

After Tomorrow the Days Disappear: Ghazals and Other Poems, Hasan Sijzi of Delhi, Rebecca Gould (trans.), Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2016, ISBN 978-0-8101-3230-6 (pbk), 109 pp.

Pity Christopher Marlowe, who had the misfortune of being born in the same year as William Shakespeare. While every teenager in the English-speaking world is compelled to read several of Shakespeare's plays, Marlowe is just a name, a "not-Shakespeare," to nearly everyone except English literature majors. In late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Delhi, the poet whose fame crowds out the others was Amīr Khusraw (1253-1325). Writing three centuries later, the historian 'Abdul Qādir Badā'ūnī compared Khusraw to the morning sun and his contemporaries to stars who faded in his brilliance. The brightest of these, the Marlowe to Khusraw's Shakespeare, was Ḥasan Sijzī Dihlavī (1254-c. 1330). In fact, the two men were close friends and fellow disciples of the Chishti Sufi saint Ḥaẓrat Nizāmuddīn Awliyā (1238-1325).

Ḥasan was a talented poet who earned a place in the Persian canon, and he deserves to be better known today. His *diwān* (selected poems) displays a lot of the same experimentation and range that Khusraw's poetry does. His *'Ishq-nāmah* is one of the first Persian poems to self-consciously adapt an Indian story into Persian verse (p. xv). But his best-known work, especially to English readers, is ironically not poetry but prose: he compiled the *malfūẓāt* (collected sayings) of Ḥaẓrat Nizāmuddīn in *Fawā'id al-Fuwād*, translated as *Morals for the Heart* by Bruce B. Lawrence.

The work under review is a slim volume containing translations of 70 short poems but this modest corpus offers vastly more than the smatterings of Ḥasan's poetry that have previously appeared in English. Rebecca Gould's translations are accurate and readable, with some particularly compelling turns of phrase. Nowhere is the language tortured in an attempt to carry too much meaning across from the source, which happens all too frequently in Persian-to-English literary translation. The trick is that "when it seemed impossible to render specific verses satisfactorily into English" the translator omitted them instead (p. xxiii). Anyone who translates from Persian lyric poetry, a tradition in which couplets are self-contained units of meaning and are often reordered or cut in performance, would do well to follow this method.

Gould has a nuanced understanding of translation and its necessary shortcomings. She gestures at untranslatability when she writes in the preface that her translations are to be understood as "interpretations" following Geoffrey Squires (p. xxiv). However, Squires' translations of Ḥāfīẓ are loose and experimental, and the translations under review here are not. Squires uses all the tools available to a contemporary poet and we can forget reading his interpretations of Ḥāfīẓ that Ḥāfīẓ wrote in classical Persian rather than twenty-first-century English (Christopher Logue's spell-binding translations from Homer produce the same effect). Academic translators do not aspire to that kind of readability, as the trend for accurate and literary but none-

theless aesthetically conservative recent translations of Indian Persian poetry by scholars shows. Two books that come to mind are Mufti Mudasir Farooqui and Nusrat Bazaz's translations of Ghanī Kashmīrī (*The Captured Gazelle*, Penguin Classics, 2013) and Sunil Sharma and Paul Losensky's translations of Amīr Khusraw (*In the Bazaar of Love*, Penguin, 2011). Taking these three competent works together made this reviewer (perhaps only speaking for himself) dream of a world in which credentialed, university-affiliated translators were willing to be more daring.

The question of intended readership dogs all translations of this sort but especially this one. The publisher probably deserves the blame for these choices more than the translator herself. The book was printed in paperback in the Northwestern World Classics series and so is framed for a general readership. But then the introduction is somewhat technical and forbidding. For a teacher or scholar, its explanation of the importance of *radīf* (refrain) in organizing ghazals is illuminating, but a casual reader seeking poetry is likely to give it a miss. If the translation is meant not for the poetry lover but for the student then such a project calls out for detailed annotation. Unfortunately, the poems are sparingly annotated and there are no markers in the text to indicate that a particular phrase is explained in the endnotes (by comparison, the Khusraw translation mentioned above has no notes, opting for a short glossary instead, and the Ghanī translation has minimal notes). Why are certain names and concepts annotated and not others? On the other hand, the critical apparatus is not particularly helpful for a scholar wanting to compare the original with the translation. The two recent editions of Hasan's poetry, Delhi and Tehran (both 2004), that form the basis for the text are difficult to acquire in the West (the translation of Ghanī mentioned above does the Persian-knowing reader the favor of providing the original text in transliteration).

None of this is to detract from the achievement of making capably translated Persian lyric poetry available in English. In devoting so many words to the faults, perhaps the reviewer doth protest too much. Any work that makes Hasan better known to a wider readership is worth the effort and Gould deserves credit for, among her many other academic interests, choosing him as a subject.

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