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**Dr. S. Ainul Hasan**

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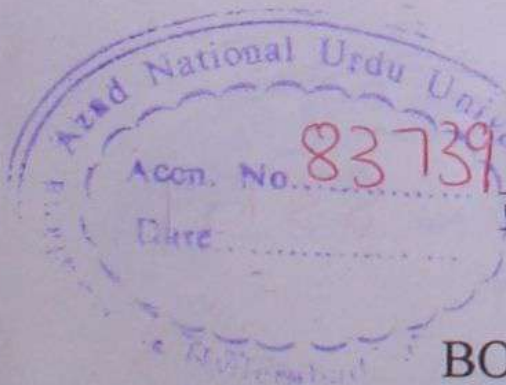
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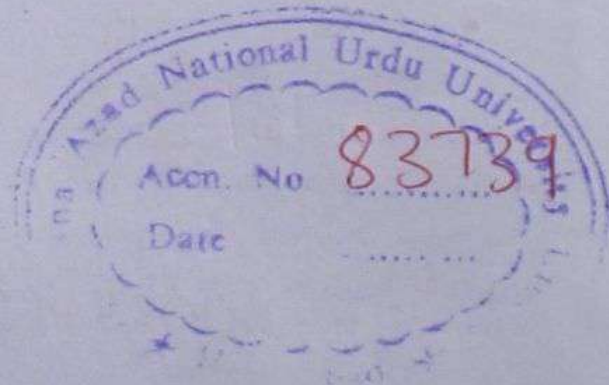
Published with financial assistance from the government of India,  
Department of education/CIEFL Vide Sanction No. CIEFL.RC.LICO/  
GOI.F-620/2002-2003/1150 dated 23 March, 2003.

First Edition : 2003 (1100 copies)  
ISBN : 81-87403-12-8

Typeset by  
Vikas Computers & Printers  
Naveen Shahdara, Delhi-110032  
Phone: 22822514

Printed at  
Nagri Printers  
Naveen Shahdara, Delhi

Price : Rs. 130.00





# Preface

This book is a result of the author's long and varied experience in the field of English Language Teaching. It is a collection of materials that have been used in the author's classes and in the classes of other teachers. The book is intended to be a resource for teachers and students alike. It is a collection of materials that have been used in the author's classes and in the classes of other teachers. The book is intended to be a resource for teachers and students alike.

*Dedicated  
to  
my parents*

All through the book, the author's personal experiences and observations are shared with the reader. The author's goal is to provide a resource that is both practical and inspiring. The author's goal is to provide a resource that is both practical and inspiring.

The author's hope is that this book will be a valuable resource for teachers and students alike. The author's hope is that this book will be a valuable resource for teachers and students alike.

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## *Preface*

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This book covers some delicate issues and remarkably deals with topical areas of Persian Studies: Problems of Second Language Acquisition, Language of Poetry, Modern Persian Literature: Pride & Prejudice, Pushkin and Persian Poetry, Omar Khayyam-Between East and the West, Glimpses of Post- Revolutionary Persian Literature, Another Birth of a Poetess, Nehru and Iran, Matthew Arnold in Pursuit of Shahnameh, Return of Fables from Paris to Tehran, Knowledge and Education in Totality, The Dissent Movement; Eroticism in Persian Poetry and Bedil and John Dryden: Offenders of Refined Love and Heroism-all have been important issues in recent years, and are likely to become more so as the present century progresses.

All through Muslim history, the Persians maintained their identity. In the realm of researches, they acted in accordance with the standards commonly laid down in the whole Muslim society, whereas in the personal, emotional and aesthetic lives they chose to be subjective and creative.

Ferdowsi, Khayyam, Rumi, Sadi, Hafiz and all other Persian poets have exalted 'Love' above religion, and have sung of wine as the symbol of self- forgetfulness and the antidote to the vanities of life: "It is in the flowing bowl that we have found the reason for our unending drunkenness." Rarely has poetry played such an important part in the life of a nation as powerfully as it has been witnessed in Iran. It is the most popular form of artistic and literary expression in Persian life and letters. Even in philosophical treatises and historical tales it has maintained its prominent position.

In the West, since the last World War, the social scientists have had much to say on the subject of "resistance to change". They have claimed that the culture, tradition and belief in the



Oriental societies are barriers to progress. Such an allegation reflects two attitudes, at times, discriminatory and some times rather realistic. The first seeks to establish a Western hegemony over the whole world and discards anything that may appear to obstruct this hegemony as negative; the second is the Western attitude founded on a Judaeo-Christian vision of history, seeking to mould the world according to a Western model. The Western achievements in technology serve as an argument, and often as an alibi to justify such an attempt of Westernisation. As far as Iranian culture and the Iranian mind are concerned, it should be remarked that for the last two centuries, they were never opposed to any technological or institutional modernisation of the country.

Many of the political writings and travel impressions of Iranian thinkers in the second half of the last century deal with the agonising problems of the technical and economic backwardness of Iran. All the social and religious movements in the country were animated by the quest for a new solution to these problems.

It is a matter of great privilege for me that I have the opportunity to share my views on various aspects of Persian language and literature with the publication of this book. I am proud of being associated with the Jawaharlal Nehru University where coexistence of different disciplines is found to the best possible extent. This is perhaps the only University where some important courses like Indo- Iran relations and study of Persian speaking world have been the vital components of language and literature studies. I am confident that this work will be quite useful not only for the students of the Centre for Persian and Central Asian Studies of the University but also to those who are interested in the study of Persian language and literature.

Last but not the least, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have rendered their support in the publication of this book.

**S. Ainul Hasan**



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# *Implication for Translation System in English-Persian Environment of Bilingualism*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the world of communication science and art, the role of language acquisition cannot be over-emphasised. With the advent of machine –aided communication and translation systems, the language, its acquisition and the mechanism of learning the language has acquired greater importance. The problem of the development of basic understanding of language acquisition for human beings gets complicated due to a large number of variables, which govern the phenomenon of language acquisition. One of the rather recently added dimensions that have become another source of complexity has appeared in the form of acquisition of more than one language. In this context, it becomes one of the prerequisites to understand the mechanism behind the second language acquisition in humans. The changing scenario of globalisation in almost all walks of life is making it necessary to expand the canvas of communication from a monolingual structure of the bilingual environment. The changing patterns of human survival thus have led to the necessity of acquiring a second language for the purpose of communication at the global level. Present paper made an attempt to study the problems associated with the second language acquisition in an English-Persian environment of bilingualism based communication system. In order to survive in the world of communication, humans have to make use of a language as the vehicle of communication. The first-language acquisition is, thus, a primary need of humans. Once the process of acquisition of the first–language is over, one enters the



corridor of the acquisition of second-language. If the second language is learnt prior to the stage of completion of the first language, the distinction between the two acquisitions remains blurred and the understanding of the mechanism of the acquisition of second language gets further complicated. First language acquisition occurs when the learner, a child, has been without a language so far and now acquires the knowledge of a language. When only one language is being acquired it is called monolingual and if two languages in parallel are being learnt it represent the case of Bilingualism. In the process of language acquisition there are a number of factors affecting the process. Some of these are in the form of :

- (a) Cognitive Development
- (b) Social Development
- (c) Linguistic Development
- (d) Language Acquisition Device and
- (e) Critical Period.

The cognitive and social developments play a critical role in language acquisition particularly in case of the first language acquisition. As regards the devices of language acquisition these include the entire vocabulary, morphology, syntax and phonology. The critical period theory is yet passing through the infancy stage and the findings are inconclusive. However, its importance, particularly in the context of Bilingualism cannot be over emphasised (Neufeld, 1979, Lebran, 1983).

## **2. COMPOUND AND COORDINATE BILINGUALISM**

'Compound' Bilingualism refers to the situation when two languages are being acquired in parallel, in a single context. In 'coordinate Bilingualism, two languages are acquired in different contexts as for example, one at home and the other at school (Ervin and Osgood, 1954). These two modes of acquisition entail distinct modes of semantic representation. Despite such claims that these two kinds of Bilingualism are distinct, many researches indicated that such a distinction in the context of second language acquisition is only 'deceptive' (Macnarma), 1970).



### **3. SPONTANEOUS AND GUIDED LEARNING**

The second language can be learnt through varieties of ways and means and at different stages of age. The two most important strategies for second language acquisition have been put forth as, spontaneous learning, and guided Learning. 'Spontaneous' learning refers to acquisition of second language in everyday communication, in a natural fashion free from systematic guidance and intervention. For example, if a Chinese goes to Egypt in search of a job and passing time over there, this is formed as spontaneous learning. Absence of a systematic and intentional intervention is the most important feature of this situation. Guided Learning, on the other hand, is always, intentional and a planned effort for acquiring the language concerned. Sometimes the spontaneous learning is also termed as "Naturalistic Second Language Acquisition" or "Second Language Acquisition in a Social Context". Are the two situations of acquiring the knowledge of languages, normally, associated with different mechanisms of learning, a problem yet to be resolved distinctly. It was found that the two, also in the order in which material is presented to the learner, which are the additional variables, affecting the process of learning in guided and spontaneous learning remains yet to be looked into.

### **4. THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

In the acquisition process of the second language, many theories and hypothesis have been developed. Among these the ones most widely referred to are Krachen's monitors Theory, Learner varieties Theory and Pidginization Theory.

Krachen's monitor theory Primarily focuses on relation between spontaneous and guided learning. In both cases, according to this theory, the crucial element is acquisition in the sense of a subconscious process governed by certain rules. The theory is not a model of language acquisition in general and is based on certain severe assumptions.

Learner Varieties Theory is based on the fact that the acquisition process can be thought as a series of transitions from one variety to the next and these transitions reveal an inherent systematically.



However, it is difficult to readily define various theories of varieties of learner and thus specific factors governing the theory cannot be modelled.

Pidginization theory involves the concept of a Pidgin which is a second language that comes into being whenever someone acquires the knowledge of a dominant language for some specific purpose (e.g./ for living, for trading etc.) Pidgins serve extremely limited communicative purposes and display features of both the dominant and subordinate languages. Pidginization theory is based on such structural properties of the language as limited vocabulary and absence of gender etc. The concept of Pidgin however remains yet to be accepted globally as demonstrated by the work of several researchers in the field. (e.g. Hymes, 1971)

## **5. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN BILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT OF PERSIAN-ENGLISH.**

The two characteristic features of linguistic processing in bilinguals which have generated interest in studying the organisation of the bilingual's two languages are:

- (a) Bilinguals can function independently in each language with minimal interference from other language
- (b) Bilinguals can translate from one language to the other at will.

To account for these skills of bilinguals, researchers (e.g. Gekoski, 1982) have advanced two types of possibilities. First, bilinguals have two linguistic stores but a single supra linguistic semantic-reference system, each item therein being attached to it a first language lexical term and second language lexical term. This position in reality is that bilinguals have two separate linguistic stores each with its one semantic reference system. This is referred to as Independent Hypothesis. This Independence proposition assumes a 2-store situation whereas the Independence proposition is based on the observation that all information exists in a single-memory store. In either of the two kinds of the storage possibilities, one important issue is in the form of seeming answer to the problem of how the second language acquisition in a human being is carried



out within the framework of the assimilation of; phonological, morphological. Syntactic and lexical domains of language learning.

So far as the bilinguals of the type English –Persian are concerned, it was found that English language distinguishes between short and long vowels (e.g. Live & leave; din & keen etc.) whereas Persian language has a peculiar intonation pattern. Thus phonologically the two languages are different.

In terms of morphological characteristics, English verbs have a very limited inflection (e.g.. the suffix–ed for past tense's for – third person singular etc.) with variations in case of irregular verbs. This is in contrast to the structural characteristics of the Persian language where endings in verbs are very differently formed. For example: -

- (a) In the end of each verb a termination according to the person is attached to the sentence, which we find in Arabic and Sanskrit Languages also. But the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular is exception to the rule and that too only in case of past and future tenses.
- (b) The simple present and present continuous are formed identically.
- (c) In Persian language, verbs generally occupy its place in the end of the sentence quite contrary to English language.
- (d) Infinitive is the original form of the verb in Persian. Verbs are subdivided into auxiliary verb, which helps to form a tense or mood of same principle verbs and forgoes its original significance. The transitive and intransitive verbs can be identified in both the languages equally.

Similar syntactic knowledge in English and in Persian can also be studied. An attributive adjective is placed before the noun in English whereas in Persian the order in general is reversed. In Persian noun is connected to adjective-with “E” using— (Ezafat) sign (e.g. Ktab-e-nav, new book) but the noun in case of number should remain in singular. (Only in case of ordinal numeral adjective follows the noun, (e.g. Hikayat-e-Dowwom, second story).

Finally, the lexical knowledge in the two languages has a bearing on bilingual's learning of the second language. Any



knowledge containing specific sound \_patterns with specific meaning (s) (the vocabulary are the lexicon) has function words eg. in and not etc. in English). In addition, there are idioms and figures of speech. There are many similarities in English and Persian languages so far as the lexical knowledge is concerned.

These domains in no way specify all the structural features of the languages, which play a role in the learning of the second language for a bilingual. However, these domains do indicate the breadth of the problems being encountered by a bilingual. The results of the present study indicated marked deviations in the learning strategies on the bilingual in case on first and second language acquisition.

## CONCLUSION

Present paper made an attempt to put forth the problems associated with the second language acquisition with special reference to the English -Persian kind of a bilingual environment. In the changing scenario of liberalisation and globalization, the importance of such studies of Bilingualism can't be overemphasised as more and more of people from deferent lingual settings are likely to attract with eachother in the globally open environment of business and trading. Thus, such studies have far- reaching implications so far as the future interaction of people in the machine-aided translation and communication environment of tomorrow is concerned.

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## *Language of Poetry*

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Poetry in almost every language has been the most powerful medium to communicate ones feelings and ideas. Most of the ancient specimen of literature, in either Arabic or Persian suggests that poetry started to come into being long before the prose literature. There was time when poetry to the cultured man seemed the natural and proper vehicle for the expression of all manners of thoughts and philosophies at great length- the love for woman and wine, the joys and sorrows, descriptions of flora and fauna etc.

The luminaries at the courts of Iran and India become renowned for their genius for extempore composition of poetical verses, their keen perceptions and their ability to paint beautiful word pictures thereby charming the hearts of the monarchs and other patrons. Among the remarkable poets was also the one who played with words, against which they held as their rivals through torrential and fiery attacks. There are hardly such examples in the history of literature of any other language except Persian, nor is there any evidence concerning the literary lore of any nation, of the East or the West that there existed in its language and literature such pointed and powerful weapons of satires as we find in the case of poets living in the Courts of the Kings and Amirs of Iran and India.

The contribution of Mahmud of Ghazna to the Persian literature is unforgettable. As a ruler, he is believed to be a religious bigot and oppressor<sup>1</sup>. However his love for knowledge and learning was as fervent as was his religious zeal. It is said that four hundred "appointed poets" thronged his capital.<sup>2</sup> it was during his reign that the post of Malekush-Shuara (king of poets) was first introduced and Unsuri was selected for this distinction.<sup>3</sup>

Ferdausi Tusi, the great composer of "shahnameh" composed his national epic at the Court of Mahmud. A magnificent resort



was erected for Ferdowsi near the palace of the king, and best painters of the age were employed to cover the walls with portraits of kings and heroes, and with paintings depicting military encounters. In short, with everything that could excite martial valour to accelerate fiery imagination in the poet's mind.<sup>4</sup>

After 30 years of hard labour, the "Book of kings and Heroes" comprising sixty thousand couplets, was completed. The whole work is written in the form of a Mathnavi, or narrative poem in stirring couplets, which give a thrilling history of the kings & heroes of Persia from the earliest times to the fall of the last Sasanid Monarch Yazdgerd (AD 650), and revived the grandeur of pre-Islamic Iran.

*"Basi ranj bordam darin sal -e- si  
Ajam zendeh kardam bedin Parsi"*

While presenting this great epic to the Sultan, Ferdowsi, as promised by Mahmud, should have received sixty thousand gold coins. But the Prime- Minister, Hasan -e- Maymandi is reported to have submitted to the king that in view of the bad condition of the treasury the payment of such a large amount could not be made to Ferdowsi. Besides, he argued it would be a folly to pay such an enormous sum for mere poetical performance. The king having become convinced with the counsel of Hasan, directed that the poet be paid sixty thousand silver coins instead of the promised gold ones.<sup>5</sup>

When the bags of silver coins were taken to the poet, he became indignant and contemptuously distributed the amount amongst the needy persons. The Prime Minister utilised this opportunity in polluting the mind of the Sultan by interpreting the act of Ferdowsi as a deliberate insult.<sup>6</sup>

Mahmud having become furious and outraged ordered that the poet should be trampled under the feet of an elephant. Ferdowsi took flight and became out of reach of the wrath of the Sultan. But before leaving Ghazna, he composed a few couplets against Mahmud for his miserliness and cheating, and put the satirical poem on the wall of the gates of the City of Ghazna to be read by the common people.<sup>7</sup>



*Aya shah-e Mahmud keshwar goshay  
 Ze kas gar natarsi betars az khoday  
 Har an shah ke dar band -e- dinar bud  
 Be nazdeeke ahl-e- kherad khar bud  
 Chu ander tabarash bozorgi nabood  
 Nayarast nam -e - bozorgan shenid  
 Sar -e- nasazayan bar afrashtan  
 va zishan omid -e- behi dashtan  
 sar -e- reshta -e- khish gom kardanast  
 Va jaib andarun mar parvardanast  
 Ze bad gauharan aan nabashad ajab  
 Nashayad setardan siyahi ze shab  
 Ze napakzadeh madari omid  
 Ke zangi be shostan nagardad sefid.*

“O world conquering Mahmud, if you fear none, at least fear God. Whichever king is in the bond of gold is looked down upon by the wise.

Since nobility was lacking in the Sultan's blood, there could be no gesture of nobility in his actions.

To exalt the unworthy and entertain hopes from him, is to lose the clue to your welfare and nurture a serpent in your bosom.

An evil return is not strange from evil people as blackness is inseparable from night.

Entertain not hopes from the man of ignoble birth; because washing make not thee Ethiopians white”.<sup>8</sup>

Sometime even a flowery poem wins the hearts of the listeners because of its lucid expression. In support of this statement one could refer the following episode that took place in the Royal palace of the Emperor Aurangzeb.

Among the conservative Muslim families, the ladies, though having a privileged status, were never allowed to exhibit quality of their marital engagements before their parents. On the contrary, we find examples of courage shown by some spinsters of the hered by deciding their own bridegrooms. For example, the daughter of Aurangzeb, Zaibunnisa was allowed by her father to pass her life in her own way by not marrying at all. Alamgir was extremely sad



at the decision of her beloved daughter. One day, he sent a respected lady of the herem to her daughter to find out the reason for not getting married to one of her cousins or any other Prince or rich young,<sup>9</sup> in reply Zaibunnisa composed a couplet and sent it to her father.

*"Nihal sarkash-o-gol biwafa va laleh dorang  
Darin chaman bache ommid ashijan bandam"*

"Young plants are arrogant, flowers are unfaithful, tulips are double-dealers. (When such is the situation) How am I expected to build my nest in the garden."

Similarly, there are large number of Persian couplets having great importance in history, such as:

*"Egar Ferdous bar rooy-e -zaminast  
Hmin ast-o- haminast-o- haminast"*

"If there is any Paradise on earth, it is only here and nowhere else."

The above verse is attributed to the great Mughal Emperor, Jahangir, as also to different persons at different times. Jahangir is supposed to have uttered this couplet in ecstasy on beholding the breath-taking natural beauty of famous Kashmir valleys.

The couplet has been translated into almost all the languages of the world. Every tourist coming to Kashmir is not only reminded of this couplet, but he psychologically experiences it and vouches for its accuracy with great rapture and excitement.

Many a time, people have made poetry instrumental in maintaining law & order of a particular place; as we find in Bokhara during the early days of Islam.

