Published: September 12, 2017
Last Updated: September 13, 2017

ḴAMRIYA

ḴAMRIYA (pl. *ḵamriyāt*), derived from the Arabic *ḵamr*, wine, technically applied to poems with thematic contents chiefly about wine, wine-making, wine-drinking, and its various other aspects.

Background. In addressing the typology of poetry, Ḥosayn Wāʿeẓ Kāšefi (d. 910/1504-5) defines *ḵamriyāt* as "poems describing the attributes and states of wine, the beauty of the cupbearer's face, and the ambience of wine gatherings" (p. 37; see also Moʾtaman, p. 224). This article focuses on the first of these characteristics; for the second see SAQI-NĀMA. Synonyms for *ḵamr* used in Persian with varying frequency are *bāda*, *may* (more commonly in today's Persian, *mey*), *šarāb*, *nabiḏ*, *mol*, *ṣahbāʾ*, and *begmāz*. The number of its Arabic equivalents, a few of which, such as *rāḥ* and *raḥiq*, are also used in Persian poetry, rather infrequently though, goes well beyond one hundred (see Dehḵodā, s.v. *ḵamr, bāda, šarāb*). From its early stages of development in the latter half of the 9th century, Persian poetry contained several anacreontic themes. However, the tendency toward composing wine poetry in the Islamic era could not have happened overnight nor could it be attributed wholly to the influence from Arabic poetry, as might incorrectly be assumed (e.g., Rastegār Fasāʾi, 2009, III, pp. 52-53). Of course, geographical proximity and cultural exchange between Iran and the Arab world, especially following the Arab conquest of Iran and the rise of Islam there as its dominant religion, did help Persian poetry receive certain elements from Arabic literature, causing some measure of imitation on the part of Iranians (Daudpota, p. 163; Yamin, p. 63; Maḥjub, p. 91). Umar M. Daudpota (pp. 133-44) maintains that in wine-poetry,

as in other genres, Arabic poets were the models for Iranian poets. He substantiates his argument by juxtaposing Arabic poems with those written in Persian under their influence. The following verse by Abu ʿObāda Boḥtori (d. 284/897) is just one of many examples:

> *Yoḵfi al-zojāja lawnohā fakaʾannahā*
> *Fi'l-kaff qāʾematon be-ḡayr enāʾen.*
> Its (of wine) color hides the glass, so that it seems
> To stand on the palm without a vessel (tr. Daudpota, p. 139).

According to Daudpota, several Iranian poets have rendered this conceit in Persian verse, including Kesāʾi Marvazi:

> *Ān ṣāfi-ʾi ke čun be kaf-e dast bar nehi,*
> *Kaf az qadaḥ nadāni ni az qadaḥ nabiḏ.*
> So clear it is that when you put it on the palm of your hand,
> You will neither know the palm from the cup, nor the cup from the wine (tr. Daudpota, p. 139).

Nonetheless, this all could be related mainly to formal features and a limited amount of anacreontic motifs, not to the essence of the relation between poetry and wine, something rooted in the long history of humans, as they are both somehow connected with the excitement and thrill of the soul and the departure of man's self from his selfhood into the world of "the unconventional." A study of the myths and tradition of various peoples bears witness to their beliefs in the mystical effects of wine and the significance of vines in their daily life (Lesān, p. 48; Ṣadiqi, pp. 49-50; Moʿin, 1945, pp. 52-54; Yamin, p. 70).

Historical facts bear witness to the prevalence of wine and wine-drinking in ancient Iran (see Daryaee, pp. 42-43), as does Iranian mythology. According to Abu'l-Qāsem Ferdowsi, Jamšid was the first Pišdādi king who had a wine-drinking table set up (I, p. 44, verse 54). In his *Lobāb al-albāb*, Sadid al-Din ʿAwfi states, "It is said that wine came into being in Jamšid's reign" (ʿAwfi, I, pp. 21-25; see also Rāwandi, pp. 432-34). In a fascinating ode, the poet Manučehri (d. 432/1041) speaks of wine as "Jamšid's daughter, who had been imprisoned in the Zoroastians' house for 700 to 800 years, and now the poet is setting it

free from prison" (pp. 143-45; see also *Nowruz-nāma*, pp. 65-70, quoted in Moʿin, 1959, I, pp. 440, 447, 450-51; Jonaydi, pp. 4-7).

