearly does. Like the *Maqāmāt*, the stories of the *Golestān* reflect humorously on various social classes and types, are often set in distant locales, and rely upon rhymed parallel prose interspersed with verse. Unlike



the *Maqāmāt*, the *Golestān* does not follow the framework of a single narrator recounting episodes about a recurring picaresque hero, and, with its generally much shorter stories, does not depend as much on characterization or plot development. Instead, the *Golestān* and *Bustān* have been seen as the culmination of the Persian *pand-nāma* genre, as exemplified in the *Qābus-nāma* or *Kimiā-ye sa'ādat* (de Fouchécour, pp. 5, 311). In this view, Sa'di replaced Ġazzālī as the pre-eminent moral authority among Persian speakers by perfecting a trend in which, as with Sanā'i's *Ḥadiqat al-ḥaqīqa* (q.v.), the tradition of moral/wisdom literature merged with the mystical tradition (de Fouchécour, p. 253). This attention to content as the defining generic feature of the *Golestān* has the advantage of highlighting the unique nature of Sa'di's achievement.

The *Golestān* combines simple and unadorned prose to create a new genre not clearly indebted to any prior form (Maḥjub), and by joining the previously distinct prose and verse registers into a unified literary idiom (Foruḡi, p. vi) Sa'di created a "true literary form out of what had hitherto been only too often a rather shapeless mass of ill-assorted materials" (Arberry, p. 21). Despite this, surprisingly little has been written about the stylistics of the *Golestān*. Malek-al-Šo'arā' Bahār gives the best technical analysis of its rhetorical features (pp. 124-56). Ziā' Mowāḥḥed (pp. 145-79) notes the minimalist plots sculpted out of language, word play, and psychological insight, and the way Sa'di memorably and musically expresses *mots justes*, often without recourse to imagery, and concludes that the *Golestān* is characteristically a "poetry of ideas."

Sa'di boasts in the epilogue (G191) that he did not borrow verse from other poets to adorn the *Golestān*, as was common epistolary practice. Despite the appearance of one line from Asadi (G59; Yusofi, pp. 235-36), and a pair from the *Rāḥat al-šodur* (Purpirār, p. 70), this claim holds true, though Sa'di does apparently quote lines of his own (Browne, pp. 536-37). The suggestion that many lines of Sa'di's verse were inspired by particular Arabic examples in Motanabbi (Maḥfuz) has been unanimously rejected (e.g., Moḥaqqueq, p. 184).

Influence. Now universally regarded as the outstanding practitioner of "inimitable simplicity" (*sahl-e momtane'*) in Persian literature, Sa'di describes himself in the *Golestān*'s preface as already celebrated far and wide for his style, claiming that copies of his compositions were considered quite valuable (G51). We know that Sa'di's *ḡazals* were celebrated in distant parts during his lifetime, though evidently not before the mid-1250s (Eqbāl), and perhaps not until after 658/1260 (Minovi, p. 670). Sa'di himself had complained in 1257



(*Bustān*, intro.) that he was not properly appreciated in Shiraz, but with the appearance of the *Bustān* and *Golestān* that certainly changed.

Sa'di was quite prescient in offering the *Golestān* as a model of epistolary style for the emulation of orators and secretaries (*motakallemān-rā ba kār āyad wa motarasselān-rā balāḡat bīafzāyad*, G54). Its fame spread widely and rapidly, displacing Abu'l-Ma'ālī Naṣr-Allāh's *Kalīla wa Demna-ye bahrāmšāhi* (which 'Awfi had encouraged secretaries to study) as the pinnacle of Persian prose style. The *Golestān* was known in Anatolia within a few years of its composition, perhaps facilitated by the fact that Ġiāṭ-al-Dīn Kaykōsrow, the Seljuk ruler in Konya, had married the daughter of Sa'di's patron, Abu Bakr b. Sa'd. In a letter written sometime before 677/1278, a certain Abu Bakr al-Motaṭabbēb "Ṣadr" in Konya quoted a *qeṭ'a* from the *Golestān* (*tavānam ān ka ...*, chap. 1:5) without mentioning Sa'di's name, and Aflāki in his *Manāqeb al-'ārefīn* (compiled 718-54/1318-1353), also quotes without attribution an Arabic verse occurring in the preface (*balāḡa al-'olā...*G50).