One of the Samanid kings, Nasr. b.-Ahmad came to visit Herat. The blooming land of wonders and its pleasant weather fascinated him to the extent that he decided to make it his abode. On the other hand, his high officials in Bukhara could not bear the absence of their king and were looking for his return. Many requests were made to him but the king was not even ready to listen to them. Finally, his Prime Minister called of Rudaki Samarghandi for the help. Rudaki composed a beautiful poem and approached the king. When he read out the poem visualising the beauty of his kingdom,



the king was so much excited that he could not control his emotions. Without any delay, the king mounted the horse, galloped it fast and arrived in Bukhara. The poem is still remembered with great admiration.<sup>9</sup>

*Boye jooye Mulian ayad hamin  
Yad-e-yar-e-, mehraban ayad hamin  
Reg-e-Amu -o- darashtihay -e- aan  
Zir -e- payam porniyan ayad hamin  
Ab -e- jaihon az neshat-e-roye doost  
Khang-e-mara ta mayan ayad hamin  
Ai Bukhara shad bash -o- shad zee  
Mir zi to shadman ayad hmin  
Mir mahast -o- Bukhara aseman,  
Mah sooy -e- asman ayad hamin  
Mir sarvast -o- Bukhara boostan  
Sarv sooye boostan ayad hamin<sup>10</sup>*

“There is wafting the scent of the Oxus stream; the kind is receiving the memory of dear friends left behind.

The sands of Oxus, with all their harshness, are lime Chinese Silk beneath our feet.

Behold the greeting of the Oxus; overjoyed at the return of friends, it is leaping up right to the girth of our horses.

O Bukhara, live long and be happy; with a happy heart the Amir is now hastening to thee. Bukhara is the sky and the Amir is the moon ; now the moon is on its way to the sky:

Bukhara is the garden and the Amir is the Cypress; now is the Cypress on its way to the garden”

When talking of Persian poetry, the mind invariably turns to the richness of its past. The grandeur of form, the vigour and freshness of ideas, the subtle artistic ingenuities, the exquisite grace of style and manner.

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## *Modern Persian Literature : Pride and Prejudice*

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When talking of Persian literature the mind invariably turns to the glory and richness of its past. The pomp and grandeur of Persian culture has often been portrayed in the writings of Iranian intelligentsia; and so, it remains a subject of interesting discussion among the social scientists and men of letters, within and outside Iran. Today, even the biggest enemy of Iran too admits to the fact that the jewels of Persian Culture has enriched not only its next door neighbours but has also thrown its rays on the people living even in the remotest parts of the world. The sweetness of Persian language and its vast literature has contributed a lot to this campaign over the course of history.

The Persians have always been very proud of their language, literature, ideology and culture. In spite of heavy odds and many socio-economic upsurges, they have tried to protect their dignity and preserve their identity. One must give credit to the Iranians that even after accepting Islam, and considering Arabic language as the medium of their religious discourses and decrees, they have kept no stone unturned in order to resist against Arab Culture and therefore, have not made any compromise vis-à-vis their national language.

Ferdowsi's great epic "Shahnameh"(The Book of Kings and Heroes), is an important landmark, not only in the renaissance of the Persian language and literature that has remained practically unchanged for thousand years, but also in its expression of national identity. Having undergone for more than three centuries and having assimilated the Muslim faith to make a new culture out of it, the Iranians saw themselves described in Shahnameh as a people



possessed of ancient traditions, and yet imbued with fresh vitality and aspirations. Ferdowsi is one of the rare authors who managed to depict vividly the inner soul of the people. His heroes and their struggle for justice stem from the most ancient popular traditions and form, all the legends of Iranian mythology in which any Iranian can recognise himself.

All through the Muslim history, the Persians maintained their own identity. In the realm of mind and intellectual research, they acted in accordance with the standards common to the whole of Muslim community, whereas in their personal, emotional and aesthetic lives, they lived in a different world. Avicenna, who was to remain for centuries the unique master of medicine of unprecedented philosophical-psychological dimensions, and who produced outstanding works (*Al-Shifa*, *Al-Qanun*) in philosophy and medicine in Arab tongue, was highly proud of being an Iranian.

The feeling of dissatisfaction with oneself and confession of man's inability to explain the mysteries of life are the main features in the works of Omar Khayyam, whose Rubaiyyat (quatrains) express it with deep anguish and sorrows. In order to ease his anguish, this mathematician and astronomer sought in the wisdom of nations and explanations that he found to escape the vanity of philosophers and theologians, he took refuge in epic narration. The toleration that emerges from Omar Khayyam's thoughts is characteristic of Iranian culture and literature and is to be found at all times in the Persian books.

It was only by the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century when deep rooted Persian culture got diluted by so called protectors as to adopt a new colour and to co-ordinate with the new-born nationalistic feeling.

The concept of 'Nation', from which the term Nationalism has been derived, appears for the first time during 14<sup>th</sup> –15<sup>th</sup> centuries in Europe. During this time people belonging to the same language –groups, living in the same territory and practising almost the same types of traditions, began to think of themselves as one. This gave a great fillip to the monarchs, whose powers were curtailed to a large extent by the feudal lords. Consequent upon the emergence of this national identity, the people lent support to the monarchs



who were able to establish nation-states in England, Spain, France, Prussia, Russia and other countries. Thus nationalism in its historical concept implies such a belief of oneness among the people on the basis of language, territory, customs, traditions and others such outward manifestations which can be easily discerned. In the post-feudal age, the concept of nationalism has come to stay and in all the later political developments, this concept has played a very important role.

In the Iranian context, the people of pre-constitutional movement (1905-6) have often been accused of not having this concept. True, this concept of nationalism was absent in the 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century Iranian psyche, but as the national movement started taking roots in the country, one finds a rapid development of this idea.

The economic expansion of European nations reached its climax during the nineteenth century, and it is from this date that the process of modernisation in the Iranian society may be said to have begun.. Slowly and gradually Iran came under the influence of rival interests. As a result of these developments Iran was placed deep down to its misfortunes. J.B.Fraser describes the tragic state of Persia in these words... "... all orders seem on the point of suspension, and a disposition to anarchy obtains, which certainly would end in some revolution, were it not for some counterpoises connected with religion and peculiar political situation prevailing in the country, that tend to preserve things as they are, and to resist every cultural efforts at improvement. The insecurity on life, limb, or property even for the passing day, produces a corresponding mistrust among the individuals; the servant distrusts his master, the master his servant .... The worst is that there is no rational prospect of amelioration, no point from which to look forward to a happier state of society, for there is not hope of any change in the system of government."<sup>1</sup>

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century Iran was occupied by the Russians in the north and the British in the South. During this period, Iran experienced intense foreign subversions whose manifestations were the domestic political turmoil and the disorders



at that time. A number of eminent scholars of Iran have expressed their deep sorrows against such torturous developments in Iran. Md. Hejazi's famous novel 'Homa' and his well-known short story, 'Shirin Kola' could serve the best example of their disagreement. Sa'eed Nafeesi too, has registered his protest in the form of a story titled 'Khanah-i-pedari'.<sup>2</sup>

The twenty years of Reza Shah Pahlavi's dictatorial regime, a short period as it was, were crucial in the history of Iran.. During this period various changes took place in the Iranian society. These changes led to an enormous development of intellectual creative thought. Changes not only in behaviour, but in dress too became an outward symbol of the new way of perceptions. Reforms in the field of education ' according to the European pattern, was the basis of essential cultural changes. In 1934, a University after the name of Reza Shah Pahlavi was founded in Tehran covering all basic branches of contemporary learning, such as medicine, technical sciences, natural philosophy, veterinary sciences, agriculture and fine arts etc. fell in the same line.

The development of press and book publishing (both by state and private publishing houses) greatly added to the popularisation of educational progress. Some purist tendencies, that manifested authority at that time, led to the enhancement of freshly born nationalistic feelings in Iran. The purists aimed at removing foreign influences from the language, especially Arabic ones and replacing them by neologisms or archaisms, brought into life again. Sa'eed Nafeesi, Bahar Mashhadi, Mohammad Hejazi, Poor-i-Dawood, Sadegh Hedayat and Jamalzadeh played a leading role in this regard. Jamalzadeh's "Farsi Shekar Ast" initiated this discussion.<sup>3</sup>

New Persian literature writing was also progressing. Some textbooks dealing both with works of Persian writers and translations from foreign literature appeared. It is worth mentioning that the translations from European languages into Persian have given a new direction to the modern literature of Iran. It was mainly through translated documents that the Iranians came across Western Culture, art, tradition, idea, style etc. This time Iran had moved into a modern era and assumed a central place in the world affairs with extra-



ordinary speed. The rapidity of these events caused great concern to the intellectuals and guardians of traditional Iran. Fearing the consequences, many of them could not dare to promote their opinions, and many of them utilised this opportunity to come out openly declaring themselves as rebels. A group from within these protectors of traditional Iran deliberately avoided confrontations with the government, and through suggestions and advises registered their reactions and discharged themselves from responsibilities.

Mohd. Ali Eslami Nadushan, who was born in 1925, is known, as his cultural, political articles written for the leading magazines of the country and published in 1962, under the heading of "Iran ra az yad Nabarim" (Let us not forget Iran) earned him reputation and lent his ideas some weight. The centre of his interest is a confrontation with European civilisation so far as it fosters or retards the developments of Iran in its traditional perspective. His ideas can be briefly condensed as follows:

"The East has woken up and no longer wants the Westerners to decide its fate. As long as the Western countries hesitate to accept this reality, tension and friction can not be eliminated."<sup>4</sup>

"Our culture is deep and daily reality for the great mass of Iranian people. Classical poetry, popular poetry and songs, tales, proverbs and ancestral wisdom express a deep-seated humanism that guide men and women in their daily lives."<sup>5</sup>

".... Another development that has begun to be noticed in Iran is in the popularisation of arts. A dreadful kind of popular music, a cheap pulp literature, and a generally dread cinematic output are among the most striding out puts of this popularising trend. In Iran it is increasing fast as a result of blind imitation of what is happening in the West."<sup>6</sup>

"Referring back to the strength and identity that lie within traditions, I propose that in Iran the ancient code of 'good thought, good words and good deeds' be revived. It's full implications and applications should be taught and made into a national discipline."<sup>7</sup>

'Gharbzadegi' by Jalal Al-i-Ahmad is considered to be a numerous work in the same spirit which could best be translated as 'Obsession with Westernisation' which is highly topical and acute in the context of Iran. The author aims to fight the ever-increasing



foreign influences affecting Iranian culture and social life in its own way corresponding to the political conditions of the country. Here I would like to mention a few examples of the same author:

“The process of modernisation as interpreted or encouraged by the West, contained many erroneous elements and much veiled domination. The value of freedom, democracy and justice have often become a mere means of exploitation.”<sup>8</sup>

“The demands of rationality and objectivity constitute the very foundation of western outlook. If such an outlook has resulted in great achievements where machinery and the physical world are concerned, we must admit that it has been much less successful in dealing with the human conditions. Human sciences founded on rational objectivity are today suffering setbacks and defeats.”<sup>9</sup>

“As for administration and industry, they have to appeal to an increasing number of Sociologists and Psychologists so as to lessen the evils of dehumanising bureaucracy. Why should we follow the same road? Do we have to assess our degree of civilisation by referring to the ills of western civilisation? We can certainly adapt the techniques and methods of industrial and administrative organisation to the demands of our social and cultural life, as long as we do not forget the value that our traditions attach to man and to human relationships.”<sup>10</sup>

“In the West, since the last War, the Social Scientists have had much to say on the subject of resistance to change. They have claimed that the cultural traditions and beliefs in non-western societies are a barrier to progress. Such an allegation reflects two attitudes. The first is, consciously or unconsciously dominating and establishing a western hegemony over the whole world; the second is to model the world according to a western model. All the achievements of the West in technology serve as an argument to justify such an attempt at uniformity. As a result of such campaigns, many Asian countries paid attention to such temptations.”<sup>11</sup>

Both the scholars, Mohd. Ali Eslami and Jalal Ale Ahmad have discussed at length the evils of western culture in Iran. In this small article, I have documented only a few quotations; yet there are many more things to be acknowledged. Whatever may be the



contention of their feelings, but their sentimental attitudes, towards their national identity and grace, can easily be discerned in the writing of these scholars who have sharpened their instruments to kill the western model of culture as to preserve the true picture of Iran on a spotless canvas.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a great enthusiasm for the adoption of the western model. Taqi Zadeh, one of the most respected representatives of elite had openly declared, "We must westernise ourselves, body and soul".<sup>12</sup> Fifty years afterwards, in the 1960s, he repented and admitted the importance of a cultural identity. Today, among the new generation of poets, writers and artists, belonging to the different schools of thoughts, there is not one who wishes to become westernised in body and soul.

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## *Pushkin and Persian Poetry*

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The recent revival in Persian Poetry may be said to begin with the present century, when Iran went through a political change which resulted in limiting the despotic authority and in creating a new concept of political rights. Literature reflected this development by two diverging tendencies. On the one hand, it renounced the tradition of court poetry which was replaced by patriotic verses; on the other hand, there continued a large out put of traditional poetry in which the surviving hold of mysticism was represented by dialectic influences.

The awakening in Iran demanded books and articles on the socio-political problems of "common man" which Iran had to borrow from the European literature. Thus, the early modern literature was based on translations of famous European masterpieces. Being mainly a poetry- based country, Iran paid special attention to the translations of the poetical works of the European poets. The Iranian poets gradually started withdrawing from the translations and engaged themselves into producing self-creative literature. Nonetheless, the new methods as well as new concepts like realism, romanticism and symbolism adapted by them from different literature of Europe were clearly evident in their compositions. Some of the Russian poets namely Pushkin, Lermontov, Mayakovsky and Chekhov have placed the finer delicacies of Russian images into the Iranian mind. In the Persian poetry, therefore, we so often find their song of beauty flowing in complete harmony with the melodious modulations of life and universe. Aleksandr Pushkin served as an ideal model to the Iranian poets, especially the composers of long narrative poems. Pushkin was introduced to the readers by a weekly paper "Azad" which was lithographed in Tabriz and containing portraits of notable patriots



of older and most recent times; founded towards the end of A.H.1324 (beginning of AD 1907) under the control of the 'Kitabkhana-i-Tarbiyat' (Tarbiyat Library) and editorship of Mirza Reza Khan Tarbiyat. This library, which in the beginning was the first specimen of a book-shop of modern times in Azarbayjan, but in a very small and humble way, continued day by day, by persistent efforts and endeavours, to increase its scope and prestige, importing useful books in every language from every part of the world, and circulating and making them known in Iran, so that it eventually become the best, most important and most comprehensive of all book-shops with exception in throughout Persia, publishing every year a printed catalogue in the European fashion.<sup>1</sup> There is a long list of translators who have paid special attention to the works of this great poet and playwright of Iran's next door neighbour. Yusuf Eitesamul – Mulk, Lotf Ali Suratgar, Iqbal Yaghmai, Hushang Mastufi, Reza Amini, Hasan Shahbaz, Hussain Quli Mastan, Taqi Hamidi and Mehdi Hameedi all of them in their own way have made their contributions to the translation works of Aleksandar Pushkin. The early translations of Pushkin's works include his famous poems such as 'Under the Blue Sky of Her Native Land' (Zeer-i-Asmaan-i-Abiye-Bumi, ash). The Caucasian Captive (Aseer-i-Qafqaazi), the Captain's Daughter (Naakhodaaye-kadkhodaa), the Little House (Khanah-i-kuchik), Tales of Belkin (Qissehaaye-Balkan), The Fountain of Bakhchisarai (Cheshmah-i-Baghchisaray), Ode to Liberty (Chekaamah-i-Azaadegi), The Night (Shab), The Cypress (Kuligari), The Feast During the Plague (Ziyaafat Dar Ta, oon), The Bronze Horseman (Asbsawaar-i-Misbaari), The Peasant Gentle Woman (Zan-i-Najeeb-i-Rustaa, yee), Russian Folk tales (Afsaanehaaye-Qaumi-i-Rus), The Snow Storm (Tufaan-i-Barf), The Stone Guest (Mehmaan-i-Sangi), The Queen of Spades (Shahbaanuye-Beelzan), The Station Master (Ra, ees-i-Eestgaah), and The Undertaker (Mas, ul-i-Kafan-o-Dafn) etc.

Tawaddod (affection) happened to be the first Persian newspaper published in Paris in 1891 under the editorship of Sheikh Abu Nazzara. This paper was published in many languages including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, French, and Russian. One Section of this



paper contained literary translation of Russian masterpieces. Pushkin's folk tales were the special feature of this paper.<sup>2</sup>

During the Constitutional Revolution, a newspaper called "Barq" (thunder) was published from Tabriz which contained one page in Russian under the title of "Literature" (Adabiyyat) followed by its translation in the Persian language.<sup>3</sup> Some of Pushkin's narrative poems appeared there with explanatory note on his life style and his three splendid affairs including the one with the wife of a Governor General. This also followed by his admiration and literary value of some of his poems like "The Caucasian Captive" "The Gypsies" and "The tale of a Nobleman ". The last one seems to have created a new wave in the history of the Persian Poetry "Meerzadeh Ishqui, one of the great modern poets of Iran, was the first one who picked up this theme and composed a remarkable "Opera" under the title of Rastakheez (Resurrection)<sup>4</sup>. This opera is considered to be the most popular one ever- composed in the Persian language. This is basically satirical in nature and a combination of almost all the socio-political elements for the welfare of the Iranians and their struggle for freedom. Ishqui, who was a progressive poet, was quite disturbed by the World War I and extremely impressed by the Russian Revolution. By the virtue of revolutionary spirit, he happened to be a successful Parliamentarian also, and therefore, he presented the contemporary political and administrative affairs of his country in his Opera that denounced the tyranny of the government at that time. One can say that among all his literary creations Opera has come out in a unique style of poetry which probably he borrowed from Pushkin's long poem "The Queen of Spade". As for example:

*"On the day, what the wrath of nation come confronts  
tyranny,*

*The whole empire will be overthrown;*

*The sky will turn hostile to the traitors of the earth,*

*It will be the time for slaughtering the armies of corpse-  
washer.*

*With whose foul blood the stretches of the earth will become  
red."*<sup>5</sup>



The Ideals of Ishqui is divided into three tableaux: The first deals with the seduction of a village girl by a rich youth; the second gives an account of her suicide and the last provides a condemnation of the existing social conditions as described by the father of the girl. The poem ends on a revolutionary note. The fate of Eid-e-Al-e-Ishqui seemed to be quite similar to Pushkin's poem "Queen of Spades" which was put to strong censorship and confiscated by the respective governments. Both the poets could not survive very long (Pushkin in his late 30's died of his natural death whereas Ishqui in his 30's was murdered in 1924. The tragic end of the Queen of Spades and Eid-e-Al. is echoed in similar fashion: Not a soul come to know what had happened,

*"During his sobs in the noise of the day,  
Her aged father quietly bathed her body  
Wrapped it in shroud, and all by himself,  
Prepared for her the nuptial chamber of grave"*<sup>6</sup>

"O God! How shall Thy vengeance fall on the people!" During recent years there has appeared a new school of poets whose works reflect strong traces of symbolism. Nima Yushij may be regarded as its pioneer and leading exponent. He too draws inspirations from Pushkin's versification. In the poem Ay Shab (O Night) Nima presents an aspect of nature in relation to his own mood and feelings.<sup>7</sup> The poem provides a fine example of mere trans-creation based upon Puskin's poem "The Night"

*"O night, inauspicious and dreadful,  
"How long will thou strike first into my soul?  
Either pluck out my eyes from their sockets, or  
Take the veil from thy face,  
Or leave me to die  
Because I am sick of this world".*

There are many more poets and writers of modern Iran who have distinguished themselves either by adopting Pushkin's style of narration or by making a mere trans-creation in their compositions. Last but not the least, politically Iran was never comfortable with Russia, but due to the literary exchanges the



friendship of the 'aunt bear' turned into great understanding and co-operation which points out a famous fable regarding friendship of a man and a bear where bear sits awake by the side of his sleeping friend to guard him. When it sees a fly sitting on the nose of his friend, it tries to get rid of the fly, but irritated by the fly's obstinacy of coming and sitting again and again on his friend's nose, the bear picks up a big stone and aims it at the fly. The fly flies away and the man falls into the pool of blood.

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## *Omar khayyam: Between East and the West*

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Translation is an art in its own. The translator does not merely change the language but, through his work, he tries to express the inherent emotions, metaphysics and the culture of the original language in the language in which he translates. Often on doing so, the translator also blends his own emotions and thoughts in the translated piece. Such works, no doubt important in their own right, are often quite different from the original – different enough to be treated as a separate piece of literature rather than translated works. They take the form of an independent writing, inspired from the source from which they are translated.

