A Brief History of Metaphor in Persian Poetry (Part II)

To indicate something of the density and complexity of this arsine in pre-modern Persian poetry, here is a translation of a very early poem that is made up almost entirely of motifs that belonged to a common stock widely utilized by poets for centuries to come. The poem is by the tenth-century poet Rāhān, as is appropriate for this volume, is the earliest-known woman poet to write in Persian:

The garden shows so many flowers, as though
Māni had painted their resplendent glow
Dawn's breezes never bore Tībetan musk,
How is the world so musky when they blow?

Are Majmūn's eyes within the clouds, that they
Shed Layli's cheeks' hue on each rose below?
Like wine within an agate glass, his tears
Have filled each tulip with their crimson glow

Raise up the wine bowl, raise it up to you
Since luck dog denies you who say “No”

Narcissi glow with silver and with gold
It's Kānī's crown their shining petals show

Like urns in purple cowls the violet blooms
Do they turn into Christians as they grow?

The poem is a bābārāh—that is, a poem welcoming the spring, a form that is still, a thousand years later, a recognized category of Persian poetry—and it is set in the archetypal beautiful place for Persian culture, the lomas armōn, to end them all, a garden. But what is “Māni,” the tenth-century founder of the religion of Manichaeism, doing in the poem? In Persian lore he was also a painter whose beautiful paintings looked so true to life that they deceived both people and animals, and this accounts for “painted” in the second line. Because the flowers are compared to Māni's paintings, this means they must be very beautiful, and Persian poetry takes it for granted that beauty is a major concern of every civilized person. And something else is also going on here: every civilized person. And some Persian lyric poetry takes it for granted that the flowers are so true to life that they deceive everyone. Because the flowers are considered to be equally valid. Later on, such references were read as allegorical (the mention of a figure from another religion, for example, was seen as a metaphor for one who transmits mystical knowledge—that is, a knowledge outside of the mainstream of Islam), and in later poems they are often allegorical, but they were meant quite literally, for themselves, in Rāhān, as poems, as they were in the poems of her contemporaries and of many subsequent poets.

The locus amoenus to end them all,
How is the world so musky when they blow?

Do they turn into Christians as they grow?

In the gamma camera, a SPECT scan can show how well the organs are functioning of certain or active or less active; or how well blood is flowing to the heart; what areas of the brain are more working. A SPECT scan can show how well blood is flowing to the heart; what areas of the brain are more active or less active; or what parts of the bone are affected by cancer. While many imaging tests show what the internal organs look like, a SPECT scan can show how well the organs are working. A SPECT scan can show how well blood is flowing to the heart; what areas of the brain are more active or less active; or what parts of the bone are affected by cancer.

Iran Marks National Teachers Day

MINISTER OF CULTURE IN BAKU TO ATTEND 6TH WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

Iranian Researchers Develop New Method to Diagnose Cancer

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The village of Sasang is located 25 km south of Minudasht in Golestan province, where the main occupation of its residents is agriculture and animal husbandry.

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