The *Golestān* inspired numerous imitations, beginning with the *Rawza-ye kold* of Majd K̄vāfi (733/1333) and including most notably Jāmi's *Bahārestān* (892/1497) and Qā'āni's *Parišān* (1152/1836), the latter published in the margins of an early *Golestān* lithograph (Tabriz, 1286/1869). The aptness and vitality of Sa'di's proverbs and aphorisms can be measured by their continued currency in modern Persian conversation (Kōrramšāhi, p. 15); Ġolām-Ḥosayn Yusofi (1984) cites 405 proverbs coined in the *Golestān* and Jalāl-al-Dīn Homā'i (1938, p. 814) remarks how these have permeated all social classes, even the illiterate.

In Ottoman Turkey, the plethora of *Golestān* commentaries from the 16th century testifies to its widespread use by this time as a textbook, both of the Persian language and of Islamic ethics (Yazıcı, p. 323). Arabic commentaries were produced by Ya'qub Efendi Sayyed 'Alizāda (d. 931/1525) and by Moṣṭafā b. Ša'bān Soruri (d. 957/1550) in Amasya; points in both of these, as well as in the Turkish commentaries of Lāme'i Čelebi (d. 928/1532) and Šam'i (d. 1000/1592), are frequently refuted by Sudi of Bosnia, who wrote an extensive interlinear Turkish commentary with copious grammatical points in 1004/1595-96. Though Sudi's *Šarḥ* has remained the standard Turkish commentary, others continued to appear through the 1890s, testifying to the continued use of the *Golestān* as a medium of Persian language and, more generally, of ethical instruction in Ottoman lands.



In India, the commentaries were written in Persian, the earliest by Oways b. ‘Alā’-al-Din Ādam for the Bahmani sultan in 900/1494. In his *Kiābān-e Golestān* (pub. Delhi, 1268/1852), Serāj-al-Din ‘Ali-Khan Ārzu (q.v.; d. 1169/1756) alludes to prior commentaries by Mir Nur-Allāh Aḥrāri and Mollā Sa’d Tattavi, among others. Commentaries continued to appear in the subcontinent throughout the 19th and into the 20th century, in both Persian and in Urdu (Nowšāhi, pp. 113-19). In 1771, Sir William Jones (pp. x-xi) advised students of Persian to pick as their first exercise in the language an easy chapter of the *Golestān* to translate. Thus the *Golestān* became the primary text of Persian instruction for officials of British India at Fort William College (est. 1801) and at Haileybury College in England (est. 1806), with selections of the text being repeatedly published in primer form. Michael John Rowlandson provided a manual to help Persian readers with the Arabic passages (Madras, 1828); diacritics were included to mark the short vowels in at least two *Golestān* editions published in Calcutta (ed. A. Sprenger, Calcutta, 1851; ed. W. Nassau Lee, Calcutta, 1871), and two other editions appended glossaries (ed. F. Johnson, Hertford, 1863; ed. J. Platts, London, 1871).

Neoclassical writers of the 18th and 19th century desirous of a return to the lucid eloquence of the past (see [BĀZGAŠT-E ADABĪ](#)) took Sa’di’s *Golestān* as their example. Abu’l-Qāsem Qā’em-maqām Farāhāni, who copied out a small vade mecum edition of the *Golestān* and read it whenever the opportunity arose (Homā’i, 1967, p. 17), attempted in his *Monša’āt*, not to write a pastiche of the *Golestān*, but to recapture the genius of Sa’di’s language (Maḥjub, pp. 592-93, 615). Though rhyming prose and elegant proverbial witticisms fell out of favor in the 20th century as a modern prose literature influenced by European models developed, Sa’di remains the “most eloquent of orators” (*afṣaḥ al-motakallemīn*), and the *Golestān* still retains the title of “the most beautiful book of prose in Persian” (Korramšāhi, p. 15).