The Rubaiyat of Omar khayyam and their translation by Edward J. Fitzgerald is the best example of such a literature. Though Fitzgerald's translation is comparable to the original in its sweetness and melody, yet the fact remains that the translator was unable to fully comprehend the ideas of Omar Khayyam. Omar Khayyam was a well-known physician, scientist, mathematician and astronomer of Iran. For many centuries, the Iranians had refused to accept Khayyam as a poet. The credit for this goes to Fitzgerald who made him immortal in poetry through the translation of his Rubaiyat. With this translation, the attention of many scholars was drawn towards the original verses of Omar Khayyam. In spite of his inability to fully comprehend the original Rubaiyat, Fitzgerald had greatly enriched Persian and the English literature through his work.

Why could not Fitzgerald comprehend the ideas of Khayyam? Probably major reason behind this was that the contemporary West had not fully understood the Oriental civilisation of Persia. Khayyam



was a nationalist poet. He respected the ancient civilisation of Iran and was extremely proud of it. Probably due to this, he lamented in the memory of the ancient emperors:

*Ein kohne rubat ra ke alam namast  
Waramgahe ablaqe subho shamast  
Bazmeest ke wamandahe sad Jamshidast  
Qasreest ke takyegahe sad Baharamast.*

“At this old and dilapidated house, which we call the world, morning and evening come for their resting and spread light and darkness. Many Jamshids have abandoned this banquet. It is that palace, which at one time was the abode of many Bahrams.”

Jamshid and Bahram were the mighty emperors of ancient Iran, who are also counted among the pioneers of the ancient civilisation.

Khayyam considers wine as a part of the ancient culture of Iran and consequently, talks much about indulging in wine. Simultaneous to the rise of Islam in Iran, there was an increasing influence of the Semitic culture, which was opposed by many Iranians. It was at Iran where wine had been invented during the reign of Emperor Jamshid and consequently, a special festival “Navruz” was celebrated to mark the occasion. Every year, on ‘Navruz’, barrels of old wine were opened and drinking parties were organised. The Aryan conscience of Khayyam could not tolerate this disregard to wine and the ancient civilisation. Thus Khayyam’s use of wine is a symbol of challenge to the Semitic culture. Though the contemporaries of Khayyam have written a lot about him but never has he been portrayed as a drinkard. Omar Khayyam was not what he is generally taken to be in the West. He was not like the present day “Hippy” who is content in sitting on the bank of a river with a beloved Saaqi on his laps and drowning himself in music and wine. On the contrary, Khayyam was an intelligent, thoughtful and brave person –a fact nowhere to be found in the translation of Fitzgerald. Unconsciously Fitzgerald has painted Khayyam in such colours of lust and passion which he had never been, yet this translation has been the source of many later day’s “Madhushala” each of them with due importance in their respective literature,



Omar Khayyam never had a blind faith in religion. He could never accept the Islamic concept of Heaven – with rivers overflowing, with honey and wine and beautiful angels for each man's desires:

- Gooyand behesht-o-hur-e-ain khahad bud
- Anja maye nab-o-angbeen khahad bud
- Gar ma mayo mashuq gozideem che baak
- Chun aqebat-e- kar hamen khahad bud.

“It is said that beautiful dark-eyed fairies dwell in the heaven and the rivers flow with nectar and wine. But if we associate with women and wine over here itself, then what is the harm in that as ultimately we would be getting the same in heaven.”

Here again, we find Khayyam challenging the paradoxes of the Semitic culture. Fitzgerald was unable to comprehend the major cause underlying Khayyam's pessimism. Khayyam was an intelligent scientist, who was well aware of the subtleties of science. Being a learned astronomer as well, he could foresee a person's future but could do nothing to amend it. This caused him immense sorrow:

*Yekchand be koodakee be ostaad shodeem  
Yechand be ostadiye khud shad shodeem  
Payane sokhan shanv ke mara che raseed  
Az khak dar amadeem-o –barbad shodeem.*

“In our innocence we believed that we have become learned and we were quite happy over it ; but ultimately this is what we had discovered that we have come from the soil and will be wiped away with the wind.

The effort of Sanghmitra and Mahendra had resulted in the spread of Buddhism all over the world, especially so, in Asia. We get the evidence of this in Iran even after the rise of Islam. Omar Khayyam hailed from the eastern part of Iran, which contains the remains of Buddhist monasteries. Probably Khayyam had also studied the Buddhist philosophy, as we find a deep influence of this on the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. This fact has also been acknowledged in modern Iranian literature. Many Rubaiyat of Khayyam published from Tehran, had contained the front piece of



Gautam Buddha. One of the greatest literatures of Persia, Sadeque Hedayat has discussed this in his book "Taranehaye Khayyam" (the Songs of Khayyam). Khayyam had a unique concept of God. According to him, no doubt the creator of this lovely nature was a marvellous artist but such an artist (the God), was not compassionate, forgiving or beneficial; rather he was a dispassionate and sly artist. In many of his verses, while praising God, the creator for his beautiful creation, Khayyam has condemned his cruelty.

*Jameest ke aql afareen mee zanadash  
Sad bose ze mahr bar jabeen meezanadash  
Ein koozegar-e- dahr cheneen jame lateef  
Mee sazaad-o- bar zameen mee zanadash.*

"Man is a wonderful cup of wine that is capable of being praised by intelligence itself. If it could come to life, intelligence will shower thousands of kisses on its forehead. Yet what to say of this potter who breaks them after making so many such wonderful cups. Khayyam has accepted men to be fallacious but he refuses to accept that God is forgiving and merciful.

*Nakarde gunah dar jahan keest begu  
Aan kas ke gonah nakard chon zeest begu  
Man bad konam to bad mokafat dehee  
Pas farq mayan-e- mano to cheest begu.*

"Give me the name of a person who has not committed a mistake or sin. Even if we find such a person, then tell me how has he survived? We do commit mistakes or sins. But God! If you do not forgive those, then how do we differ from each other?"

Khayyam was deeply pained at the human sufferings. Being an astronomer, he attributed the cause of such suffering to the planets. He believed that the whole life is full of sorrows.

*Aye charkhe falak hkarabee az keeneye tost  
Beedadgare adate deereneye tost  
Way khak egar seeneye to beshkafand  
Bas gauhar-e- qeemate key dar seeneye tost.*

"O all encompassing sky, you are sly and destructive by nature. You have been unjustified to human beings since time immemorial,



and O land, one should tear your chest to realise how many precious stones you have hidden away from us”.

This verse of Khayyam recalls to our mind the Buddhist saying “Sarvmidam dukham dukham” (Wherever I saw, I found sorrows only).

Khayyam was always critical of the theories of Karma or the belief in heaven or hell. Probably due to his belief that the body was immortal and the soul was mortal, he was never accepted as a poet in Iran. According to him, after our death, we are not aware of the destiny of the soul.

*Ta chand zaneem bar, sar-e- daryaha khesht  
Beezaar shodam ze bot-parastane kenesht  
Khayyam ke goft doozakhee khahad bood  
Key raft be dozakh va ke amad ze bahesht.*

“Till how long will we be in the dark, throwing stones aimlessly in the water. I am tired of those idolaters who venerate the angels in heaven: O Khayyam, who says that you will go to hell- has anyone gone to hell or returned from heaven?”

In another couplet- a testimony of Khayyam’s resentment against Islam, he differs from the basic philosophy of elements. According to which the body is made up of five immortal elements which are indestructible., merely changing its form. As Khayyam beautifully expresses this philosophy in the following Rubai:

*Een kooze-cho man asheqe zaaree boode’st  
Dar bande sar-e- zolf-e- negaree boode’st  
Ein dasteh ke bar gardan-e-oo meebeenee  
Dasteest ke dar gardan-e- yaaree boode’st*

“After his death, a person’s body mixes with the earth and is subsequently recreated. From the earth, the flower blossom and from the same soil, the potter makes vessels and cups of wine. This cup which you are looking at, at one time, was a lovelorn like me which lay entangled in the locks of his beloved. And look at the handle of the cup, it is not a handle but the arms of that lover, which once held the neck on his beloved close to him”

Through his Rubaiyat, we get an idea that Khayyam was severely criticised for his unique ideas and that he had hardly paid



any attention to them. Khayyam had realised the value of time and was cautious, as time was cautious as time was always running ahead. He believed that "today only mattered- neither yesterday nor tomorrow was important for man".

*Ein qafilay-e-omr ajab mee gozarad  
Daryaab damee ke baatarab meegozrad  
Saqee gham-e-fardaye hareefaan che khoree  
Peesh arr piyale ra ke shab mee gozarad.*

"This caravan of life is proceeding with extraordinary speed. Whatever moments of pleasure we get, we should not let them go out of our hands. O Saqi! Why do the thoughts of tomorrow or of your adversaries torment you? Pass me a cup of wine as the dusk of my life is not far away"

Thus Khayyam means that the earth is not our own, happiness is temporary, the world is full of sorrows, the future is unknown, the life is about to end, and only by forgetting all these is one able to redeem all sufferings. At the dusk of his life Khayyam is thus not attracted to the material pleasures, but of renunciation and sacrifice.

Omar's eastern contemporaries, who had better chances to know him and judge him better, had high opinion about him. "His oldest contemporary Nizami, the devout prosodist calls him at Balkh (AH506/1112-13AD) 'Hujjatul -Haq' (Argument of Truth) and 'Imam' (Religious Leader or Scholar). His second biographer Abul 'Ali Hussan 'Ali Baihaqi (d. AH 665/1269AD) calls him 'al-Dastur, al-Failsuf, Hujjatul-Islam.'"<sup>1</sup>

It is an irony that the world today knows Omar Khayyam only as a Poet. Iran owes a heavy debt of gratitude to the West for it fell to an English writer Fitzgerald to bring out of oblivion one of the most illustrious intellectuals ever born in this ancient land. Europe also acknowledged his contribution to Mathematics, "His treatise of Algebra was translated into English as far back as 1851 AD"<sup>2</sup>

India does not lag behind in acknowledging his great genius. The quatrains of Omar Khayyam have been translated in almost all the languages of this country. Swami Govinda Tirtha has translated the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam into Marathi.<sup>3</sup>



“Omar Khayyam was a versatile genius. He had drunk deep in the fountain of various branches of knowledge and showed his skill in the field of science, Mathematics, Astronomy, Philosophy, Metaphysics and Poetry. He has left a number of tracts on different subjects in Arabic and Persian prose and even his quatrains are replete with philosophical and mystical thoughts and manifest his views on many problems such as the inevitability of death, evanescence of life, tyranny of fate, helplessness of mankind, sovereignty of the Supreme Being, ephemerality of the phenomenal world, secret of existence, gnosis of God etc.”<sup>4</sup>

Paying tribute to the genius of Khayyam, Maulana Shibli Nu'mani says: “In philosophy he was equal to Bu Ali Sina, and in religion, literature and history he was a beacon light of the savants of his days. He had an extraordinary retentive power of his memory. He excelled in the art of reading the Holy Quran also.”<sup>5</sup>

By and large, the modern scholars have degenerated Omar. He appears to Dr. Hastie to be a vulgar wit with superficial reputation for composing lean and flashy songs. According to Whinfield he expresses irreligious and anti-nominal utterances. Even Professor A.J. Arberry (1952) concurs with the century-old views of Fitzgerald (1859) in calling him a blasphemous atheist, libertine and Epicurean. One thirteenth century writer, Sheikh Najmu'd-din, calls him an unhappy philosopher, atheist and materialist. Such writers have painted him as toys-topper, holding the cup of wine and delighting the company of the beloved Saqi or cup-bearer.<sup>6</sup>

It is wrong to say that Khayyam was a hedonist and belonged to the class of people, whose motto in life was to eat, drink and be merry.

His heavy engagements in scientific works did not allow him to indulge in such idle pleasures of drinking and intoxication.

“With regard to Omar Khayyam, the Orientalists have played a very tactful method of confirmation of disgrace in the form of praise which in Persian *figure of speech* called “Takidul-zam-bemayashbahul-madh”.<sup>7</sup>

Fitzgerald's translation contains several non-Khayyamian quotations: “Herron Allen has shown that Fitzgerald included



borrowings from Sufi Poets' Attar (d. 1229AD), Hafiz (d. 1389 AD), Sa'di (d. 1292AD), and Jami (d. 1492AD)."<sup>8</sup>

What Omar symbolises as the "Moving Hand", the "Eternal Saqi", The Potter", the Wheel of Destiny", is simply the force that preconditions everything.

It has become a commonplace that the *Rubaiyat* translated by Fitzgerald more faithfully represents the Irish poet than the Persian. Yet this itself is a superfluous argument. "Omar represents not himself but a school of Sufi philosophy. It is necessary to know not only what Omar really said but also what he meant by it."<sup>9</sup>

Fitzgerald produced "a new patched Omar exciting, miserable, self-deluded unhealthy fanatic of his cult. This "cult" was a literary craze and delusion, infatuation and spurious idolatry."<sup>10</sup>

Says Vaughn, "according to Sufi system Wine is equivalent to devotion; the Tavern is an oratory, Kisses and Embraces, the raptures of piety, while Wantonness, Drunkenness, and Merriment are religious ardour and abstraction from all terrestrial thought."<sup>11</sup>

Omar Khayyam was essentially a man of science who found no logic in denial of life. And this is one question Khayyam asks through the pages of his *Rubaiyat*: "Why should life, which is God's most wonderful gift to man, be despised."<sup>12</sup>

Buddhist philosophy and learning had made impact upon those who trade in the name of religion had nothing short of the influence of Buddhism on him. Buddha was also against Brahminism.

Besides Buddhist philosophy, Omar Khayyam seems to have been influenced by Vedantic philosophy also. Uohn Payde observes, We may imagine Omar Khayyam whilst his beliefs at bottom firmly anchored in the treat fundamental ideas of Vedantic pantheism.

Let those who accuse Omar of being an atheist note what Omar wrote in the opening chapter of his recently discovered prose work styled *navroz-Nameh*, wherein he invokes most reverently God the Creator. This opening address to the Almighty as translated by Frederick Rosen settles this doubt once for all. It begins:

"In the name of God the Merciful, the Gracious! Praise and thanks to the Lord—may His glory shine! Who is the Creator of the World and the Holder of the earth and of time, Who gives all



living beings their daily sustenance, Who knows the manifest of the occult, Who is Himself without desire and without associate, without rule or want, Who is beyond the limits of measure or numbers, almighty and wanting neither help nor assistance."<sup>13</sup>

Penitence and pardon are age-old topics but Khayyam has given new colours to these themes. He says he is a sinful slave but where is God's grace, he knows his heart is full of darkness, but where is His light? If He gives him pardon as the wage of his fidelity, this is simply a commercial transaction. Where is His favour and grace!<sup>14</sup>

"Professor Cowell, one of the profoundest Orientalists of the, 19th century looked on Omar as a true Sufi, and his poem as a mystical one in which profoundly religious impulses and doctrines are conveyed in a series of figures wherein the drunkenness lauded by Omar is to be read as rapture of Divine Love, and the Wine which causes it as Divine Mercy."<sup>15</sup>

Such is the difference between the Omar Khayyam of Rubaiyat, who carried all the compassion of the world in his bosom and the poet as portrayed by Edward J. Fitzgerald.

The "Madhushala" contains the sweetness of honey but not the pride and self-respect found in the Aryan subconscious of Khayyam.

On the basis of various researches, comments and observations made by the western and eastern intelligentsia on Khayyam's philosophical thoughts, certainly, one finds as many as five distinct approaches appearing out of his poetic compositions i.e.

- (1) He seems to be an atheist who does not show his inclination towards any religious doctrine or faith that keeps a man away from wordly pleasure and amusement.
- (2) An ardent lover and true believer of God. A God fearing person, fully aware of man's shortcomings, who seeks mercy of God for his ultimate salvation.
- (3) An enquisitive student, greatly influenced by the Buddhist philosophy and learning, who seeks refuge in the monestries of Karma.
- (4) An staunch believer of the fundamentals of Vedantic Panthaism, according to which, the combination of beauty and nature can never be overlooked. The masterly designed



beauty displays its affiliation with nature as to become testimony to the oneness of body and soul.

- (5) An escapist who runs away from the basic reality of human existence, who mourns the helplessness and inability of life that passes through many leaps and bounds of time and finally, disappears from the surface of earth as it happened to many Jamshids and so many Bahrams.

So for as my understanding of Khayyam is concerned, frankly speaking, I do not wish Khayyam to be an athiest or an ordent devotee of God, niether I wish him to be a preecher of Buddhist philosophy nor a believer of Vedantic Panthaism or an epicurian escapist; rather I wish him to be understood as a poet of Rubaiyat only; because the greatness of this man lies in the fact that he has captured the heart and soul of different set of people belonging to different schools of thought and bent of mind. Let us come out of the dogmas that have led to extra- ordinary academic bankruptcy. Let there be reincornation of one thousand Khayyams out of one who was born in Nishapur but lived with the wisdom of the entire globe.

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## *Glimpses of Post-Revolutionary Persian Literature*

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Iranians have always been very proud of their language, literature, ideology and culture. In spite of many odds and upsurges, they have been able to preserve their identity and dignity in a subtle manner. In the realm of intellect they act in accordance with the standards common to the entire Islamic societies, whereas, in their personal, emotional and aesthetic lives they live in a different world.

The twenty years of Islamic Revolution, considerably a short span, have been very crucial in the history of the Iranian literature. During this period various changes have taken place in the society leading enormous developments vis-à-vis intellectual creativity, educational reforms, press and publications. In the course of evaluation, we find in literature two distinct features towards such developments. Literature in the first decade was fully devoted to the objects of reformation as well as reconstruction of national images which had suffered a setback due to the Western influences on one hand, and the hostile attitude of some developed influential countries on the other. During this period, the entire literature, mainly that of poetry, appeared to be a sequence of lamentations and pathos emerging out of insecurity and uncertainty prevailing throughout the country. The diversities and differences in the field of religion, code of conduct, ideology, morality, behaviour and spiritual guidance became the thrust areas of discussions. This was the time when old-timers could not dare to overshadow the very spirit of the revolution; and thus the protectors acted smartly by imposing strict censorship on media throughout the country. Although such a censorship was not something new in Iran but this time it appeared to be more purposeful than ever before. As a



result of this, a large number of distinguished scholars, poets, authors and professors helplessly either migrated to the foreign land or confined themselves to the four walls of their study rooms. Many of them lost their presence amidst revolutionary waves and at times, tried in vein to send their voices to a small group of takers in these words:

*"From justice and virtue they stand aside,  
Dumb, blind, untaught the people abide,  
None of us takes head or thought"*<sup>1</sup>

In the first decade of the Islamic Revolution, the author who acquired highest fame in creative literature was a theatre artist known as 'Makhmalbaf. He happened to be a radical thinker and a follower of Dr. Ali Shariati. By virtue of being radical, he was imprisoned by Rezashah quite for a long time. Immediately after the Islamic Revolution, the new government set him free along with many other artists who were made captive for their open criticism of the despotic regime.<sup>2</sup>

Bagh-i-Balur (The Crystal Garden), a novel by Makhmalbaf is testimony to his application towards reason and ability to resist against a mindset which dilutes the essence of Shari, ah for acquiring worldly gains which ultimately leads the nation to the primitive ages.<sup>3</sup>

The story deals with the life of an unworthy woman of Kermanshah, who travels through a number of temporary marriages by making full use of a clause "Sighe" which allows a woman to opt for a temporary husband even for the shortest period of time. Needless to say that this marriage remains a secret deal between two individuals and rules out the possibility of third party's involvement.

The lady keeps on changing places and lastly arrives in Baghdad where she marries a washer of the dead, and then a police officer. To her, Baghdad seemed to be a different locality where she comes across many other obligations, but very soon escapes and finds herself in the company of a young Muslim woman. She remains in her company quite for sometime and is inspired by her to shun these activities for leading peaceful life.