Given the long record of Iranians' interest in wine, it is no wonder that it came to be one of the favorite themes of poets from the very beginning. Manučehri's poem on making wine for the celebration of the Mehragān feast (pp. 197-205) and the fact that Kaykāvus b. Eskandar ʿOnṣor-al-Maʿāli (pp. 67-70), Neẓām-al-Molk (pp. 173-74), and Moḥammad b. ʿAli Rāwandi (pp. 416-28) each devoted a separate chapter to the etiquettes to be observed at wine-drinking gatherings all demonstrate that the early Persian composers of wine poems had fair knowledge of the custom of wine making and wine drinking in the remote time of Iran's long history. Conceding the Arabic influence on Persian wine poetry, especially during the spread in Iran of Arabic language and literature in the Omayyad and early ʿAbbasid caliphate (for more information on this, see Yamin, pp. 66-69; al-Kik, pp. 52-61; for a fairly comprehensive scholarly analysis of Arabic wine poetry from the Jāheliya to the early ʿAbbasid period, see Kennedy), it is also noteworthy that some of the major writers of Bacchic poetry in Arabic, such as Abu Nowās of Ahvāz (d. between 198-200/813-15) and Baššār b. Bord (d. 167/783) were Iranian in origin. Some of them even boasted of their Iranian parentage (Daudpota, p. 173). One would be tempted to hypothesize a probable echo across time in these wine-loving poets' compositions from their wine-loving ancestors.

Beginning of poetry in Persian. Recorded evidence shows that the description of wine in the early Islamic era appeared for the first time in the compositions of poets in the Samanid period (250-389/864-999). The first significant and extensive extant piece of wine poetry from this period is the ninety-two distich *qaṣida* by the celebrated poet-musician Rudaki of Samarqand (d. 329/940-41), which became a model for many wine poetry composers after him. This so-called "father of Persian poetry" presents a most delightful and vivid description of wine in its various stages, from the moment that grapes are picked from the vine to the time when their delicious red juice is brought to a magnificent royal gathering at the court of the poet's patron, the Samanid amir Naṣr b. Aḥmad (*Tāriḵ-e Sistān*, pp. 317-19). Rudaki's similes and metaphors in describing wine are pleasantly vivid and tangible; for instance, note the following, where he compares wine with a "melted ruby" (tr. Edward Cowell, in Browne, I, p. 45):

Bring me yon wine which thou might'st call a melted ruby in its

cup,
Or like a scimetar unsheathed, in the sun's noon-tide light held up.
'Tis the rose-water, thou might'st, say, yea thence distilled for purity;
Its sweetness falls as sleep's own balm steals o'er the vigil-wearied eye.

In a relatively few poems remaining from other Samanid poets and those from the early Ghaznavid time, one can see some *ḵamri* themes expressed in simple charming language, such as two verses by Abu'l-Ḥasan ʿAli Lowkari and in poems written by Abu-'l-Moʾayyad Balḵi, Ṭāher b. Fażl Čaḡāni, Abu'l-ʿAlāʾ Šuštari, Abu ʿAbd-Allāh Moḥammad Jonaydi, Kesāʾi Marvazi, Abu Šakur Balḵi, ʿAmāra Marvazi, and Rawnaqi of Bukhara (Ṣafā, I, pp. 403-8, 421-22, 428-29, 438-39, 441, 446-47, 452; Maḥjub, p. 93). After Rudaki, Baššār Marḡazi seems to have composed one of the finest and most comprehensive descriptions of wine. His well-constructed and beautifully expressed 31-distich poem represents an almost perfect *ḵamri* ode (see Hušyār, pp. 24-25), which was no doubt one of the models followed by the Ghaznavid wine poet Manučehri Dāmḡāni (for the complete text of Baššār's *ḵamriya*, see Moʿin, 1955, pp. 51-55; Ṣafā, I, p. 452). Wine poetry reached its zenith in Manučehri's lively odes (*qaṣida*) and stanzaic poems (*mosammaṭ*), with their fascinating imagery and expressions for describing grapes, vineyards, the process of making wine, and so on..

