What Kind of Wine did Rudaki Fancy?

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One of the earliest Persian poets, Rudaki (859–941), employed the word wine within a wide semantic register in his poems. However, his unicity is most manifest when the process of wine making within a highly allegorical poem entitled “Mother of Wine” is depicted. Through contextual, historical, and discursive analyses, it is argued that this poem—written in the form of a qasideh—was composed for the purpose of being performed for an audial audience, and thus reflected the conscious cultural discourse of the Samanids (819–999 – the first Iranian dynasty following the Arab conquest of Persia), who deemed themselves heirs to past, pre-Islamic grandeur, and sought to connect both in content and form (here the performativity of the poem) with the Sasanian empire (ca. 224–651).

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