This is worth to be mentioned that the system of Halaleh (Resolver) in Iran has been in question since very long time. In late 50's. Sadegh Hedayat's short story 'Mohallel'(Resolved) and Bozorg Alvi's 'Zan Bedun-i-Mard'(Wife without Husband) sparked a subject of discussion in the intellectual circle of Iran. As a result of that, a feature film was also made on the subject. The matter was brought to Ayatollah Murtaza Motahhari for his opinion and interpretation. Ayatollah Motahhari, quoting the Qoranic Verses, threw light on its implications and discarded the misuse of the clause by evil-doors in clear terms.<sup>4</sup>

Frankly speaking, nowadays such a novel is not allowed to be published in Iran as it directly affects the socio-religious ethos of the Revolution. It was perhaps due to some negligence on the part of 'Wizarat-i-Farhang-o-Ershad-i-Islami (Ministry of Education & Culture) that the publication of *Bagh-i-Balur* had become possible. Today this book is not available in the market because of the censorship imposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.<sup>5</sup>

The second important aspect of Post-Islamic Revolutionary literature throws light on the merits and demerits of new socio-political order on the basis of which the spirit of a revolution can be sustained. A good example of such pattern is found in Simin Daneshwar's novel, 'The Island of Distress' which was published in the second decade of the Islamic Revolution. In this novel, the author has silently revolted against the domination of male society which, according to her, is bent upon creating obstacles in the way of Muslim women's quest for socio-cultural identity. The 'Island of Distress' revolves around a group of students who work under the able guidance of a University Professor (the author herself) for acquiring academic excellence. These students belong to different sets of ideology and faith, which ultimately put them into a difficult position. Discussions and debates among the students, on issues, small and big, prolongs for hours together and each other convinces none of them. Modernity and tradition happened to be the thrust areas on which they deliberate upon. The matter is stretched to the extent that their friendship at times turns into personal conflicts.



This novel has sparked many leaps and bounds of controversies in the political and academic circle of Iran; and as a result, the second part of this novel has not been allowed to be published as yet. The fact remains that the author occupies great respect in the Iranian society and has recently been honoured with the highest Academy Award in a simple gathering of renowned scholars and statesmen of Iran for contributing such a valuable piece of literature.<sup>6</sup>

The story also creeps through the defiance and even disobedience to husband's wishes and his ideas of preserving bogus customs and traditions quite contrary to the need and aspirations of the time.

An overview of the life of contemporary Muslim Women proves that the choice of self-determination is an important factor which requires a drastic shift in one's priorities and ultimately in one's entire way of life. Literature provided author the means of expressing desire and aspiration challenging the status quo and propagating that life has much more to give than that of traditional roles.<sup>7</sup>

It may be said here that the faculty of reason or the inner guide, found only in human beings, conveys to the mind only one common commandment but those who do not accept the guidance of reason are the people whose worldly desires pull them towards its side.<sup>8</sup>

In the modern set of the human society, the aims and objects of life change from nation to nation, man to man, individual to individual and group to group. In spite of various obligations and impositions, every now and then ideas are expressed according to the individual's own taste and choice; and accordingly, action and deeds based upon one's own choice, taste, temperament and ideals lead to diversities and differences.<sup>9</sup> Such diversities and differences in our society of human beings are as old as the surface of earth began to multiply with its inhabitants. As the population increased, and the number of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve shot up, the differences between the human society also gradually enhanced in many ways and so many directions; such are religion, worldly gains, conducts, behaviours, moralities, ideologies and knowledge.<sup>10</sup>



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## *“Another Birth” of a Poetess*

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Foroogh-i-Farrokhzad (1935-1967) was not only one of the prominent Iranian poets/poetesses but the most controversial too. Loved by Iranian youths, criticised by her contemporary poets and writers, admired by world critics-especially after her death; Foroogh was not an ordinary poetry composer, nonetheless an ordinary woman. She could think much faster than her compatriots; displayed a rare maturity unexpected from any Iranian woman and marched ahead towards complete freedom and modernity with such a pace that she left her Iranian brothers and sisters far behind her. As a result, she was isolated, lonely and at times depressed; and yet quite determined not to give up the battle.

She was the poetess and a woman who could be either admired or condemned but not the one who could be ignored or overlooked.

Apart from her poetic skill, her unique personality and her contribution to the Iranian society could not be bypassed. This is the reason why researches are made not only about her poetry but also about the problems of the Iranian society that she tried to solve in her own way with the medium of her lucid thought-provoking and honest poetry.

Foroogh's personal life has played a very great role in moulding and shaping her poetry as well as personality; so even a brief life sketch of Foroogh may serve as a necessary part of clear introduction to her poetic calibre. While studying Foroogh's life style it is easier to understand the different stages of her poetry writing and mental and intellectual development.

Foroogh-i- Farrokhzad was born in Tehran in January 1935. Foroogh's formal education was exclusively at 'Girls public school' in Tehran: six years of elementary school, and a brief period of study of painting and sewing at "Banuan Technical School". She



never received a high school diploma. At thirteen or fourteen, Forough began composing poetry in the traditional ghazal verse form, but she never published any of these ghazals. At sixteen, she married Parviz Shapur, a government employee, who has been a satirist and caricaturist of some local distinction, a year later, in 1952, Forough's first collection of verse, called *Aseer* (The Captive), the famous collection with the same name but including poems composed in 1952 and after, appeared in 1955.<sup>1</sup>

Forough's only child, a boy named Kamyar was born in 1953, and shortly thereafter the family moved to Ahwaz where Forough's husband had been transferred. Forough is still remembered in Ahwaz as a daring young woman, petite attractive, with beautiful eyes, one of the first women there to wear modern European dresses on the streets. In any case forough's marriage to Shapur dissolved by divorce in 1954, before her twentieth birthday, with Shapur gaining permanent custody of Kamyar. By the time she returned to Tehran and *Aseer* (The Captive) appeared in 1955, Forough was a well-known literary figure and the subject of some controversy as well.<sup>2</sup>

She, now in her early twenties and well-known in literary circles, was already being acclaimed as only the second woman poet of real or supposed greatness in the history of Persian literature, the other being Parvin Eitesami (1907-1941), whose life and works have already been reviewed many a time.

In 1957 appeared *Esyaan* (Rebellion), the third collection of poems, which she later characterised, along with *Deewar* (The wall), as the hopeless threshing of arms and legs between the two stages in life .....the final gaps of breath before a sort of release.

The thirty-five poems in Forough's fourth collection, *Tawallodi Digar* (Another Birth), were composed in a period of nearly six years from 1958-1963, and the publication of this volume and subsequent poems truly signalled "another birth" for Forough as a poetess as well as person.<sup>3</sup>

First, the later poems exhibit marked differences in superficial form from Forough's earlier collections. Quatrain stanzas, which constituted the basic formal divisions in her earlier compositions i.e., of eighty-six poems in her first three collections, seventy-five are series of quatrains. The later poems also exhibit a predominance



of verses of unequal length (as opposed to verses of uniform length in terms of quantitative metrical patterns in earlier compositions), an abandonment of regular patterns of end rhyme, and less adherence to traditional patterns of quantitative metres. In these regards, Forough's later poems constitute a departure from traditional verse forms and prosody almost as marked as her earlier break from traditional verse in terms of subject matter and diction. Nevertheless, there persist in Forough's later poems palpable links with the echoes of traditional verse and the Iranian literary past that help give many of these poems a true ring and body, in contrast with the products of some other contemporary Iranian poets that often seem mere grafting of kinds of western verse and modes of thought onto the Persian languages. This sort of lack of development of new forms without recourse to and regard for the cultural context from which they spring signals for one critic is a lack of depth in much of contemporary Persian verse. But this is an indictment from which Forough's later verse is surely excepted.

Second, Forough's later poems reveal maturity both o command of language and in broadening of concerns and visions. These dimensions of Forough's growth as a poet are easily seen in many poems from *Tawallodi digar* (Another Birth) and the posthumous *Iman beyawareem be aaghaz-i-fasl-i-sard* (Let us have faith in the beginning of the cold season) translated elsewhere, poems such as *Parandeh faqat yek parandeh bood* (The bird was only a bird), *Hedyeh* (Gift), *Aayehaye zamini* (Verses of the Land), *Delam baraye baghche mee soozad* (I feel for the garden), *Man az to mee meeram* (I will give up my life for you), *Gol-e- Sorkh* (Red Rose), *An Roozha* (Those days), *Tooy-e- Khak* (Upon the earth) and *Baad Mara Khahad Bord* (The wind will carry us away).

The following brief samples from Forough's later poems illustrate aspect of how they represent of her "Another Birth"

*My heart is heavy, o so heavy  
I move to the porch, and  
Extend my fingers over the  
Stretched skin of night  
The linking lamps are dark, O so dark.  
No one will introduce me to the sun,*



*Escort me the celebration of the sparrows.  
Bear flight in memory, for the bird is mortal."*

*(Delam gerafteh ast) My heart is heavy)*

For the speaker of this poem all avenues are blocked; the attempt to relate to and free oneself from night futile. It is a moment that may epitomise a whole life or constitute the essence of a life of attempted love and hopelessness. But, as the following poem reveals, it is not being alone that is responsible for one's sense of loneliness and futility.

*Night comes  
And after  
And after darkness  
Eyes  
Hands  
And breathing and more breathing  
And the sound of water  
Which drips drops from the faucet  
Then two red points  
From two lighted cigarettes  
The click's tick- toque  
And two hearts  
And two lone hearts.*

*Joft (The Couple)*

Foroogh moves from the vision of hopelessness and despair in *Delam gerafteh ast* (My heart is heavy) and *Joft* (The Couple) to doubt and possible optimism, respectively, in the next piece, a brief section from the highly regarded title poems of Tawallodi Deegar (Another Birth).

Though Foroogh was not a shaping force in modern Persian poetry, which formally came into existence in the early 1920's, she, as a second generation modernist, entered an arena where the battlelines between the forces of tradition and innovation and past and present are still drawn and the conflict persists.<sup>4</sup>

As a woman in a predominately Muslim Society, Foroogh's commitment to poetic statements of frankness and self-revelation



flies in the face of an equally long attending and just recently challenged tradition of feminine circumspectness, public modesty, and conscious avoidance of attention and competitiveness in a male-dominated society. Forough may not have been a feminist, but as a free spirit and poet, she was perforce at the forefront of the new consciousness of women on Iran, another continuing conflict of past verses present, religion verses secularism, and traditional mores verses changing attitudes and common sense.

*From the prison confines of darkness  
 From the turbid cesspool of the world  
 Hear my needful clamour,  
 O able, unique God.  
 Rend this veil of blackness, and perhaps you'll see within  
 my breast of sin and corruption.  
 The one you gave me, it isn't a heart  
 Beating in blood; free it, or keep it empty of carnal desires,  
 Or encumber it with affection and fidelity.  
 From my eyes snatch  
 The eagerness to run to another;  
 O God, be merciful, and teach my eyes  
 To shy away from the shining eyes of others.  
 Dar barabar-i- khoda (Face to face with God)*

Dar barabar-i- khoda (Face to face with God) is not particularly typical of Forough's early poems in its address to God, but its representation of a desperate longing mood is typical. And where the emotion and images of romantic imagery of 'face to face with God' are focused on the specific aspects of woman's love for a man, the reader conditional Iranian bounds of literary decorum and who, as an "I" representing a woman poet, transgress bounds of traditional social mores as well.

Forough's quest for complete freedom and modernity created lots of problems for her. She never regretted being a woman, but never accepted subjugation of women by male-dominated society. While fighting against injustice to women, she had to start her battle on the other front too. She wanted Iran to be "modern" but not Europeanised. she hated the hypocrisy of Iranian women who



tried to look westernised without making any intellectual and social progress.<sup>5</sup>

She criticised Shah, the ruler of Iran for projecting the false image of Iran. Shah wanted to create another Pates in Iran where majority of the rural masses was quite far away from the urban civilisation.

He would try to display the wealth and prosperity of Tehran to the world when rest of Iran was poverty –stricken and hungry. Forough wanted freedom from such seat dreams too. She was an honest soul who tried to bring awakening and awareness amongst Iranians by portraying the most realistic picture of her nation whom she ardently loved.<sup>6</sup>

She could not tolerate physical exploitation of women by men. She could never be fooled by unending praise of a woman's beauty by poets and authors. She portrayed the real picture of women and their tragic plight in her poetry demanding respect and dignity for them. She made several appeals to women to break unhealthy norms and traditions of the society. Her call for breaking the age-old social norms and traditions was misunderstood and misinterpreted. She was accused of being an immoral woman demanding free-sex society, the tragedy of Forough's life lies in the fact that when she was alive, even women in spite of realising the truth of each and every word of Forough, never appreciated her, but after her death everyone suddenly started missing her honesty, integrity and leadership. Today Forough is an ideal for Iranian youths and held in high esteem by critics and intellectuals.

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## *Nehru and Iran*

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India's contact with the outside world, especially with Iran, was established quite early in the ancient period and developed through succeeding centuries. Initially these contacts were motivated by trade considerations' but later on were further strengthened and reinforced by cultural relations. It has also been predominant in the field of philosophical exchange that form an important constituent of intellectual heritage.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, during the constitutional movement in Iran, India was also fighting for freedom against British Imperialism, and became a remarkable source of inspiration for the freedom fighters of Iran. As the political leaders of Iran were approaching a sea change in the society, the Persian intellegnsia was at the threshold of modernizing Iran. Not only the vision of great Indian leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, were loved and admired by the Iranian masses but also their lifestyle was greatly appreciated and given high importance in the literary circle of Iran.

The socio-cultural life of India has always been a subject of discussion in the minds of the intellectuals of Iran. For Iranians, Nehru is a symbol for spiritual movement and holy aspiration, which goes a long way to create awakening among the nations of the world. He takes firm and effective steps to champion the cause of humanity and uplift the position of man. M.A.Eslami Nadushan, a very eminent, skilful prose-writer of contemporary Iran, in his long essay "India without Nehru" discusses Nehru's role and his contribution in making India as the largest democracy. He writes:

"It is the independent India under the leadership of our late Prime-Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which draws Iranians so close to India and Indian Masses that they perceive the image of



India more clearly and accurately than ever before. His affectionately smiling face kindled Iranian hearts with great hopes, joy and faith in human values. They were as much shocked and taken back by his death as the Indians were."<sup>1</sup>

Eslami Nadushan describes Nehru as the champion of the causes of Indian masses. "Nehru's involvement with the Indian masses was so deep and intricate that one could not be separated from the other. It was based on mutual love, respect, compassion, spiritual acknowledgement and sincerity."<sup>2</sup>

Nehru's contribution to the development of Indian villagers and villages was given a world-wide acceptance in the changing shape of the time. Thus the author writes:

"Many a time villagers would be quite adamant and vehemently refuse to accept any change in their traditional life (e-g), they would not agree to their children to be vaccinated even if the small pox epidemic caused a very great danger to them; nor would they agree to change their outdated method of farming."<sup>3</sup>

Talking about the Indian Democratic system the author gives full marks to Nehru and his farsightedness and says:

"Nehru lived in close contact with the Indian Masses for more than half a century. Indians had passed through all sorts of odds; but also enjoyed their survival because in all good and bad days Nehru accompanied them, inspired them, inspired them, guided them, and shared all the ecstasies and agonies with them, triumphantly leading hungry and developing India to the utmost position to be honoured as the best and largest democracy in India."<sup>4</sup>

Referring to the challenges Nehru had to confront with, another author writes:

"This westernised man of the East served as the connecting bridge between the Asian and European culture. Void created in the world by his death can not be filled easily. The West has lost the wisest and most intellectual friend, who had boldly recognised and introduced the western culture to the East. The East has lost much more because there will hardly be anyone in future to substitute Nehru, who resurrected Asia and Africa with all his charm, politeness, mass appeal, sincerity and honesty."<sup>5</sup>



The similarity of thoughts that has been discussed above is not the only instance in the study of Nehru and Iran. The vast and rich Persian literature is full of concepts that bear ample similitude with the thoughts of Nehru. As a matter of fact, the close cultural ties between India and Iran became manifest in historical and ethical norms of the two ancient civilisation and further blossomed in various forms in the literature produced in India and Iran. For example, the ideas of Nehru in his book "Discovery of India" reveal complete ideological resemblance to the thoughts of Iranian intellegnsia.

On 18<sup>th</sup> September '1959 Nehru went on a 4 day visit to Iran. There he addressed to the exclusive gathering in these words:

"For the first time I have come to this great county. I must confess that my old dream turned into reality. After independence, I visited a large number of countries and saw various places in the world, but it is very unfortunate that I could not visit Iran due to unavoidable circumstances. Now that I have arrived in Iran, I feel extreme pleasure and satisfaction."<sup>6</sup>

In another meeting with the Prime- Minister of Iran he spoke, "Our language speaks of our cultural ties during the course of history. It is a known fact that the ancient language of Iran, which is called "Pahlavi" happens to be quite similar to our ancient language' Sanskrit. Both the languages have many things in common in them' signifying our relations through ages."<sup>7</sup>

Nehru was given a warm-welcome, when he visited University of Tehran. On such an auspicious occasion, the vice-chancellor, University of Tehran expressed his sentiments in these words:

"The great services that you have rendered to the cause of humanity, the mission of peace that you have led for the benefit of mankind, and the ties of friendship with Iran that you have made practical, will be regarded in history as the biggest honour for India as well as Iran".<sup>8</sup>

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***“Sohrab and Rustum”***  
***Mathew Arnold in Pursuit of Shahnameh***

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The vast extension of literary exploration into all aspects of human life has enabled scholars to carry forward their interactions with different linguistic and cultural zones. Such an extension of literary exploration and interactions, have always been the basic need of every social set up; yet it has been noticed that, many a time, this attempt has become a futile exercise. Occupying only one corner of vast and multi-dimensional literary piece, and failing to throw light on each and every aspect of its nature is the deep cause of concern before the intellectual circle. And thus, instead of disseminating knowledge among people, such a trend leads to extraordinary literary crisis. In the name of freedom it is not prohibited for any one to expand the realm of his literary activities, but at the same time, it is obligatory for men of letters not to overlook the temperament of thoughts and ideas in order to do full justice to the concerned literary document. Although it is a matter of great appreciation that the West has always been one step forward in this regard, and has utilised its maximum mental power to complete the task successfully, yet it has not been able to give any justification of misconduct that has been witnessed throughout the ages. E.J. Fitzgerald, who introduced Omar Khayyam as a poet, discovering his quatrains and translating them into English language, failed to convey the very basic feeling of Khayyam in his literary translations. Moreover, he gave a misleading signal by creating trans-literature which later on became a popular trend with all those writers who involved themselves in literary translations, without going into the depth of the original poet's/author's feelings and expressions.