Translations. Ottoman Anatolia produced at least seven Turkish translations of the *Golestān*, exclusive of interlinear commentaries. Among the earliest were the Kipchak translation of Sayf Sarāyi in 1391 and that of Maḥmud b. Qāzi Mānyās, who completed a full prose translation (second quarter of the 15th century), and set about rendering the poems into verse in a second redaction. The *Golestān* retained its popularity under the Turkish Republic, when the Ministry of Culture supported its translation into modern Turkish (Yazıcı, pp. 321-24).

Sa’di had been first introduced to the West in a partial French translation by



André du Ryer (1634), upon which Friedrich Ochsenbach based a German translation (1636). Following this, Georgius Gentius produced a Latin version accompanied by the Persian text (1651). Adam Olearius, who had learned Persian in Persia with the help of a Persian convert to Christianity, Hakwirdi (Ḥaqqverdi), made it the first direct German translation from a Persian work; upon this J. V. Duisberg based a Dutch version (1654).

These and other translations of the *Golestān* (and, to a lesser extent, of the *Bustān*) established Sa'di's reputation among Enlightenment thinkers as a didactic but entertaining poet of manners and morals; the 18th century vogue for the "Oriental tale" in Europe only reinforced the popularity of Sa'di's stories, leading many western writers to champion or exploit them, including Denis Diderot, Voltaire, and Ernest Renan, who considered Sa'di to share in French sensibility (Arberry, p. 15), as well as Johann Gottfried Herder and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (see Massé; Yohannan, 1977).

The English translation history begins with Stephen Sullivan's selections (1774), followed by Francis Gladwin (q.v.; 1806, based on his own rather inflated edition of the text) and James Ross (1823, based on the Gentius edition), both in prose. Prose and verse translations were offered by Edward Eastwick (1852) and Edwin Arnold (1899; on translations, see Arberry, pp. 27-29). Emerson read the *Golestān* in translation in 1843; he penned a preface for the American edition of Gladwin's translation (Boston, 1865) in which he introduces the work as one of the world's sacred books (see Clinton). Henry David Thoreau knew it by 1847, quoting from it twice in *Concord River* and in his closing remarks on philanthropy in *Walden*. The world-wide success of the *Golestān* can be measured by its continued translation into Urdu (Mir Šir-'Ali Afsus, 1802, followed by many others), Russian (Alieva, 1957), Italian (De Vincentiis, 1873), Polish (Biberstein-Kazimirski, 1876), Provençal (Piat, 1888), Hindi (Mihr Cand Das, 1889), Romanian (Ciocanel, 1905), Czech (J. Entlicher, 1906; Kubičková), and Arabic (Forāti, 1961, in prose and verse). The *Golestān* also lent its name to an opera by Nicolas Dalayrac (1805, which however has precious little to do with Sa'di), and a nocturne for piano by Kaikhosro Sohrabji.

Sa'di realized that stories with frank sexual content might offend some sensibilities, yet feared critics would think him incapable of expression if he avoided the subject (chap. 3:13, G113). Many western translators found tales with homosexual or pederastic themes (chap. 5) especially inappropriate to the objectives of the work, and therefore rendered them into Latin or changed



the gender roles. Edward Eastwick excised them altogether, for which he was charged with bowdlerizing the work (Defrémery, 1858, p. iii). Relatively accurate and complete versions of the work became available in the mid-19th century through the efforts of Karl Heinrich Graf (1846; revised by Bellman, 1982) and Nesslermann (1864) for German, Sémelet and Defrémery (1858) for French, and Rehatsek for English (1888 with the imprimatur of Richard Burton's Kama Shastra Society). More modern versions of select chapters or stories of the *Golestān* have since been offered in these languages (Gelpke, Arberry, etc.). An excellent summary of the text is given in Yohannan (1987, pp. 57-91).