Wine poetry after Manučehri did not sustain its wealth and breath as such, but it was never abandoned in Persian poetry; rather, it has preserved its significant place in some way or other up to the present time. In fact, a great portion of Persian poetry (lyrics and love songs, in particular) depends on wine poetry without which it would be of little vigor and spirit. Interestingly enough, whenever the poet speaks of joy and happiness, wine is usually one of the key elements, and conversely, whenever there is a murmur of sorrow, its only cure is wine. The poet finds in it the increase of joy and the decrease of sorrow. In short, some kind of *ḵamriya* has, to a greater or lesser extent, remained a fixed component of Persian poetry. Even pious poets such as Ḥakim Sanāʾi (d. ca. 525/1130; see Šafiʿi Kadkani, pp. 12-13, 28-29, 106-9) and Ḵāqāni Šervāni (d. 595/1198; Ḵāqāni Šervāni, I, *qaṣida* no. 124, of which the entire amatory prologue [*nasib*] is a detailed description of and request for wine; see also his *ḡazal*s, II, nos 293, 347, 348, 385, 793) sing wine songs.

The introductory part of *qaṣida*s, the *nasib*, that contains descriptions of wine, cupbearer (*sāqi*), and wine-drinking gatherings at homes, in rose gardens, or by green fields, has proved to be one of the liveliest and most charming *nasib*s in Persian poetry. Sarāj-al-Din Qomri (d. 687/1228), a poet rather inclined to wine poetry, has devoted the *nasib*s of several of his *qaṣida*s (nos 7, 8, 15, 23) to descriptions of wine. The first portion of one of the *qaṣida*s of ʿObayd Zākāni (d. 771/1369) is entirely devoted to wine and its benefits (pp. 61-62). Badr Čāči, a 14th-century poet, composed a lavishly ornate *qaṣida* filled with metaphors in praise of the patron's cup and wine (pp. 33-34). The 577-couplet *maṯnawi*, entitled "Dastur-nāma," composed by Nezāri Qohestāni (d. 721/1321), is in reality a versified praise of wine and the etiquette of wine drinking (*Divān*, pp. 264 ff.; see also the editor's note on p. 254). Among other poets who have demonstrated greater proclivity toward wine poetry and created delightful compositions in this genre mention should be made of Yaḡmā Jandaqi (d. 1276/1859), in quite a number of his *ḡazal*s (e.g., nos. 12, 21, 36, 38, 109, 128), and Mirzā Ḥabib Qāʾāni (d. 1273/1856), in the *nasib*s of several of his *qaṣida*s and some stanzas of his *mosammaṭ*s. Among contemporary poets, Moḥammad-Taqi Malek-al-Šoʿarāʾ Bahār (d. 1951), in addition to verses in *ḵamriya* genre here and there, has an extensive *qaṣida* modeled in meter and rhyme on Baššār Marḡazi's *ḵamriya*, entitled "Šab o šarāb" (Night and wine); he has also composed a *qaṣida*, called "Waṣf-e angur" (Description of grapes) in the same mood as Rudaki's *qaṣida* mentioned above (Bahār, I, pp. 118-19). There are few *ḡazal*s in the *Divān* of ʿEmād Ḵorāsāni (d. 2003) in which at least one or two verses are not assigned to wine and wine drinking (see, e.g., pp. 113, 117, 135, 241, 293).