Distortion of the original feeling and sensitivity may succeed in making the translation as charming and attractive as the original one, but it certainly violates the originality of ideas, and the basic philosophy of life portmanteaus by the original author. Jan Rypka, the great Persian scholar, also endorses the same feeling in these words:

"In respect of minuteness of observation and perceptibility, an European scholar will never be able to equal a cultured Iranian man of letters. Many things seem to him to coincide and to be of a more uniform nature than they appear to the Oriental observer. He will not easily grasp the point of difference between individual poets, especially lyric poet, when examining their artistic characteristics, quite apart from the finer shades of meaning. It is in any case certain that we should be making a great mistake, were we to judge this poetic individuality by the standards of modern literature."<sup>1</sup>

'Sohrab and Rustum' is a well-known long poem by the great Victorian poet, Matthew Arnold. The effective date of its publication is said to be November 1853. How this theme struck Matthew Arnold, and what made him to compose such an elegy, full of lamentations and pathos, is yet to be discovered; but as a matter of fact, "Shahnameh of the Persian poet Ferdowsi" translated by James Atkinson (1832) might have provided a detailed account of the tragedy to the poet. Moreover, Sainte Beuve's essay on Ferdowsi, had already appeared on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1850, where the author had elaborated the tragedy under the heading of 'The death of Sohrab', and Sir John Malcolm's 'History of Persia', which was published in 1815, may have supplied the background and names of places and subsidiary characters not mentioned by Sainte Beuve. Other details too, including the description of the Oxus, are found in Alexander Burnes' 'Travels into Bokhara' published in 1834.<sup>2</sup> The story of "Sohrab and Rustum" is told in Sir John Malcolm's "History of Persia", as follows:

"The young Sohrab was the fruit of one of Rustum's early amours. He had left his mother, and sought fame under the banners of Afrasiab, whose armies he commanded, and soon obtained a renown beyond that of all contemporary heroes but his father. He



had carried death and dismay into the ranks of the Persians, and had terrified the boldest warriors of the country, before Rostum encountered him, which at last that hero resolved to do under a feigned name. They met three times. The first time they parted by mutual consent, though Sohrab had the advantage. The second time the youth obtained a victory, but granted life to his unknown father. The third was fatal to Sohrab, who, when writhing in pangs of death, warned his conqueror to shun the vengeance that is inspired by parental woes, and bade him dread the rage of the mighty Rostum, who must soon learn that he had slain his son Sohrab. These words, we are told, were as death to the aged hero; and when he recovered from a trance, he called in despair for proof of what Sohrab had said. The afflicted and dying youth tore open his mail, and showed his father a seal which his mother had placed on his arm when she disclosed to him the secret of his birth, and bade him seek his father. The sight of his own signet rendered Rostum quite frantic; he cursed himself, attempting to put an end to his existence, and was only prevented by the efforts of his expiring son. After Sohrab's death, he burnt his tents and all his goods, and carried the corpse to Seistan, where it was interred. The army of Turan, agreeable to the last request of Sohrab, permitted to cross Oxus unmolested. To concile us to the improbability of this tale, we are informed that Rostum could have no idea his son was in existence. The mother of Sohrab had written to him about his child being a daughter, fearing to lose her darling infant if she revealed the truth. Rostum, as stated before, fought under a feigned name, an usage not common in the chivalrous combat of those days."<sup>3</sup>

The poem 'Sohrab and Rostum' has brought a lot of fame to the poet, and is considered to be one of the best poems in the history of elegiac literature. After completing this powerful verse, M. Arnold came out with the statement of joy and claimed – "The best that has been thought and said in the world".<sup>4</sup>

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 1853 Arnold wrote to his closest friend, Clogh, "I have just got through a thing which pleases me more than anything. I have done – but it is pain and grief composing with such interruptions as I have..." (CL 136). In another letter, to his mother, of May 1853 he wrote, "All my spare time has been spent on a



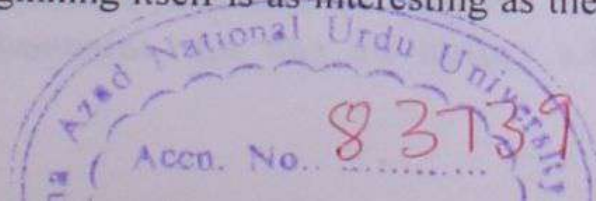
poem that I have just finished, and which I think by far the best thing I have done". (LI, 130).

As Arnold had reached his satisfaction in 'Sohrab and Rostum' such expressions are understandable. But from a critical viewpoint it is surprising that the emotional tone and final effect of the work on the reader is quite distant from the impression of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. He not only lacks the high seriousness of the great epic, but also does not display the basic concept of such a great combat between father and son. Although the entire poem invites readers to get involved into the affair, but it fails to give any clue as to whom one should lend his support and whom to consider responsible for the tragic end of Sohrab.

Ferdowsi, while narrating this emotional story, not only produces a complete background of Rostum's eminence over the bulk of warriors of his time, but also designs Sohrab's inner feeling and total appearance, i.e., his keenness to feel a fatherly affection from Rostum, and display his own virtues before him. Quite contrary to that, Matthew Arnold begins his poem abruptly, without any prefixation to the theme.

*And the first grey of morning fill'd the east,  
And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream,  
But all the Tartar camp along the stream,  
Was hush'd, and still the men were plunged in sleep;  
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long  
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;  
But when the grey dawn stole into his tent,  
He rose and clad himself, and girt his sword,  
And took his horsemen's cloak, and left his tent,  
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,  
Through the dim camp to Peran – Wisan tent.<sup>5</sup>*

While putting the tragedy in the form of a verse, Ferdowsi seems to have been down to earth with regard to a peculiar mood and musical expression, making efforts to co-ordinate it with mind and soul of generations to come. His thrust on larding versification is quite significant, as it gives a mixed feeling of joy and sorrow to the narration. The beginning itself is as interesting as the ending of the poem, e.g.,





*Konum razm-e-Sohrab-o-Rustum shanov  
Digarha Shaneedastee in ham shanov  
Yekee dastanast -o- por aab -e- chashm  
Del-e-nazok az Rustum ayad be khashm*

On the other hand, Arnold's poem fails to provide joy to his readers. This is not because it represents a sad or painful situation, in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, where everything is to be endured, nothing to be enjoyed. But the technique adopted by him and the way of its representation is less overwhelming and more indifferent, unlike Ferdowsi, who expresses joy in the very existence of Rustum towards whom he, as well as his compatriots, had shown absolute pride and unending respect.

Matthew Arnold himself believes — "Three things are vitally important for a poet to know – the choice of the subject; the accurate construction; and building of a character"<sup>6</sup> and "Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea, the idea is the fact".<sup>7</sup> Considering these statements a reality, one admires him for his perceptions. But, as a matter of fact, the poem "Sohrab and Rustum" drives him away from his own arguments, and provides an opportunity to Kathleen Tillotson to comment – "It is believed that the death of the son, Sohrab at the hands of the mighty warrior Rustum is a symbolic representation of the poet's hypocrite willingness to identify himself with Ferdowsi".<sup>8</sup> Apart from many factual mistakes, Arnold's poem contains a number of additions and omissions that separate the story from its basic concept and makes the theme superfluous. According to Shahnameh, after initial defeat, Rustum rushes to the river side to fetch a handful of water, to overcome the blow:

*Chu Rustum ze chang-e-wai azad gasht  
Busan-e- yekee kooh-e-poolad gasht  
Kharaman beshod Suy-e-aab-e-rawan  
Chu jan rafte'ee koo beyabad dawan  
Bekhor ab-o-rooy -e- zamin bar neshast  
Be peesh -e- jahan aafarin shod nokhast  
Benaleed bar kerdegar -e- jahan  
Bezaree hamin arezoo kard an  
Ke lokhtee ze zoorash setanad hamee  
Ke raftan be rah bar tawanad hamee*



Such a description conveys not merely Rustum's helplessness. It rather portrays the very existence of Almighty God, whose help is sought even by an unchallenged warrior, so as to reassemble the lost strength and vigour. Arnold overlooks here, this important aspect, which is a significant feature of Eastern intelligentsia.

There are several examples of textual change in Arnold's poem, where a new colour can easily be found. It may be Arnold's attempt to prove that this was his original work, based on his research on Iranian history, not copied from either Shahnameh, or any other translation done by the European authors. However, Arnold has failed to create the mood which Ferdowsi had very successfully created, keeping Rustum's dignity and pride intact in the minds of the readers, who have always been sharing the sorrows of Rustum while going through this great tragedy. The description of the last round of combat too, reveals Arnold's art of plagiarism. Ferdowsi narrates it in these couplets:

*Be koshtee geraftan nehadand sar  
Geraftand hardo dawal -e- kamar  
Zadash bar zamin bar bekerdar sheer  
Bedanist an ham namanad bezeer  
Sobok tighe tiz az nayam barkesheed  
Bar-e-Sheer-e-beedarbar dareed.*

Arnold narrates:

*"They rushed together, as two eagles on one prey,  
The cloud; and the two armies saw the pair  
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet  
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand"*

When the wounded Sohrab revealed himself to his father, realizing his blunder, Rustum looked deep down to his presence, and in the first instance, tried to kill himself in front of Sohrab, but was prevented by his son from making such an attempt.

*Yekee Khanjar-e-abgun bar Kesheed  
Sarash ra hamin Khast az tan boreed*

(Ferdowsi)



*And his sobs choked him, and he clutched his sword,  
To draw it, and for ever let life out*

*(Arnold)*

Arnold describes this moment of grief in a flimsy way and showers no blood on human psyche. This in contrast to Ferdowsi, who at the climax of this episode, leaves no stone unturned and steals humane from mankind preventing blood for its circulation.

The spirit of Persian poetry is tragic because it sees in our moral destiny the presence of evils in every event, even the noblest of human endeavours. The belief which was still active in the minds of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century tragedy-composers that "whom the God wishes to destroy he first makes mad" can not be overlooked. Misery deserved and misery undeserved, each is will of God, for God is the cause of everything that happens, be it good or bad.

This significant belief, which is the spirit of whole Shahnameh could hardly be witnessed in Arnold's interpretation. Arnold in his poem does not even give a slight hint at the intervention of God into the affairs of human beings, but unknowingly raises the question of fate and self-determination.

The art of poetry is not necessarily that of realism. In spite of his crippling limitations, Ferdowsi was able to invent and improvise the theme that he extracted from the Old Testaments of Iran. Yet no invention and improvisation in the physical scale of event and occurrence can suffice the poetry which demands a finer type of dimension and a subtler level of improvisation. In fact, Ferdowsi was able to produce finer examples of composition than the descriptions made in "Khodayeenamak", and "Bondeheshn" etc; just because the monotony of his theme is off-set by invention of metaphors. His poem being religious, in source and substance, Ferdowsi could take very little liberty with the facts. His inventions in this direction, therefore, follow the safe beaten tracks keeping to the right side of the combat and only for the sake of inventing parting scenes, dialogues, details of weapons of war, oration etc. As he himself has claimed:



*Pai afgandam az nazm Kakh -e- boland  
Ke az bad -o- baran nayabad gazand.  
Ze abyat -e- ghorra do rah see hezar,  
Mar an jomle dar shiva -e- Karzar.  
Ze Shamsheer-o-teer-o-kamano kamand  
Ze gopal -o- az teeghaye - boland.  
Ze bargastawan-o-ze khoftan -o- khood,  
Ze Sahra -o- darya -o- az khoshk rood.  
Ze gorg -o- ze sheer-o-ze peel-o-palang,  
Ze afreet -o- az azhdeha -o- nehang.  
Ze nerang -e- ghool-o-ze jadoo-e-deev,  
Kaz eeshan begardun resedeh ghareev.*

Ferdowsi in his mission as to revive the dumb Iran and illuminate the ancient glory of Persian Kings has achieved grand success and is conferred with tremendous applause throughout the world; but at the same time, Arnold's revival of Ferdowsi brought nothing for him but his own satisfaction. Jerome W. Clinton endorses his feeling in these words:

Matthew Arnold's poem "Sohrab and Rustum" which I term a "brilliant paraphrase" that does not do justice to the striking differences in style and substance between the two. Arnold's poem is not Ferdowsi in England but Homer in Central Asia, and I wish I had hit on the graceful phrase, "free adoption".<sup>9</sup>

So far as paraphrasing is concerned, I do not fully agree with W. Clinton's view, because there is hardly any evidence of Arnold's understanding of Shahnameh, besides his effort in making his ears sharp. In this regard, Michael C. Hillmann's comments appear to be more clear and appropriate.

Because Arnold never read Ferdowsi's story in Persian or in translation, but merely an account of it in a review of a translation, where he was inspired was not paraphrase in any sense. Partial inspiration for the title of the tragedy of "Sohrab and Rustum" may have come from Arnold's poem because Shahnameh manuscript and literary Iranians do not refer to the story of "Sohrab and Rustum" in Persian.<sup>10</sup>

Matthew Arnold is not the only European author who has tried to show his expertise on Iran but has failed to do justice to it. The



main tragedy of Rostum-Sohrab is caused by national ego and chauvinism of Tahmina who wanted the strongest man, Rostum as her husband but refused to make any sacrifice as his wife. She hated Iran and never agreed to the idea of going there; but nurtured the dream of conquering Iran with the help of her son, Sohrab. She thus desired ruling over Iran with Rostum as the king and herself, the queen. This Iran-Turan conflict has been completely overlooked by Arnold.

It is possible that the purpose of Matthew Arnold, in taking up the subject from the epic, may be a political one. Since the British were trying to capture the land of Iran by their military power, through their age old shrewdness, perhaps Matthew Arnold tried to show that the British were not causing any damage and destruction, but rendering service to the country by popularising their literature and culture. Undoubtedly, the most popular story of 'Shahnameh' was the best mean to serve this end.

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## ***“Return of Fables from Paris to Tehran” – A Study of La Fontaine’s Impact on Iranian Intelligentsia***

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The fables of Panchatantra which initially originated from the Sanskrit Literature of India, spread throughout the world by their Pahlavi, Arabic and Persian translations done by Iranians.

Iranians were so much charmed and amused by Panchatantra that from time to time they tried to bring out simpler versions of the previous translations. Thus from Kartak-O-Damnak, the first translation rendered in the Pahlavi language during the Sasanian period, we have number of Persian versions like Kalileh-Va-Damneh, Marzban-Nameh, Akhlaw-i-Mohseni, Anwar-i-Sohaili, Ayar-i-Danesh etc.

Iranians used the fables, which were originally the finest examples of Indian Niti-Shastra, with great versatility. The whole creative classical prose owes its style to Panchatantra. Besides, Iranians skilfully use the birds and animals characters in their ethical verse too. Practically all the great poets were inspired by the fables...Sanai, Attar and Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi included many fables of Panchatantra in their mystical poems. Rumi’s Mathnavi widely acknowledged as “Quran written in Pahlavi (Persian)” language included more than forty fables of Panchatantra.

With Safdavid’s rule in Iran (16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> Century), the Persian Literature especially poetry suffered a great setback.<sup>1</sup> Most of the Iranian poets and scholars migrated to India seeking shelter and patronage of the Mughal and Bahmani Kings.<sup>2</sup>

In the wake of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Iran underwent a great political change known in history as “The Constitutional Revolution” (1905-1909) demanding healthy Parliamentary system, curtailing endless



power of the monarchs and bringing them under the control of people. As Europe had already gone through this phase earlier at different places and at different times. The revolutionary literature of Europe, especially that of the French Revolution, had a vast literature pertaining to the great political changes which provided different models to Iran at its threshold of awakening. On the other hand, the advent of press in Iran had simplified the language, turning the language into a useful medium for people instead of the classical, poetical, rhyming narration full of ambiguity.<sup>3</sup>

The Iranian literature which was blissfully swinging in the past (the era of return)<sup>4</sup> had nothing to offer except ethical and romantic narration.

The awakening in Iran demanded books and articles on the socio-political problems of "common man" which Iran had to borrow from the European literature. Thus the early modern literature was based on translations of the famous European masterpieces.<sup>5</sup>

Being mainly a poetry-based country, Iran paid special attention to the translation of the poetical work of European poets. Gradually, Persian prose – a new trend in Iranian writing fell into the same line. The intellectuals gradually started withdrawing from the translations and engaged themselves into producing creative literature. Nonetheless, the new methods as well as new concepts like intellectualism, realism, romanticism and symbolism adopted by them from different literature of Europe were clearly evident in their compositions.

France happened to be among the first major European countries with which Iran wanted to interact in the field of socio-cultural exchanges. Qa'ani, a great Iranian poet of early 19<sup>th</sup> century is said to be the first Iranian poet who had full command over the French Language and literature.<sup>6</sup> During 19<sup>th</sup> century a sense of understanding the French language and literature had already penetrated into the minds of Iranian intelligentsia. As a result of which, many socio-political reformers of Iran such as Qaim Muqam Farahani, Amir Kabir, Sadr-i-Azam Nuri etc., put their utmost efforts in terms of having better exchanges between the two countries.<sup>7</sup>

La Fontaine served as an ideal model to Iranians who too adopted the beautiful symbolic style in their narrations. Imitating



La Fontaine's Panchatantra fables became medium of expressing their political and social thoughts. Hence the Panchatantra fables trend that had lost during the Safavid's period, returned to Iran through the French Literature, especially through La Fontaine's masterpieces.

In June 1886 Mirza Mohammad Khan, the editor of a weekly newspaper "Farhang"<sup>8</sup> (culture) was the first Iranian who introduced La Fontaine to his readers. The last two pages of "Farhang" contained an instalment of Fables, which were translated by Mirza Kazim, a Professor of Natural Sciences at Darul-Fonun College (Technical institute) of Tehran. It carried La Fontaine's introduction as well as few of his famous fables namely, The Animals affected by Plague, The Lion's Court, The Disloyal Trustee, Two Rats, The Wolf and The Egg, The Tortoise and the Two Ducks etc.<sup>9</sup>

Mirza Mohammad Kazim introduces La Fontaine as following:

"La Fontaine, a lawyer by profession left his home town because of the daily tensions between him and his wife and chose to settle down in Paris.

Gradually he got elected as member of the French Academy in 1683. Some of his compositions bore sharp criticism against the French Monarch Louis the XIV, which naturally resulted into great displeasure on the Monarch's part. Fortunately, for La Fontaine, some of the important post holders of the Louis' court had quite good and cordial relations with him. Their friendship protected him from Monarch's wrath.

La Fontaine, during his lifetime, behaved like a non-believer criticizing and attacking religions in most of his writings. However, at the end of his life, just before his death, he declared himself to be a true and devout Christian.

It is observed that La Fontaine failed to maintain consistency in his thoughts and ideals. He himself was aware of this weakness and it is indeed great on his part to accept this fact in his writings.

La Fontaine loved to write stories, especially the fables that made him famous throughout France in particular and in the whole world in general.



La Fontaine was a well-read person and was greatly charmed by Asian and Greek folk-tales and fables. He has used them in his compositions with a great skill.

The adaptation of the stories in the French Literature is so marvelously done that they appear to be his original creation. There is hardly any trace of Asian or Greek culture in them. The most important point in this regard to be noted is that the Asian and Greek tales lay emphasis mainly on Ethics and Moral-building, whereas, La Fontaine used them for social and political purpose. He has portrayed the socio-Cultural life of the people of France in very subtle manner. They remained the distinct features of highly popular compositions. The themes dealt by him at large include the politics of the government, the economic conditions of common man, various taxes imposed on the people, and overall declining standard of living in Paris."<sup>10</sup>

Tawaddod<sup>11</sup> (affection) happened to be the first Persian newspaper published in Paris in 1891 under the editorship of Sheikh Abu Nazzara. This paper was published in four languages, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and French. One section of this paper contained literary translations of French masterpieces. La Fontaine's fables were the special feature of this paper.

During the constitutional Revolution, a newspaper called "Barq"<sup>12</sup> (Thunder) was published from Tabriz, which contained one page in French under the title of "Literature" (Adabiyat) followed by its translation in the Persian language. Some of La Fontaine's fables appeared there with explanatory notes criticizing in metaphorical manner the doings of the government which in point of literary value, were both important and beautiful, and by reason of their natural simplicity and approximation in style, were as distinguished in merit as they were plain in style, were as distinguished in merit as they were plain in language; and were worthy to be taken as models and examples.<sup>13</sup>

The process of Modernisation in Iran that started at the end of 19th Century resulted into Iranians shifting their attention from glorious past of Asia to the development and progress of the modern world of Europe. Being lovers of literature and culture, it was but



natural that the European literature came to be their prime concern. Politically Iran was not very comfortable with some important European countries such as England and Russia,<sup>14</sup> but France became their favourite. The French Revolution inspired them greatly to introduce new political order in their own country.<sup>15</sup> In a highly illiterate nation like Iran, those few who were well educated mostly received their higher education from France. On one hand, they translated the French literature into Persian and on the other, they started Modern Schools<sup>16</sup> in Tehran based on the French models. So the literary class of Iran, especially the writers and poets, was highly influenced by the French writings.

The Modern Iranian Literature, which for the first twenty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century made a start through different newspapers and magazines,<sup>17</sup> matured up in 1920s giving distinct character to the modern literature in the form of books and publications.<sup>18</sup>

La Fontaine became very favourite with the Iranian intellectuals because of his symbolic style of writing that was very much needed by the freedom fighters living under strong dictatorship and strict censorship.<sup>19</sup>

One of the leading freedom fighters during the era of constitutional movement in Iran was Ali Akbar Dehkhoda,<sup>20</sup> a successful journalist, good poet, great critic and versatile writer. In his newspaper "Sur-i-Israfil" he started a column under the heading of "Charand-o-Parand" (Animals and Birds).<sup>21</sup> The main objective and the popular theme under this column was subtle criticism of the despotic rule, the miserable state of affairs of Iranian life, and a plea for the change of order in socio-political life of Iran.<sup>22</sup>

Another well known modern poet and freedom fighter, Md. Riza Isqui,<sup>23</sup> who was shot down in the prime of his youth, was a great admirer of La Fontaine. His poem "golzar" (Garden) carried distinct mark of La Fontaine's influence.<sup>24</sup>

He was followed by many other intellectuals like Dr. Mohd. Hejazi,<sup>25</sup> a well known novelist, short story writer, and one of the earliest professors of the University of Tehran who wrote "Pand-i-Karkas" (Advise of a vulture).<sup>26</sup> The story turned out to be extremely popular amongst the Iranians.