HISTORY OF THE TEXT

Manuscript transmission. Sa'di's panegyrics show him composing poetry into the 1280s, some twenty to thirty years after completing the *Golestān*; we may on this basis speculate that he continued to revise the text throughout his career. Moṣṭafā Dākeri calculates from the rate of composition of Sa'di's ghazals that it took many years worth of drafts to produce the *Golestān* (Dākeri, pp. 7-8). Also, from a very early point in the transmission history of the *Golestān*, it is evident that copyists deliberately changed or modernized the text (Korramšāhi, p. 15), to the extent that very few of the existing medieval copies agree completely with any other copy in all respects (Maškur, p. iv).

A manuscript purportedly copied by the calligrapher Yāqut Mosta'ṣemi, dating to 668/1269, has been printed in facsimile (Ātābāy), but as the colophon is illegible, it has been skeptically received. The earliest relatively complete and reliably dated manuscript was copied out in 720/1320, though a manuscript dating to 700/1300 of the introduction alone survives. The text is well attested in many other 14th century exemplars, and probably several hundred pre-modern copies survive in various locations. D. N. Marshall mentions one manuscript (Marshall, p. 51) owned by Shah Jahān (r. 1037-67/1627-57) which he presented to his son Dārā Šokōh (q.v.).

At least two recensions of the collected works (*Kolliyāt*) of Sa'di were prepared in 726/1326 and 734/1334 by Bisotun (Blochet, pp. 125-6; text in Foruḡi), and the *Golestān* comes at the head of an early manuscript of the *Kolliyāt* copied out in 726/1326 (Jāvid). A copy of the *Kolliyāt* made for the Mughal emperor Akbar places the *Bustān* before the *Golestān* (Blochet, pp. 134-35), but this order is reversed in most manuscripts of the *Kolliyāt*. In the traditional arrangement of the *Kolliyāt*, the *Golestān* is the first major work presented,



with only a few minor prose treatises preceding it. This, along with the fact that many stand-alone *Golestān* manuscripts have the *Bustān* copied out in the margins, suggests that the *Golestān* was perceived as the author's most popular or important work within a generation or two of his death.

Printed editions: Though Gentius first printed the text in Amsterdam (1651), no edition of the *Golestān* was published in the Islamic world until J. H. Harrington's edition of the *Kolliyāt* (vol. I, Calcutta, 1205/1791), prepared in large part by Mawlawi Moḥammad Rašid (Yohannan, 1977, pp. 9, 266). Several other Europeans printed or lithographed editions in Calcutta in the early 19th century, thus effectively bringing the manuscript tradition to an end (Gladwin, 1806; Dumoulin, 1807). The *Golestān* was one of the earliest products of Persian typography, printed in Tabriz in 1824 (de Sacy, pp. 162-63; Defrémery, 1862, p. 1004), and again in Tehran in 1847. Several different editions also appeared in Cairo (Bulāq) and Istanbul in the 19th century, and the text was printed over a hundred times in India (Nawšāhi, pp. 73-87). Further editions appeared in Paris (Sémelet, 1828), England (Eastwick, 1850), Leipzig (ed. and trans. by Graf, following Soruri's commentary, 1846), and Berlin (Kāviāni press, 1921).

Critical editions: The first critical edition was produced by 'Abd-al-'Azīm Qarib in 1931, followed by Moḥammad-'Alī Foruḡi's *Kolliyāt* (1937), which has for many years remained the basis for citation of the text. Rustam M. Alieva used manuscripts in the Soviet Union to prepare his edition and translation (1959). In the 1960s a handful of new critical texts set about collating and correcting the above, including editions by Sa'id Nafisi (1962), Moḥammad-Jawād Maškur (1965), Kālil Kaṭib Rahbar (1966), and Bahā'-al-Din Korramšāhi (1977).

The best critical edition of the work is that of Ġolām-Ḥosayn Yusofi, based upon seventeen manuscripts plus the reliable printed editions. It includes extensive notes, indices, and bibliography. Mowahḥed (pp. 132 ff.) provides a comparison of this with Foruḡi's text, both based on the same manuscript copy. Yusofi's editorial decisions have not pleased all critics (e.g., Purpirār, pp. 72-73), and at least one edition has attempted to incorporate and improve upon its results (Korramšāhi, 1996).



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