Poetical forms. From the very inception of Persian poetry, the motif of wine has been so appealing to poets that it has virtually been used in any conventional verse form. Although *qaṣida*s completely dedicated to the theme of wine and wine drinking are relatively few, those with their *nasib* in the *ḵamriya* genre are abundant. There are countless wine-related themes and imagery created by hundreds of poets throughout the twelve-century long history of the Persian *ḡazal*. However, poets have not demonstrated equal interest in such themes. With his many *ḵamri ḡazal*s, Hafez stands out among Persian poets. Of numerous *robāʿi*s composed from the early days of Persian poetry up to the present time, a substantial portion have *ḵamri* contents, but those attributed to Omar Khayyam seem to have a particularly different character. Wine in his poems, though most often referring to true and not metaphorical wine, assumes a special role in the context of his outlook on life

here and now, and, therefore, must be seen in the context of his overall philosophical concerns and qualms. As he says in one of his *robāʿis*:

> When I am dead, wash me with wine,
> Say my funeral service with pure wine;
> If thou woudst see me on the resurrection day
> Thou must seek in the dust of the tavern door (tr. Daudpota, p. 144).

Stanzaic forms, *mosammaṭ*, *tarkib-band*, and *tarjiʿ-band* do not end with Manučehri; during the long history of Persian poetry, practically any poet using such poetical forms has devoted the entirety or parts of them to *ḵamriya* themes; the mystical *tarjiʿ-band* by Vaḥši Bāfqi (d. 991/1583, pp. 331-37), a long *tarjiʿ-band* by ʿAbd-Allāh Kāmel Jahromi (d. 1028/1619; ʿAbd-al-Nabi Faḵr-al-Zamāni, pp. 707-18), and parts of Qāʾāni's *mosammaṭ*s are just a few of many examples. The volume of *ḵamriya* poetry in *maṯnawi* form is quite considerable, but what has the greatest share of *ḵamriya* inthis form are *sāqi-nāma*s.

Thematic aspects. Depending on under what real or imagined circumstances the poet is composing a *ḵamriya* poem, its contents may vary in certain respects, although the basic ideas normally remain the same. The poet may start with the vineyard and its keeper, depicting the several months from late spring through mid-autumn during which grapes gradually turn from sour green to yellow sweet, are picked from grapevines, and taken to traditional "wineries," where they are dumped in a *čarḵošt* (a tank-like container for crushing and squeezing grapes), then poured into large earthen jars (*ḵom*), and kept for 40 days, according to Hafez (*Divān*, p. 342), or three months, according to Manučehri (*Divān*, verse 1940), at the end of which the pure shining red wine is ready to drink. Sometimes the poet chooses to describe the happy circle of close friends drinking wine privately or at a tavern. In a number of panegyric *qaṣida*s, the *ḵamriya* poetry in the *nasib* part of the *qaṣida* varies and often includes a graphic depiction of convivial gatherings at his patron's palace or at the magnificent residences of dignitaries such as viziers or military commanders, having a happy time with wine. However, the poet's *kamri* description may be addressed to the cupbearer or even to an imaginary audience (see, e.g., Rudakiʿs well-known 92-distich ode and his description of its royal setting in *Tāriḵ-e Sistān,* pp 317-19; cf. Ḥāfeẓ, *ḡazal* no.

308; many of Manučehri's *qaṣida*s and *mosammaṭs*, e.g. pp. 6-7, 21-22, 177-81). Wine drinking may take place in early morning or at sunset, outdoors by a river under the shade of trees, or indoors away from the suspicious eyes of judges and *moḥtasebs* (bazaar supervisors) who disapprove of wine; thus the content of the poet's wine song changes accordingly. Still, *ḵamriya* poetry sometimes takes a symbolic form, serving as a vehicle for expressing philosophical reflections and mystical experience (see further below).