Jamalzadeh, <sup>27</sup> the pioneer of short story-writing in Iran, beautifully criticised the Russian invasion in his story entitled "Friendship of the Aunt Bear"<sup>28</sup> (Doosti-i-Khaleh Kherseh). The title subtly points to a famous fable regarding friendship of a man and a bear where bear sits awake by the side of his sleeping friend to guard him. When it sees a fly sitting on the nose of his friend, it tries to get rid of the fly, but irritated by the fly's obstinacy of coming and sitting again and again on his friend's nose, the bear picks up a big stone and aims it at the fly. The fly flies away but the man is killed.

Jamalzadeh clearly points out to his compatriots that the left wing of the Iranian freedom fighters, who solely depended on their Russian friends, and follow them blindly were heading towards the same fate as that of the man who befriended the bear. According to Jamalzadeh, Russians were not very sharp, at the same time, he found them quite aggressive like bears.

Nader Ibrahimy is perhaps the best short story writer of Iran today. His "Hikayat-i-She Mahi"<sup>29</sup> (The Story of Three Fish) and "Yek Khanewada-i-Bozorg" (A big Family) are the glaring examples of La Fontaine's style (narration). The first story indicates that there are three types of men in the country. The first category of the people leave the country and settle down elsewhere when they see that the condition in the country is not favourable to them. The second one tries to put pretence and cheat others for their survival. But the people of the third category, who are innocent and straightforward, do not live long.

The second story "A Big Family"<sup>30</sup> draws a universal view of mighty people killing and harassing the weak ones and making the life miserable for common people. The whole story moves around a family of birds where one by one each bird is put to death by a cruel and stronger creature.

Samad-i-Behrangy, <sup>31</sup> a reformist writer of Iran who travelled throughout the country, with a black board and chalk in hand, with a view to imparting a minimum basic knowledge to his illiterate Iranian brothers and sisters, held a view that the society should be changed from its grass-root.<sup>32</sup> He did not care to change the elderly



population of Iran but focussed his attention on growing up children, and tried to mould them into his own ideas and philosophy. He is acknowledged as the best author of "Children's literature". He never believed in fantasies and fairy tales or the story of Cynderalla where the beautiful innocent girl never resisted against ill-doings of her step mother.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, He made use of fables to educate them and to teach them to stand up to all inequalities and injustice and put up strong resistance to get rid of all the evils of the society.<sup>34</sup>

The authors and poets of the later Pahlavi period were more inclined to use La Fontaine's fables in their symbolic narration. Following is the list of some of the masterpieces of the modern authors and poets who too chose to write like their earlier brothers in "La Fontaine's style".

#### **POETS:**

Masud Farzad (Return of Phoenix), Bahar (Owl of War), Parveen Etesami (The Wolf and the Dog), Aarif Qazveeni (The Captive Bird), Neema Yushij (The Amen Bird), Khanlari (O the Bird of Dawn – The Eagle), Mahdi Hamidi (The Death of a Hen), Feridun-I-Tawalloli (The Thoughtful Bird) etc.

#### **AUTHORS:**

Lotf Ali Suratgar (The Story of a Donkey), Sadiq-i-Chubak (Justice), Yusuf Etesamul-Mulk (The Pigeon and the Crow), Sadique Headayat (The Lumpen Dog), Samad-I-Behranghi (Two Cats on a Wall), Hasan Shahbaz (The Black Cat), Shojauddin Shafa (The Crow – The Pigeon), etc.

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The list seems to be endless. Political freedom had been evading Iran for centuries and the strict press-censorship is getting stricter day by day. In such circumstances La Fontaine's style helps them a lot in expressing their views in symbolic style. The Indian fables and its style, which travelled throughout the world due to the various translations done by the Iranians, have ultimately returned back to Iran via France.



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15. "Iran and Iranians in view of 18<sup>th</sup> Century-Europe", O.H. Bonree, Hastee, Pub. Tehran 1373 Solar. Autumn edition, pp.123.
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27. "Once upon a Time" (Collection of Short Stories), pub. Burlin 1921.
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30. "This story has been translated into Hindi by Prof. S.J. Havewalla (Farsi ki Chuni Hui Kahanian).
31. "He was killed by 'Sawak', secret police of Reza Shah Pahlavi.
32. He belonged to Azarbaijan. He is still remembered by the children of Azerbaijan. "Qisseha-I-Azarbaijan" is a well-known book written by him.
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## *Knowledge and Education in Totality*

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In the modern days of hi-tech era not only the quantitative concept of education has changed but also its qualitative features are on the path of dynamic transformation from the classical frame to the modern track. With the passage of time it is getting all the more established that education is no more a unidimensional concept of learning rather it is multidimensional multifaceted and as much complex as the human being itself. Learning process, the vehicle of education starts taking shape right from the birth stage and continues till one breaths his/her last. It is multifaceted in the sense that it doesn't remain confined to the school boundaries only but it crosses all barriers to get stretched to the home, to the street and to the "totality" of the environment in which one grows and passes his/her life. It is this concept of "totality" in education that gets moulded into the Islamic cavity so as to cast an ultimate product in the form and shape of a civilised human being. Islam demands surrendering before the Creature in "totality", where the conceptual framework of totality bears a one-to-one correspondence with that of the "totality" involved in the meaning of "education". The basic objective of education and knowledge within the ideological and structural framework of Islam remain the same: to evolve a society woven with the finer fabrics of human beings. Islam enjoins upon its followers to get educated *menal mahd elal lahed* i.e. from cradle to the grave. And precisely the same becomes the venue and sphere of influence of modern day's education. The Islamic ideology attaches so much importance to education and knowledge that the only basis of the superiority of its apostles and messengers and prophets is demonstrated and demarcated through the characteristic feature of "knowledge" only. Quran has very well and elaborately narrated this fact when the very first prophet, Adam was to be



assigned to provide spiritual leadership to human race, and other creatures, then existing, came forward to claim for the leadership. The Almighty tested the knowledge of Adam as well as others. When others conceded that they had only limited knowledge then Adam was awarded to become the first messenger of Islam. And accordingly *elm-e-Adam*, the knowledge of Adam is viewed as the miracle bestowed by the Divine on Adam. In the other extreme, the Divine's miracle bestowed on the last prophet of Islam has been declared to be none other than the Holy Book. Thus from all around the entire structure of Islamic ideology it becomes clear that it is built on knowledge and education. The last prophet has throughout his lifetime been honoured and distinguished only through his very well deep-rooted and deep founded ocean of knowledge. Even today what Islam is best and justifiably proud of is its treasure of knowledge in the form of Quran, the miracle associated with the last prophet, Hazrat Mohammad (pbuh). And this tradition of Islam getting founded in the very deep-rooted bricks and stories of knowledge and education did not come to a halt even after Hazrat Ali (as) despite the very adverse and brutal environment in which the successive spiritual leaders of Islam survived, each and every one of the Twelve Imams has contributed and enriched the treasure of knowledge of Islam. As for example, the fourth Imam Hazrat Zainul-Abideen (as) has left behind an unlimited source of knowledge in the form of "*Saheefa-e-Kamila*" that would go on quenching the unending thrust of knowledge of the knowledge-seekers population of the world of not only modern day's but also the ones of the days to come. One remains surprised to assume how much knowledge these spiritual leaders of Islam have acquired! Whether it is related to sociology or economics, history or logic, mathematics or science, these sources of knowledge cater to the demands and ever expanding horizons of each and every subject of these widely scattered branches of education. Even in this hi-tech era these books provide excellent food of thought for our future generations of scientist and thinkers. To cite an example, the reference, *Saheefa-e-Kamila* of Hazrat Zainul-Abideen (as) records in it that "O God You know the best how much is the weight of the shadow". Present days limited field of science, as of now doesn't



have such a concept of shadow having some weight! However, those aware of the scientific limitations of the world of measurement & instrumentation system can very well appreciate the conceptual world behind this fact brought to the sun light by the Islamic scholar, Hazrat Zainul-Abideen. Thus one can very well visualise and realise how deeply knit and woven is the fabric evolved through the combination of knowledge and education. Perhaps the two are so much intermingled that of one can dare tearing them apart.

Everyone would readily concede that most of us are Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Zoarashtrians etc. merely by virtue of having been born in such families and this perhaps is the main reason for our being neither fully aware of all the basic principles of our own religion; nor following or practising it. It would accordingly be appreciated that one's being Muslim or Christian or Jew etc. without either knowing or duly following all the compulsory and prohibitive commandments of one's own religion, is like deceiving one's own self and conscience. Thus most precious and irreplaceable moments of our lives are wasted without utilising the same advantageously for this and the world hereafter, resulting in an irreparable loss for our generations and us.

If one goes through the political history of Europe, one will find that during the tenth century the greater part of the region called by the Greeks as "Oikoumene" was comprised of countries which were either under Arab rulers or were greatly influenced by the Saracenic Civilisation. The people of these countries, which were under Arab domination, have had very strong ties of common religion, language and culture and they untidily felt themselves to be the members of a vast empire, whose religious and cultural centres were Mecca and Baghdad respectively.

It was the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century of the Christian era when there appeared a prophet from amongst the Arabs and he delivered his Message in Arabic which was his mother tongue, and he introduced a book, namely, the Quaran, which according to so many Western Orientalists and Particularly to its Believers is an embodiment of all science, wisdom and truth.

Arabic as a sacred language: The rules of conduct laid down in the said Arabic Scripture introduced by Muhammad, and the lessons



of morality and humanly conduct preached therein and also the word and practices of the Holy Prophet, now preserved in the Voluminous collections of traditions, had turned the Saracenic nations into the most cultured and civilised race of the world. Thus, after the Advent of Islam, the culture and civilisation carried abroad by the Arabs, spread through Arabic, their mother tongue and the Sacred medium of their new faith. This movement which caused a great change in the outlook and mode of life of the people of a large portion of the globe may be compared to a wave that rolled onward fertilising every soil over which it passed and watering every field go grow and to harvest all that is fruitful and needful for the spiritual as well as worldly progress of a people rightly called the cultured and the civilised.

Arabic holds the same sacred and high place among the Semitic languages as the Greek among the European languages. The Message of Islam was delivered in Arabic when this language was in its zenith.

Arabic among the Semitic languages and its merit: Among other classical languages like Aramaic and Hebrew could never prove to be rivals of Arabic in elasticity, classical capabilities and other characteristics of a living language. Though Hebrew and Arabic stand very close to each other and although for about two thousand years both were at a stage where it was difficult to differentiate between various moods and verbs of the two languages and where it was almost impossible to catch the meanings of the words used with innumerable suffixes without observing any regular method or rules of etymology. Later on, it was only Arabic that grew into a most scientific as well as a literary language, so much so that Hebrew now truly be called as the daughter of Arabic and not its sister. The poverty-stricken Hebrew could never enjoy the luxuries, which Arabic has been for more than thirteen centuries. The shortcomings or deficiencies found in Hebrew were probably due to unsettled life of its users i.e. the Jews. The Jews always sought refuge with the people of different languages, cultures and civilisations and they passed a life no better than a conquered race. Thus, Hebrew, due to everyday changes and foreign influences could not develop into a systematised language which could have



definite rules of grammar and thereby to be intelligible to its students without much strain or burden on mind.

Among so many outstanding merits in which Arabic language has surpassed other great languages of the world may be mentioned here in the words of Alfred Guillaume, who in the introduction of his work "The Legacy of Islam" writes: "A fundamental characteristic of the Semitic languages is to have only three consonants to the verb. There are exceptions to these rules in the various languages but such exceptions are comparatively rare. It appears that compound words to express ideas are practically unknown in Arabic language. Consequently it is more interesting and remarkable that the language which is to circumscribed should be able to cope with all the lore of the Greek words and so seldom give rise to suspicion that any strain is being put upon its resources." The learned author further remarks, "Arabic is fitted to express relations with more conscience than the Aryan languages because of the extra-ordinary flexibility of the verbs and nouns."

Philip K. Hitti observes in his work "History of the Arabs", "No people in the world, perhaps manifest such enthusiastic admiration for literary expression and are so moved by the word, spoken or written, as the Arabs. Hardly any language seems capable of exercising over the minds of its users such irresistible influence as Arabic."

Pre- Islamic Poetry: It is rather proverbial that "poetry is the register of the Arabs" and it was only in the field of poetical expressions that the pre- Islamic Arabic excellence and that the Arabs felt pride in their literary achievements so much so that they called themselves "Arab" i.e. eloquent and considered the people of other languages as "dumb" i.e. Ajam.

The oldest piece of literature of the pre- Islamic days is the poetical compositions generally known as Qasidah (odes). They exhibit a marvellous art of expression and contain such capacities of the language that some times it is believed that no Arabic poet of the Islamic period could compose any poem equal in merits to the pre-Islamic poems.

As a matter of fact, when Arabic poetry was potentially at its best, the Quran in prose form was revealed to the prophet, which



he used to read out and explain the meanings of its verses. In the pre- Islamic days, there was no prose work, therefore, the Quran was the first of its kind in Arabic. The language of the Quran is rhythmical as well as musical, but not poetical. This is important to mention here that the Quran gives no encouragement to poetry but rather in view of the vulgarities found in the pre- Islamic poetic compositions, it has condemned such poetic compositions. For example, Quran says :

“ As for poets, the erring follow them.” (Q. 26: 224)

At another occasion Allah says about the Arabic preacher, Mohammad:

“ We have not taught him poetry, nor it is meant for him.” (Q. 36 : 38)

This was an indication to the believers not to indulge in poetry, which is injurious and unhealthy for the society. But so far as poetry, which preaches morality, is concerned the prophet has certainly its lawfulness and has also given encouragement to the poets like Hassan-i. Thabit who wrote verses praising Allah and eulogising His prophets for their high moral preaching and spiritual life; and the prophet used to hear his poems with great appreciation. The poetical collection or Divan of Ali, (as) the Prophet's cousin, is also full of moral lessons, spiritualism and godly life along with love of knowledge which are the only theme of his verses, similarly, there are numerous Muslim poets, who composed poems to impart moral lessons and made use of their talents to mend the ill manners and bad habits of the people. Such efforts did not go waste and poets like Sadi, Rumi, Attar, Nizami, Jamin and numerous other renowned and famous poets of Persian Language made use of their talents in preaching rules of conduct through their poetical exhortations. Truly speaking poetry loses its charm to a great extent if there is no exaggeration and romance but Islam denounces love and vulgar thoughts in language with the result that the pious Muslims paid less heed to poetry and were mainly interested in writing Arabic Prose. The style of Quran, therefore, served as model and set the standard that the Muslim writers generally endeavoured to imitate. Moreover study of the Quran has been an essential part



of the faith, therefore, even today in all the Arabic Madressahs from primary up to highest standards Quran has always been the basic fabric of the whole curriculum. This has been a trend of all the countries from Morocco to the Far East including India where education is imparted in Arabic as Dars-e-Nizami.

This is why Quran has been rendered in almost every living language of the world e.g. English, French, German, Turkish, Persian, Chinese, Bengali, Marathi, Gujrati, Japanese, Urdu etc. and attempts have been made to translate the Holy Book into Hindi also. One such work has been published with Hindi translation.

Now because Arabic is the native language of Islam and all the original and basic work on Islam have been written in Arabic, therefore, Islam and Arabic are often used as interchangeable terms and to a great extent it is but true that the secular and spiritual aspects of the Arabic language are inseparable in the natural cause. The great literary influence of Quran may be realised from the fact as Hitti has observed that it was due to it alone that various dialects of the Arabic-speaking people have not fallen apart into distinct languages. Obviously the Moroccans, the Egyptians, the Iraqis, the Syrians, and others who speak different dialects of Arabic, do not at all feel themselves strangers in one another land and neither pronunciation and accent prove hindrance to catch the words of these Arab people.

✓ Secular Influences of Arabic Literature: Now in order to have an idea of the potential capabilities of the Arabic language and also to know how far this Language could enrich other languages with its vast treasures of vocabularies, diction, style, thoughts and ideas, etc., one should read the history of the Persian language and literature. Pahlavi, which long before the Islamic Dispensation or Muslim Rule had become almost a dead Language regenerated in the form of Persian under the influence of Arabic, and the Huzvarish was replaced by the Arabic script.

When Persia was conquered by the Arabs the Persians showed great skill in their study and knowledge of Arabic language and literature and with the help of Arabic they revive their national language i.e., Pahlavi and it was Arabic which made the forsaken



Pahlavi language to take a new shape and flourish in its native land, and it became not only a dialect of Iranian people but also turned into a sweet literary language. Although Firdausi did his best not to make use of Arabic words in his great epic, *Shahnameh* yet he was compelled to bring in his verses at least 5% of them.

Now let us see the influence of Arabic on the European languages, civilisation and culture. In Europe Spain was the only country which was conquered and nominated by the Arabs though not for long. What achievements were made by the Arabs in Spain require a good deal of time to be accounted for. But for a little understanding let me quote the words of the author of "The Language of Islam." who writes:

"Yet it can not be denied that while Europe lay for the most part in misery and decay, both materially and spiritually, the Spanish Muslims created a splendid civilisation and organised economic life. Muslims of Spain played a decisive part in the development of art, science, philosophy and poetry, and its influence reached even to the highest peaks of the Christian thoughts of the thirteenth century if ever, Spain was the torch of Europe".

Numerous words of Arabic have been adopted in Spanish and Arabic models also influenced Portuguese language and its poets. As a concrete example, let me mention here some of the Arabic words that have passed of into the Spanish and Portuguese languages.

The word 'Fonda' in Spanish has been borrowed from 'fundeq' (i.e. hotel); 'tarifa' from 'tarif' (the former means tariff and latter means definition) of Gabon from qaba (outer-garment) 'adoquin' from al-dukan (the shop) or al-calde from al-qadi (the judge), etc. These and several words adapted from Arabic to Spanish include some of the commonest objects of daily life.

In Spanish as a rule, Arabic words along with their definite article were adopted and the Spanish article 'la' was added in front of them, e.g. 'la-aciquia' (Canal) from al-saqiya. Similarly, in Portuguese alcatifa (carpet) was borrowed from al-qatifa (Velvet) or alfaiate from al-khayyt or alfandega from al-funduq (custom-house.)



There are numerous other words which have passed into French, German, English and other European languages e.g. in Arabic the word al-Amir; which means captain of the sea-ship, was adopted in French as "amiral" i.e. the definite article of Arabic "al' as against Arabic was added after the word 'amir' and from French when it passed on into English it became, 'admiral' similarly, the Arabic word 'ard' which was adopted in German as Eard when passed on into English it became earth, The same thing happened to the Arabic word ' rafd' which means to give up and it became refuse in English.

The above-mentioned influences of Arabic language are not of much importance for all the languages of the world. Due to their mutual impact, inclusion of words from Arabic is seen in different branches of knowledge and learning of the European countries, and this is definite that the Western literature, its philosophy, religion, geography, and other sciences owe much to Arabic in their valuable researches and literary contributions.

It has been unanimously held by the Western Orientalists that in almost every branch of knowledge Arabic scholars have contributed original thoughts and have made new investigations, Arnold and Guillaume, therefore, in their combined work "The legacy of Islam' write:

"The first book in England the Dictates and sayings of the Philosophers, was translated from a French version of Latin recast of an Arabic work of this type."

One more example shall serve to understand the influences of Arabic writings in Europe and other countries of the world is the translation of the Arabian Nights published in English and French for 30 times and up till now its three hundred editions are found in all the languages of the west.

Religious Influences: It will not be irrelevant to mention in the above context that Clement V appealed to the Christian Europe to introduce the teaching of Arabic and Hebrew in the four great Universities of Europe namely Bologna, Paris, Salamanca, and Oxford so that after the study of the two languages the followers of Christ might be able to cope with the Muslim and Jewish Missionaries in religious discussions.