Terminology and expressions. Ḵamriya poems have led to the creation of hundreds of names, figurative uses of language, poetic allusions, and metaphoric expressions. Apart from its ordinary literal names, *ḵamr* has received through poets an exceptionally great number of designations, many of which emphasize a specific quality of wine, including color, scent, kinds, taste, flavor, smooth flow, medical effects, and many other real or imaginary characteristics. To mention just a few examples from among many attributes: *golrang* or *suri* (red rose-colored), *zard* (yellow), *nāb* (pure), *nušin* or *širin* (sweet), *talḵ* (bitter), *zolāl* or *rowšan* (translucent), *šafaqi* (of twilight color), *kohan* (aged), *poḵta* (fully ripe, mature), *ḵām* (raw), *do-sāla* (two-year old), *jānbaḵš* (exhilarating, invigorating), *ḵeradsuz* (that burns or razes wisdom), *behešti* (paradisiacal), *dinārgun* (color of gold coins, yellow), *ṣobḥgāhi* (suitable for drinking in the morning), *mardafkan* (overpowering). As the production of wine (prohibited in Islam) was generally attributed to Zoroastrians, there appeared expressions such as *šarāb-e gabr* or *mey-e majus* (both referring to choice wine made by Zoroastrian wine makers).

What is more, grapevines and grapes have created a variety of poetic images, resulting in a whole range of similes, metaphors, and figurative descriptions of wine, such as: *doḵtar-e raz* (the grapevine'sdaughter*), kudak-e angur* (the grape's toddler), *farzand-e majus* (the Zoroastrian's child), *čašma-ye ḵoršid* (the sun's fountainhead), *ḵun-e ḵorus* (rooster's blood), *čašm-e kabutar* (pigeon's eye), *ašk-e ṣorāḥi* (cup's tears), *laʿl-e moḏāb* (melted ruby), *gol-e našāṭ* (the flower of joy), and *šoʿla-ye tāk* (the flame of the grapevine). Poets in favor of wine have called it *ʿIsā-ye har darmān* (curing every disease as Jesus did) and *āb-e ḥayāt* (water of life), and it has also been denounced as *omm al-ḵabāʾeṯ* (mother of all evils). Among other designations showing the specific kinds of wine are *bāda-ye poštdār* (spicy wine), *bāda-ye bipošt* (wine with no spice in it), *bāda-ye sarjuš* (alluding to pure wine), *seyaki* or *moṯallaṯ* or *se mani* (all referring to the wine two thirds of which have already evaporated, making it stronger), etc. (see *Dehḵodā*, s.v. *mey* and *šarāb*).

Traditionally, wine was stored, purchased, or consumed at particular places, variously named in Persian as *mey-ḵāna, meykada, ḵom-ḵāna, ḵomestān, šarāb-ḵāna, bāda-ḵāna,* and *ḵammār-ḵāna* (the wine seller's house). Certain individuals (*ḵammār, meyforuš, šarābforuš*, or *šarābi* [wine-seller], *pir-e meyforuš,* [Zoroastrian wine-seller]), would take wine from the *ḵom* (vat), measure it with *peymāna* and *raṭl* (measuring cup) and sell it. Wine was brought to wine drinking gatherings in *qarāba*, *sabu, minā*, and *ṣorāhi*, normally made of glass containers, poured by the cupbearer (*sāqi*, *šarāb-dār*, or *piāla-dār*), into the cup (*jām, piāla, sāḡar, šarāba, kāsa*, or *sātekin)* and given to wine-drinkers (*bāda-peymāyān, bāda-gosārān, bāda nušān, šarāb-ḵvārān, sāḡar-kašān*) and sufferers from hangover (*ḵomār-āludagān*). The cupbearer may give some people as little wine as they could only "wet their throats" with it and become a little happy, while he would give some others as much as they get unconsciously drunk (*mast-e lāyaʿqel*), turning their heads left and right (*sarandāz*) because of being heavily drunk, or *šarābāluda*, (lit., soaked in wine). Therefore, there is a limit to the amount each group of tavern-goers (*mey-ḵānarow*) can and should drink, defined by the seven lines drawn on the side of the cup. The most susceptible must start from the seventh or lowest line (*ḵaṭṭ-e forudina*); and a little stronger people can begin with *ḵaṭṭ-e kāsegar*. Then come *ḵaṭṭ-e ašk, ḵaṭṭ-e azraq, ḵaṭṭ-e Baṣra, ḵaṭṭ-e Baḡdād*, and finally *ḵaṭṭ-e jowr* or *ḵaṭṭ-e awwal*, which represents the group who are able to drink the most. Those who can reach this final line are referred to as *haft ḵaṭṭ* (lit. 'seven-liner'; see Dehḵodā, s.v. *ḵaṭṭ*; Moʿin, 1959, p. 446).

Ḵamri poetry and Sufism. Until the 11th century, the expressions wine and wine-drinking were used in their basic literal sense; and wherever there was mention of this pure, clear, and invigorating drink, that intoxicating juice of grapes was intended. With the spread of Sufism and the use of poetry in expounding mystical thoughts, the *ḵamri* terminology also took on figurative mystical connotations (Rastegār, 1993, p. 181; on the entry into the domain of Sufism of *ḵamri* expressions, the reaction of the orthodox layers of the society to this heresy, and the early Sufis widely using such expressions, see Purjawādi, 1991, pp. 5-11; for the Sufi poets' intentions of admiring wine and wine drinking, especially those of Hafez's satirical anacreontic poetry, see Yaṯrebi, pp. 430-45).

Although relying on "the common knowledge of earthly drunkenness to evoke an awareness of the kinds of effects Divine Love produces" Jalāl-al-Din Moḥammad Mawlawi Rumi (1207-73) makes a clear distinction between this

"flawed worldly" intoxication and its "purified version," which leads to "inner gnostic awareness;" the former being "real", the latter "ideal." Thus ordinary intoxication "must be sacrificed to attain a higher form of awareness." According to Rumi, "the vulgar drink wine from the inside, but the gnostics drink it from the outside." In fact, Rumi employs the rhetoric of real inebriation to describe ideal intoxication (Kueny, pp. 112-13).

All the same, the use of *ḵamri* language did continue in its denotative sense as well, leading to the point where the distinction between literal and figurative language was very difficult or even impossible (or desirable) to make. What made the situation even more complicated was that some poets included both real and figurative wine in their compositions. Some critics of Hafez maintain that figurative interpretations for some of his drinking verses is hardly conceivable, which possibly stems from the intricate mixing of metaphor and non-metaphor in his poetry. Indeed, it has been this possible mixing that has caused a number of scholars to write numerous treatises explicating the symbolic meanings of *ḵamri* vocabularies. For instance, part of Saʿd-al-Din Maḥmud Šabestari's *Golšan-e rāz* is in fact the exposition of some such symbolic meanings, which have been further elaborated by Šāhdāʿi of Shiraz (d. 871/1466) in his *Nasāyem-e Golšan* (pp. 334-45), and Moḥammad Lāhiji (d. 912/1506) in his *Mafātiḥ al-eʿjāz* (pp. 601-9; see also Tahānavi, p. 733; Nurbaḵš, I, pp. 100-169). Šabestari (pp. 100-102), Moḥammad Širin Maḡrebi (pp. 6-8), and Hātef Eṣfahāni (third stanza of his *tarjiʿ-band*, p. 7) make it clear that what *ahl-e maʿni* (people of meaning) or *ahl-e maʿrefat* (people of gnosis) have in mind by using words such as *mey, sāqi, ḵarābāt* (tavern), and suchlike are esoteric meanings, which "they allude to only implicitly" (for more on the metaphorical uses and Sufi symbolism, see Lewisohn, Chap. 6).

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