In fact even the religious literature found in Arabic is so impressive and influential that Abdul Masih Intaki, a Christian by faith in his famous work *Tarikh-e- Ehyay-i- sadr-al-Islam* commenting upon the Addresses of Hazrat Ali, the son-in-law and cousin of prophet Mohammad (pbuh), compiled by Sharif-e-Radi and named as *Nahj-al-Balaghat*, writes about the marvellous speeches of Hzrat 'Ali (as)' that there are innumerable philosophical and spiritual utterances and precepts attributed to the great disciple of Muhammad (pbuh). Undoubtedly he is the leader of all the scholarly men and the philosophers of the whole world. The expressions of 'Ali' based upon rational ideas found in countless magazines, letters, speeches and sayings are worth- practising. Similarly, justice Paulas Salama, who had been Chief Justice of Beirut writes about 'Ali's' intellectual utterances and religious speeches that the Christians in their writings mention him and benefit themselves with his philosophical and spiritual guidance is a mark of respect before his words, full of lessons of morality and upright conduct. The righteous and ascetics receive strength and power in their asceticism and piety, the philosophers enlighten their minds with his brilliant star of the heaven of philosophy and the eloquence and renowned literary figures seek guidance from his words, the doctors of the theology benefit themselves to follow his theological directions and preaching.

Now let me discuss in brief what contributions Arabic has made in respect to Indian languages and societies. So far as Arabic thought pertaining to religion and spiritualism is concerned it is enough to quote here the actual words of B.N.Luniya from his work "Development of Indian Culture" published from Agra and it is thus:

"In due course these ideas began to have a conscious or unconscious effect upon the philosophical Hindu mind and fostered the growth of liberal movement, under some saints or preachers, who came to be known in history as religious reformers. The denounced caste system, preached the fundamental equality basic oneness of all religious and the unity of God-head, advocated the monotheistic faith, protested against the domination of the priestly



class, opposed the complicated elaborate excessive ritualise and formalities of religion and emphasised simple devotion, faith and puritan life as the means of deliverance or salvation for all persons."

The learned author goes on to say " Besides the doctrinal aspect, the Muslims (i.e. the followers of the Arabian Prophet) brought into India a conception of human equality, a pride in one's religion, a legal system; which in many ways was an advance of the code of the times."

In respect to the influence of the Arabic language on various Indian languages and literature's we find that it is not only Urdu which in its richness and with its vast treasure as well as a highly developed language of the world owes so greatly to Arabic but other Indian languages are also indebted to this very language. The word India is a corrupted word of Hindi. Thus the word 'Hindi' used in Hindustani is a corrupted form of the Arabic word 'Hindi' which means Indian, . It is just as English is used for the language and people of England. Similarly, the Indian word has also been mentioned in the pre-Islamic Arabic poetry as 'Muharrdun'. It seems that the Arabs knew about India even before the advent of Islam.

The influence of Arabic prose and poetry on Hindi language and literature is an unending story. Allow me to say here a few words to know the influence of Arabic on Hindi literature and through that on Indian culture and civilisation.

It is a well-known fact that according to the Quaran God is unseen and omnipotent for it says; "Vision Comprehended Him not". Kabir in one of his Dohas has said that God can never be seen through corporal eyes but only through inner eyes from which Arabic equivalent is 'basirat'. This is also a fact that the believers in the Quaran just before starting certain work used to say ' bismillah'. Similarly, the work wafa is Arabic word which means to fulfil a vow. Now the famous poem of Chakbust pertaining to the Banbas of Ram begins with the following lines:

Besides the hymns of God, the eulogies of the prophet, and of his holy progeny, the elegies pertaining to the tragedy of Karbala have been written in almost every language of India. In support of the statement set mention some of the works in different language



of India.

- (1) In Pashtu Khushhal Khan has written encomiums, elegies, odes, etc.,
- (2) Sheikh Faizullah has written so many poems and amongst them the most famous is entitled an elegy on Zainab, the sister of Imam Husain who was the grand son of the Prophet. This poem according to the Dr. Abdul Haq is a valuable contribution to the Bengali literature and another work in Bengali is a famous collection of poems written by Mohammed Khan.
- (3) A third poet Hyat Mahmud belonging to Rangpur has got two poetic collections namely Janganama and Muharram Teohar
- (4) Qadi Nazzrul Islam has composed so many poems and has borrowed this theme from Arabic writings.
- (5) Sindhi language has borrowed its script from Arabic. Syed Thabit Ali born in 1740 AD has written marvellous elegies in Sindhi. Rais Amrohvi, now living in Pakistan has translated one of the poems written in Hindi by Shah Abdul Latif of Sindh.
- (6) In Punjab Miskin is a famous poet who has written poems on Tragedy of Karbala.
- (7) The poets of Kashmir have also written enormous poems on the subjects that are purely Islamic and some of the topics are directly related to the martyrdom of Karbala.

### **CONCLUSION :**

Education is the principal aim that makes mankind live a superior life. Mankind is in need of education since the beginning of life. After a hard work by all Messengers of God in every era and the last enlightenment which is still a living miracle to all those who seek for higher education and fresh experiences, the subject became more wide and remained alive till the date. Modern people must not proclaim that Islam is the religion of only worship and the like. The one who wants to study Islam, must open his eyes at every sentence of Holy Quran and Nahjul- Balagha in addition



to the work done by the outstanding thinkers.

Before the advent of Islam, during ancient days so many systems of education were introduced in different parts of the world. If you take for example the children of society to obtain valuable objectives in life, they must try to develop the intellect and keep their physique intact. Islam too aims at it accordingly.

This discussion puts emphasis upon Quranic interpretation in order to produce a meaningful conclusion. The whole contention is based on ideas that seem to be considered necessary in letter and spirit.

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## *The Dissent Movement: A Case Study of the Contemporary Protest Literature*

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The dissent is human and it has an age- old history in all societies and systems. It has a rational base. The term refers to competitive or alternative view vis-à-vis an existing status quo at a given time. Such views may pertain to social, economic or political organization in society or state. Dissent often leads to crystallization of distinct factions, groups or parties. Each one not only propagates its objectives but also adopts certain means for achieving them. In a system where interaction of divergent ideas are permissible, there is greater scope for reconciliation and resolution of dissent. But where there is rigidity or absence of response, confrontation is inevitable. Dissent can develop into a movement if there is unity of purpose and action. In the process, often, there are pitfalls created by narrow and partisan considerations. External linkages complicate the problem. These factors can not only dissipate the dissent movement but can also provide handle to the government in any system to exploit and aggravate the fissures to its advantage.

The Iranian revolution of 1978-79 was directed primarily against the Shah of Iran and his policies, both domestic and foreign. The Shah was initially criticized and finally condemned not only for his dictatorship at home and dependence upon the USA but also for the rapid westernization that was allegedly destroying the fabrics of the Iranian society based upon Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, it was inevitable that the Iranian revolution be shared, for different reasons, by diverse groups of Iranians raging from liberal democrats to the Mujahedin / Fida'in and the Clergy. They were in turn supported by the intellectuals and businessmen of Iran, especially in the big cities, industrial centres and religious places.



The significance of the Iranian Revolution to the people of Iran is obvious enough. To the third world countries, its importance lay in the fact that it was not the usual kind of regime change or coup quite often experienced by them. On the contrary, it was an endeavor to bring about systemic transformation by evolving an ideology of development and growth not borrowed either from 'the East or the West' but having its roots within the system. A viable Iranian model could have challenged the dominance of the ruling ideology of development that has been seeking the re divination of the stagnating and ailing social set up of the third world with the help of the magic of the radical thoughts.

There are many issues related to the basic question of dissent that have been witnessed during the last two decades of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Although one should look into all the entangled branches of the issues together, but due to certain other limitations, it seems all the more better to pick up the most important and burning point to place the discussion in order. I therefore, would like to begin with the dissent voices and their reactions by those who happened to be the most important component of every healthy society.

With the increased coverage allocated to Bangladeshi author Taslima Nasreen, sometimes referred to as the female Salman Rushdie, a number of misconceptions need to be clarified. While Nasreen claims to speak for Muslim women, there appears to be a wide gap between what she says and the reality. The issue of British apostate Salman Rushdie resurfaced in all the discussions about censorship and literature. Reports still state that it was the Fatwa verdict of Ayatollah Imam Khomeini that condemned the author to death. However, this verdict was not the late Ayatollah's personal whim, but rather an application of Islamic Law pertaining to blasphemy. Muslims of all sects rallied behind the scholar in attesting to this fact. Even Cat Stevens, a former British singer, acknowledged the validity of the verdict. While campaigning for freedom of speech and expression, western writers conveniently overlook censorship in western nations. For example, *Spycatcher* by Peter Wright was banned in the United Kingdom; South African



Muslim scholar Ahmed Deedat's articles comparing Christianity and Islam are banned in France; while the booklet "Did Six Million Really Die?" questioning the killing of Jews is forbidden in Canada. It appears as though western states may censor what they deem appropriate, but when Muslims perform the same, immediate labels of suppressing freedoms are posted! <sup>1</sup>

While the oppression of women is truly a tragedy throughout time, was it not Islam and the Holy Qur'an provided them with the very first rights of inheritance, dignity and an elevated status? History narrates that newborn females were considered such a curse, that fathers would bury them alive; Islam forbade such customs. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) declared, in an era of male superiority, that men and women were equal in the eyes of God, each would be rewarded equally for their similar actions. The path to Paradise was placed beneath the mother's feet, requiring children to serve their mothers and keep them happy in all circumstances. A wife in Islam, as part of her rights, does not even have to cook, or look after the children, or may demand a servant. She is entitled to receive a payment for breast-feeding her child from her husband, if she so desires. Has any other faith allocated such powers to females, who used to be considered insignificant possessions of men? The bride, not the groom initiates a marriage in Islam, with each spouse selecting his or her companion without force or duress. Numerous other examples may be cited, but the aforementioned are sufficient for the purpose.<sup>2</sup>

That the Muslim man can marry up to four wives has constantly been a favorite target of western writers against Islam. The Qur'anic verse that allows multiple marriages also dictates that each must be treated equally and fairly. If not, then the man is sinning, and is liable for punishment by the creator.<sup>3</sup>

In wars, usually the male was killed, thus leaving behind a widow and orphans. If polygamy was not permitted, one can only imagine the number of unattended people in society. From a practical perspective, the percentage of Muslim men who actually have multiple wives can be counted on the hands! Ironically, The Islamic society (especially that of Iran) accommodates extramarital relationships, affairs, dating and the free mingling of the sexes, but



when a commitment in the form of a marriage is mentioned, polygamy is utter surprise for many.

In Islam, a man must provide food, shelter, and basic necessities for his wife and children. If the wife earns any money, it is hers to keep or dispose of as she pleases. The impracticality of this theory becomes crystal clear! Islam is way of life that does not suppress natural desires, while at the same time, restricting unauthorized sexual freedom. It encourages the universal qualities of modesty, chastity and virginity.

By calling for the Holy Qur'an to be updated, Nasreen has shown her true identity, since Muslims believe vehemently that this is the direct communication of God revealed through Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). In fact, it is a matter of pride for Muslims around the globe that this scripture has not been changed, deleted, added to or altered in any way whatsoever, since the time it was revealed until the present day. Muslims conform that it shall remain intact until the end of the world. (The Unaltered Qur'an by Prof. S.B.H. Abidi)

Who is paying and / or encouraging Taslima Nasreen? An intellectual effort to harm Islam from so-called Muslim writers seems to be the order of the day.

Many a time a general notion is being adopted as if whatever system in the Muslim countries has been prevailing is in tune with the Islamic laws, whereas the truth may be other way round. One must mark the difference between the Islamic jurisprudence and the laws made by the Muslim rulers. In other words, Islam must not be mixed with the labeled Muslims identity. For example, the male domination in the Arab world and Arab women's quest for identity have been a major issue that has not been paid much attention by the respective governments. On the contrary, if any body dares to come out openly against the system, he or she is subjected to a great deal of harassment and suppression.

*"A Space Ship of Tenderness to the Moon"* is a short story written by Laila Bal'Bakki, the well-known contemporary author of Lebanon. In this novel she has openly criticized the dominant male society of present time which has been creating obstacles in the way of Muslim women's quest for socio-cultural identity.



Laila was born in 1936 in southern Lebanon into a traditional Muslim family. She interrupted her University education to work as a Secretary in the Lebanese Parliament. Her first novel "I Live" was published in 1958, translated into French, English and other European languages, and compared by critics to the work of Françoise Sagan. She has also published a second novel "The Two Monsters" and many articles in Beirut's newspapers and magazines.<sup>4</sup>

The story 'A Space Ship of Tenderness to the Moon' symbolizes defiance and disobedience to the husband's wishes and his ideas of maintaining customs and traditions of the society. Such an attempt led her to undergo a trial before the Public Prosecutor of Lebanon. As a result of that, the charges of obscenity and harming the public morality were leveled against her. During the course of her trial, many takers of her story were bewildered to read in Lebanese and foreign press that Laila Bal'Bakki, an author, an artist, a human being, a creative force had been treated like a common criminal in her own country.

There are many other female authors, poetesses and thinkers, who like Laila have attempted to break the barriers stood in the way of their struggle for freedom and justice.

The artistic persona in their compositions, generally, projects a confused young woman who has a hard time forging an identity for her. If she denies her artistic impulses she is not living unto her own standards and ideas. On the other hand, if she depicts this split within herself, between the artist who defines herself in her vocation, and the traditional woman who can define herself only through her relationship with others, especially her husband and her son, she is condemned to all possible extent by her opponents.

An overview of these most famous contemporary Muslim women artist proves that the choice of literature as one's vocation is an important factor that requires a drastic shift in one's priorities and ultimately in one's entire way of life. Literature provided them the means of expressing one's desires and aspirations challenging the status quo and propagating that life has much more to give them than that of traditional roles. So far, social conditions and expectations have made it difficult for women in general, and for women with family and children in particular, to fully develop



artistic gifts. The recent trend has been testimony to their strong conviction that until one reaches her liberated and free self, isolated from the constricting selves of others, one will not accomplish anything. Art is the strongest love. It becomes accessible only to those who thoroughly surrender their whole existence to it.

The contemporary female authors, poetesses and thinkers of Iran have been quite successful in their approach towards the positive criticism of the male-dominated society in their writings. Despite official opposition and occasional censorship, the new genre developed space. The great 20<sup>th</sup>. Century exemplars are seen to be Parvin E'tesami, Forough-i-Farrokhzad, Zhaleh, Homa Gerami, Simin Bahbahani, Simin Daneshwar, Ardlan Farhadi and Sepideh Kashani; all of them command ever great attention for their serious realism and disabused candor anticipating resurgence. As the bourgeois spirit acquired a more prominent place in society, the protest became important; characterization and sensibility received greater attention. But the fact remains that none of the female voices, in spite of being harsh and revolutionary in letter and spirit, could dare to make use of unfair mechanism or blasphemous attitude towards the condemnation of bigotry and social evil prevailing in the society. For example, Parvin expresses her enthusiasm vis-à-vis rights of women in a poem entitled '*Zan Dar Iran*' whose opening verses may be worth quoting:

"From this lamp of knowledge, which is in our hand today, the highway of effort and the realm of prosperity are illuminated. It is better that every girl should know the value of education so that no one could say: the son is clever and the daughter is dull."<sup>5</sup>

Forough is another example of such kind; she never viewed art as a liberation from the demands of motherhood or an incomplete substitute for it; she rejected the notion that a thwarted need to give birth is the hidden generator of woman's creativity. And yet her poetry can be seen as a defense of the rights of motherhood and an affirmation of childbearing, and childbearing when and where it is a woman's choice:

*"In the shelter of night,  
Let me be impregnated by the moon*



*Let me be filled With tiny drops of rain,  
Undeveloped hearts, Scores of unborn children  
Let me be filled Maybe my love Will be the cradle For  
the birth of yet another Christ."*<sup>6</sup>

A large number of people regard only man's material aspect and neglect the other side of the coin, because they have not understood the profundity of the nature of man, or because they have not correctly evaluated it. Men of great understanding have ascribed three dimensions to man:

1. Individual material life
2. Social life
3. The world of spirit and insight

Those who give importance only to the first dimension, and believe in absolute freedom for man, even though it be harmful for him, overlook the profound character of man and they have forgotten the other two dimensions. Those who lend importance to the first and second dimensions, but neglect the third, only succeed in creating an environment that lacks spiritual and moral values.

"Arnold Toynbee, the great British historian, in a long interview with the American magazine, 'Life' said that man had submitted himself to materialism, and that from that point of view we do not lack anything. However, he said, we have become bankrupt on the spiritual side of things. However, I think there is still time, he continued, to leave this incorrect view of things and return to religion."<sup>7</sup>

At this juncture, when we call ourselves as enlightened living beings, let us refer to Saadi, the great writer of Iran, who being highly religious person described his inner instinct in respect of a woman in these words:

*Magar malaikeh bar aaseman, vagarnah bashar  
Be husn-i- surat-i-oo dar zamin nakhahad bood  
Be doosti ke haraamast baad azoo sohbat  
Keh heech notfe chonu aadami nakhahad bood*

"Perhaps she was an angel from Heaven, for no mortal on earth could be so beautiful. I swear by friendship, I shall not befriend anybody hereafter, as no mortal can ever be like her."<sup>8</sup>



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3. If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry woman of your choice, two or three, or four, but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them) then only one, that will be more suitable to prevent you from doing justice. ( *Sura iv. 3* )  
It begins with an appeal to the solidarity of mankind, the rights of women and orphans, and the implications of family relationship, including an equitable distribution of property after death. (S. iv. 1-14 and c 16)  
While the decencies of family life should be enforced, women should be held in honour and their rights recognized and this principle of goodness should be extended to all beings, great and small. (S. iv. 15-42)
4. *Women In the Middle East, Conflict between the traditional roles and poetry*, Farzaleh Milani, pp. 236
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## *Bedil & Dryden: Offenders of Refined Love and Heroism*

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The growth of Orientals in Europe and their impact on Indian schools was very high indeed throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century which was further intensified in the latter centuries. Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil and John Dryden, the well known poets of 17<sup>th</sup> / 18<sup>th</sup> century, as they started their poetic campaign at the same time and same period (Bedil in India and Dryden in England), their thoughts and ideas show many common elements. Dryden had found England raw, bleeding, and angry after the Civil War. He seemed to be willing to subdue its raging passions and bend his neck to justify the ways of rationality through the refined love of Divinity, on one hand, and by displaying heroic images of man for ultimate salvation on the other. Bedil too had before him an example of tender innocence which in the first instance aroused to suffer but finally ended in romantic passion. Naturally, he, as a witness to the leaps and bounds of his time, was perturbed with the idea of increasing conflicts amongst various components of Indian society as a result of unworthy rule of later Mughal kings.

Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil was born in Azimabad (Patna). His family was of Turkish descent belonging to the Arlas tribe of the Chaghatey. His mother tongue was Bengali, but he also knew Urdu (then called Rekhta), Sanskrit and Turkish and learned Persian and Arabic in elementary school. When his parents died, Bedil was entrusted to his uncle, Mirza Qalandar, a poet of modest talent and through him met some of the renowned Sufis of the time whose company left a profound impact on his personality and poetry. He wrote his first poem at ten, then studied the classical poets and became an accomplished poet, at the same time, continuing to imbibe the rich heritage of Sufism. He, at first, wrote in style of the Persian



masters, but after moving to Delhi in 1075/1664 he began to write more and more in the Indian style. He served in the army of Mohammad Azam but quit rather than writing qasidas in praise of the prince when asked to do so, though he maintained friendly relations with several nobles of the court.

The greatest English poet of the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, John Dryden was the writer of almost 30 tragedies, comedies, and dramatic operas. He also made a valuable and permanent contribution to English Literature in his amiable, civilised, and intelligent commentaries on poetry and drama, which are sufficiently extensive and original to entitle him to be considered, in the words of Dr. Samuel Johnson, as "the father of English criticism." He so dominated the literature of his time that it is frequently referred to by literary historians as "the age of Dryden."

#### **MAJOR WORKS:**

**Poems:** *Astraea Redux* (1660), on transfer from the field of battle to the restoration of the monarchy; *Annus Mirabilis: the year of wonders* 1666(1667); *Absalom and Achitophel*(1681); *The Medall, A satire against Sedition* (1682); *Layman's Faith* (1682); *An Ode* (1686); *The Hind and The Panther* (1687); *Alexander's Feast* (1697);

**Plays:** *The Maiden Queen* (1666); *The Indian Emperor* (1667); *The Royal Martyr* (1670); *The Conquest of Granada* (1672); *Aureng-Zebe*(1676); *All for Love* (1678); *The Spanish Fryar* (1681); *King of Portugal* (1690); *King Arthur*(1691); *The Spartan Hero* (1692); *Nature will Prevail*(1694);

**Prose:** *Of Dramatick Poesie, an essay*1668); *Essay on the Dramatique Poetry of the Last Age*(1672); *A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire* (1693).

Present paper is based on comparative study on a few important aspects of the two great lyricists of the same age who in their own language of expressions have made a mark on the big canvas of world literature.

For this purpose the episode of Chahar Unsur, Bedil's narrative of his lonely journey from Patna to Mahatsi in 1660, when he was



only 16, will serve as the best example. The factual circumstances are well-known to every reader of that remarkable Autobiography of Bedil: Shah Shuja, one of the pretenders to the throne during Shah Jahan's sickness, had been defeated; the victorious Aurangzeb was sending armies to Bengal for final conquest of the province, formerly the seat of Shah Shuja, and in Aurangzeb's army was also the Uncle of Bedil, Mirza Qalandar, who had left his family in Mahatsi, 60 kms. from Patna. Bedil was in Patna, his birth place and he had to join his uncle's family in Mahatsi and thought it more advisable to walk the entire distance, in order not to excite the avidity of robbers, frequent in those times of anarchy.

"For a necessity I had to go to Mahatsi from Patna, and decided to go on foot, accompanied by a single servant. But I was too tired that my limbs refused to move. To go back was impossible and to remain there was absurd. I was in despair. I stood up, walked a little, sat down again, cried."<sup>1</sup>

I am sure that nobody acquainted with the classical Persian narrative style will deny that such a precise description of events is extremely rare and unique. It shows a great clearness in the expression of circumstances of both place and time.

Considering that Bedil and Dryden were born and died within the same century and were both greatly admired by the people of their time, my attention was drawn to certain common elements found in their poetic narration. For Bedil a divinely or dained hierarchy governs the relations of god, man and the prophet; and a gulf yawns between love and lust between piety and sin. In Dryden it is easy to locate this love as a link in the great chain of being. It is an energy within experience, a powerful drive available to the poet, an ironic, sensuous, heroic, even moral purposes. Bedil and Dryden both, of course, possessed a clear sense of right and wrong in love, but the former talks more about the realm of good and evil.

My aim is to show how Dryden and Bedil, under some contemporary impulses but nevertheless with great force and originality, create within a belligerent heroic world characters moved by delicate love, tender pity, and soft compassion.

Dryden has presented a beloved with an amorous mind whose blood burns like a 'raging fire' and whose love remains ever eager



and never tired. The beloved rises from affection to love and heroism at the end, when Dryden gives her a greatness of mind that is also peculiarly feminine of a soft mould. Sigismonda whose love is exquisite and refined and also prophetic of the age to come, and above all, is unashamedly erotic.

*"I pleased myself, I shunn'd in continence  
And urg'd by strong desire, indul'd my sense."*<sup>2</sup>

In such expressions Bedil too does not seem to be introvert and thus says:

*"Ghubar-e- khod be tufan dadam-o- arze- wafa kardam  
Payam-e- ishque ra tamhid-e- izhar in chenin bayad"*<sup>3</sup>

Dryden's love at times, speaks of unspeakable agonies of mind that accompanied the revelation of truth, feels the pangs of nature and of kindness and thus, proclaims his innocence and asks the beloved to discover him in such a manner that:

*"Swear I am, And I will believe thee; steal into thy  
arms'  
Renew endearments, think' em no pollution,  
But chase as spirit joys; gently I 'll come,  
Thus weeping blind, like dewy night, upon thee  
And fold thee softly in my arms to slumber."*<sup>4</sup>

Bedil too reveals his love in similar fashion and says that all his happiness lie in the happiness of the beloved:

*"Sukhte lalezar-e- man, rafte gol az kenar-e- man  
Bee to na rangamo- na buy aye qadamat bahar-e- man  
Gar be sepehram ilteja'st, var maho- mehram ashn,ast  
Bedil-e- bikas-e- to'am ghair-e- to keest yar-e- man!"*<sup>5</sup>

Bedil and Dryden had before them an example of delicate and tender innocence, which is first aroused to suffer, a distress that ends in romantic passion. In the 'Indian Queen'(1963) Montazema himself weeps openly:

*"Into my eyes sorrow begins to creep;  
When hands are ty'd it is no shame to weep"*<sup>6</sup>



Says Muntazema, but here there is no association of love and sentiment, yet Bedil from the very beginning of his journey claims his innocence with the romantic passion and says:

*"Sham'e- matamkhanah-e- yasam ze ahwalam mapors  
Bee to dar aaghush-e- mizhgan sukht didanhaye man  
Husn harja jalwegar xod ishque mi ayad borun  
Arz-e- Majnu mi dehad aayina-e- Lailay-e- man"*<sup>7</sup>

By 1677 Dryden was able, though not with full success, to challenge all his predecessors, and in all for love to give noble embodiment to the new faith and idealism. He portrayed a love that is not only sensual and death defying but also refined, pitiful, courteous, and in its own way uxorial. He was at least bold enough to talk about a divine love in a society that has never understood the very presence of a power that leads to the salvation of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

The same feelings are found in the heart of Bedil supported by the similar faith and ideal when he says:

*"Shab be dil goftam che bashad aabrue-zindagi  
Goft chun parwane dar aaghush-e- dilbar sukhtan"*<sup>9</sup>

I shall now trace what Dryden himself approvingly termed the "pathetic vehemence" (The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy-Watson, 1: 259) that the notorious exaggerations and bombastic violence of these poems may in fact be marks of struggle- a struggle within Dryden's own soul as he tried to forge an ideal for himself, for his age, and for the age to come. What Dryden had tried to accomplish in his poems was to redefine greatness of soul in terms of useful to a Christian society recovering from civil strife and turning towards unity, order and civilisation. His own contemporaries were aware that they were in the presence of a lofty ideal. Dryden made love so pure, and valour so nice that one would imagine it was designed for an age of declining morality.

Almanzor, a noble stranger of mysterious origin falls in love with a future queen Almahide, now a captive, who conquers him with one glance and he sinks immediately into a lethargy of love. It is surprising if this man, whom Almahide finds "roughly noble" and even Divine in his nature, will go the way of Montazema,



forced to die frustrated, by his own hand, but another way is being prepared for the magnanimous but proudly and fiercely independent hero, who declared, "I alone am king of me", for he now burns more for the captive's freedom than for her company. Almanzor is great, but that heroic quality is being redefined as "Great souls by kindness be tied". Under the influence of this bold brave man learns to damp all inborn fire. He does not get fully succeeded: seizing his beloved's hand, he provokes the king to sentence him to death, a sentence changed to banishment through Almahida's entreaties. And thus, Almanzor achieves the ideal stated at the outset by Queen Isabella:

*"Love's a Heroic passion which can find  
No room in any degenerated mind  
It kindles all the soul with Honours fire,  
To make the lover worthy his desire.  
Against such heroes I success should fear  
Had we not too an host of lover here,  
And army of bright beauties come with me;  
Each lady shall her servants action see:  
The fair and brave on each side shall contest;  
And thy shall overcome who love the best."*<sup>10</sup>

Bedil, on the other hand, also does not believe in any kind of cowardice in the realm of love. The word pity remains out of his vocabulary. Pity does not, of course, drive out terror, as the continuing presence of powerful and destructive elements demonstrate. According to Bedil, virtues, valour, beauty and love demand intensity to the extent of redeeming a heroic hero:

*"Ghairat-e- aan qamat-e- rana boland oftade ast  
Yek sar-e- mizhgan egar mardeed sar bala konid  
Mi konad yek deeda-e- beedar kar-e- sad charagh  
Rauzani zin khanah-e- tarik bar dil waa konid"*<sup>11</sup>

Or

*To va tamkin-e- taghafol, man va bisabri-e- dard  
Ne tora yade- moravvat, ne mora dil bakhxnad"*<sup>12</sup>



Or

*Aafaque ja nadarad, hemmat koja nexeenad  
Sang az nagin bar, aayad, ta nam-e- ma nexeenad<sup>13</sup>*

“The conquest of Granada”,<sup>14</sup> displays on a world canvas the conflict between Muslim and Christian. Its values are those court of heart. with a new, highly individu -alistic sense of love; realising itself against fanatical and old- fashioned self will. Love is given an international and interfaith setting. Aureng-zebe whose portrayal of incest is confined to the world of Muslim India, and the emotions are more narrowly focused on the primal and domestic, such wars and conquests as taken place are almost entirely within the family, and Dryden says that “ true greatness, if it be anywhere on earth, is in a private virtue;...confined to a contemplation of itself.” In this, his last and best heroic poem, Dryden has clearly anticipated the domestication of heroism, which in throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>. century, was transferred from the field of battle to the court of heart.

The best of Dryden’s heroic, romantic poem, Aureng- Zebe concludes the series of wild lawless woman( that scorner of weakness and virtues, Zempoalla in The Indian Queen; that unabashed libertine in love, Lindraxa of The Conquest of Granada with the character of the Empress Nourmahal, who is carried away- ultimately to foaming madness- by her love for the title character. Nourmahal is perfectly willing to remove them all, for she is a Hobbesian ‘natural’ woman, power mad as well as incestuous, a dedicated libertine who believes love is a sovereign power which either washes death, which takes place only eight lines before the end of the story. The punishment meted out to her keeps Dryden safely within convention, but he does provide her, like his guilt away from any action she undertakes or, when it stains, stains beautifully. In her mad scene she is all fire, a burning lake, in full possession of hell even before her other Amazonian villainesses, with uncommon amount of dramatic vigor.

*Love mounts, and rowls about my stormy mind,  
Like fire, that's born by a tempestuous Wind.  
Oh, I could stifle you, with eager haste!*



*"Devour your kisses with my hungry taste!  
Rush on you! eat you! wander o'r each part,  
Raving with pleasure, snatch you to my heart!  
Then hold you off, and gaze! then, with new rage,  
Invade you, till my conscious Limbs presage  
Torrent of joy, which all their banks o'rflow!  
So lost, so blest, as I but then could know!"<sup>15</sup>*

## CONCLUSION

If love in Dryden ends up as a civilising and social affection, the reason for this does not lie in the elimination or even the weakening of physical passion. From his earliest poems to his very late translations and adaptations from foreign tongues, spirituality continues to burn with undiminished heat. No restoration writer has been called Romantic more often than Dryden. He was of course writing for a newly liberated audience, for an age to which libertinism as a plausible philosophy and way of life was not unknown; but Bedil's poetry seems to owe more to a source deep within him than to his age, and it survived his deeply felt poetic repentance for having added to the pollutions of an adulterate age. Looking to the future, we may note that there are many such glittering jewels like Bedil and Dryden, who, in their own way, have created within a belligerent heroic world characters moved by delicate love, tender pity and soft compassion. It is obligatory on our part, especially in this age of globalisation, to discover all of them for providing a definite direction to the mankind.

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## *Eroticism in Persian Poetry*

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Poetry in almost every language has been the most powerful medium to communicate one's feelings and ideas. Most of the ancient specimens of literature suggest that poetry started to come into being long before the prose literature.<sup>1</sup> There was a time when poetry to the cultured man seemed to be the natural and proper vehicle for the expression of all manner of thoughts and philosophies at greater length i.e., the love for woman and wine, the joys and sorrows of human heart, descriptions about flora and fauna etc.

The luminaries at the Courts of Iran and India became renowned for their genius for extempore composition of poetical verses. Their keen perceptions and ability to paint beautiful word pictures thereby charming the hearts of the monarchs and other patrons led the poetry to the greater extent of amusement.

When talking of Persian poetry the mind invariably turns first to the richness of its past. Here the reader finds satisfaction, which one seeks, in a greater classical literature. The grandeur of form, the vigour and freshness of ideas, the subtle artistic narrations, the exquisite grace of style and manner – these, and many more attributes, engage the attention. One may take delight in the noble mysticism of Jalaluddin Rumi, or find enjoyment in the delicate and colourful passion of Hafiz, or lose oneself in the sweet and cynical pessimism of Omar Khayyám, known to the Western world through the translation of Edward Fitzgerald.

The development of classical poetry is marked by two most outstanding trends – the panegyric and the mystic. The former emerges in neo-Persian poetry with the beginning of its known history. In fact, it appears that Persian verse was already familiar with the trend. The panegyric verse can be explained by the fact that, right up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the poet, like all



other professional people, was drawn to the royal court where he hoped to find recognition of his talents in terms of silver and gold. In return, he showed his gratitude by singing the praises of his royal master.

Under such conditions Court Poets became familiar figures in Persian society. No doubt many of them were excellent craftsmen but their talents were wholly spent on flattery in which exaggeration was almost universal. And for the same reasons, they were reminded of this fact, which says, "The praise which you sing should be suitable for the one who is praised. Thus, for a person who has never tied a knife round his waist, do not say that his sword is a lion-killer, and that he can lift mount Bih-Sotun with his pear and pierce a hair with an arrow".<sup>1</sup>

The mystic trend occupies the second important place in Persian poetry. A few eminent mystics have perhaps contributed more to the enrichment of Persian poetry than the large number of poets who have flooded it with their unconvincing and highly artificial eulogic verse. At the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian poetry reached its zenith. The centuries that preceded, had produced the great epic-writer, Firdausi; distinguished panegyrists such as, Unsuri, Farrukhi, Anwari, Khaqani and Zahir of Faryab; renowned mystic such as Attar, Rumi, Nizami and Saadi; and, lastly, the "incomparable" Hafiz. This chapter in Persian literary history tells the story of profound creativeness and the perfection of poetic technique. However, from then onwards, one finds a period of stagnation setting in; stereotyped ideas recur again and again, originality is seldom noticed, and the form of poetry, with hardly anything new to express, tends to become highly decorative and artificial.

In India, Amir Khusraou (1253-1325) laid the foundation of the ghazal. And since then we find different specimens of this form of poetry in a language, which is a mixture of Brij, Persian and Arabic.

The Persian poetry has travelled through many centuries. It has spread not only the brilliant thoughts and ideas but has created various forms, which are still alive and prevalent in the realm of expression; and the most outstanding one happens to be the form of ghazal being used in every set up of human society. Long poems,



which teach and preach lessons and philosophies are generally read or heard and forgotten. They appeal to our intellect. But the couplet of a ghazal goes deep into the heart from where it comes to the lips at appropriate moment like a proverb. Like Keats' "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever", almost every good couplet of a ghazal with its universal appeal is quoted. The ghazal has become part of the life of millions, and millions of lives have become part of the ghazal.

The ghazal began as an erotic poem, with the beloved as its central figure. The ways of the ghazal are the ways of the beloved. Like the beautiful beloved, all wrapped in shyness, who does not convey her feelings directly but only in delicate sensuous gestures – where even a 'no' means a positive 'yes' – the ghazal unfolds the emotions of human heart with its supreme art of suggestiveness. As in a single tender gesture the beloved conveys the storm of passions raging within her, so does the ghazal convey in two lines the tremendous flow of an emotion.

There are numerous couplets in the works of the great masters of this art, where we find in two lines the abstract or the substance of long incident or a story, a small but speaking picture of some overwhelming or overflowing emotions, or some philosophy of life. An aspect of life, a tale of love, an emotion of anguish or pleasure, which requires pages of prose or other forms of literature, shrinks into a line or two of ghazal, with all the expanse, height, and depth of originality and universality.

### **THE FORM AND THE FABRIC**

The ghazal is a verse form, which begins with a couplet, which rhymes with every even line of the poem. The first couplet that marks the beginning of the ghazal is called 'matla' which means the place of rising. With the rhythm of its metre, qafia and radif attracts the attention of the listeners or the readers towards the form and technique of the ghazal. As a versatile musician, sings a raga with absolute attention towards laya, taala and matras, to achieve perfection, so does a skilful poet compose while adhering to the strict requirement, need and aspiration of his art. With all the



intricacy of its science, the ghazal has a very simple technique. The poet has to express his emotions or thoughts in the lines called misras. Clarity of thought is the basic quality of every couplet of ghazal. Thus, every couplet in ghazal is independent of the preceding and the succeeding ones. But, all of them taken together create a cumulative effect and harmony between power of perception and sense of hearing.

In the ghazal, the poet tries to create in one drop the reflection of the entire ocean with the superb touch of his art. He takes the reader into the depths of his feelings of sadness, anguish, pleasure, thrill, happiness, hope, or despair; he overwhelms the reader by painting an eloquent picture of emotions. The essence of the work lies in a powerful and touching presentation of the poet's sentiments, his rhythmic subtleties reflecting the various states of human mind. Thus, the great ghazal writer, Saadi of Shiraz gives words to his feelings in this manner.

*"Drive slowly, o camel-driver, for she who was the solace of my soul is travelling; and with her, a heart, which deemed to be mine, is going.*

*I am getting separated from her; I have become a patient, ailing and helpless; and this parting, you would not say, is a cut going deep down to my bones.*

*Or*

*By spells of magic and device I thought I'd hide my wound; but it proclaims itself in the blood, which all over my threshold is flowing.*

*Or*

*In spite of her cruelty and mouth-made vows she will remain in my mind and speech, what though if she herself be going!*

*Or*

*I will rain tears, said I, till the ground turns to mire and her camel remains sunk therein like an ass – but even this I cannot do, since with the caravan my own life is going."<sup>3</sup>*

In another ghazal Saadi expresses his feelings in these words:

*"O world-lighting moon of mine, why are you so annoyed with me? O my night-illuminating candle, why are you so annoyed with me?"*



*Or*

*I will make you my guest for a night so that I may sacrifice my life and soul to you. I will make you dwell in my eyes; why are you so annoyed with me?*

*Or*

*My darling my life, O my queen, look at me, come and be my guest for a night; why are you so annoyed with me?*

*Or*

*I am your afflicted lover, the faithful devotee; your real friend as long as I live; why are you so annoyed with me?"<sup>4</sup>*

To make his expression brief and effective, to increase its suggestive force, and to embellish it, a ghazal writer makes a judicious use of metaphors, symbols, and traditions. He draws similes, but since a simile normally makes a poetic expression more clear and direct, he has greater fascination for the metaphor, which helps maintain his chief quality of suggestiveness. With its metaphoric and symbolic expression, the ghazal shows its deep insight, provides fascinating background, which enhances the beauty of the picture that the poet paints. Saaqi and wine, spring and autumn, nightingale and rose, candle and moth, Laila and Majnun, Yusuf and Zulaikha, and many more words, legends, and traditions are used by a poet to suggest and deal with the various aspects of life, and to bring universality to his art. Here are some verses worth-quoting to serve as illustration:

*The life of a man is like Laila (the beloved of Majnu) which one should spend in the same way as Majnu had spent.<sup>5</sup>*

*Or*

In this context, an exchange of poetic dialogue between Jahangir and Nurjahan may serve as the best example:

Jahangir addresses Nurjahan

*"I am not the nightingale to fill the air with my plaintive cries. I am the moth that dies without uttering a single moan.*

In reply Nurjahan says:

*I am not a moth that dies an instantaneous death. I suffer a*



*lingering death like the candle, which burns through the night without uttering a single moan."*<sup>6</sup>

Mysticism is also an integral part of Gazal. And therefore, a poet conveys two different meanings in one single couplet. The first one is generally based upon the materialistic approach whereas, the second one is devoted to the most beloved and compassionate providence of the entire creation of the world.

Let me quote a few verses from various periods in order to highlight this tradition of sacred love or use of sacred language in speaking of love. One of the outstanding early poets, Jamil sang of his beloved Buthaina:

*"She is the full moon and the (other) ladies are stars,  
And how great is the difference between full moon and stars!*

*She excels mankind in beauty just as*

*"The night of power" excels a thousand months"*<sup>7</sup>

This is a clear interpretation of Sura 97; the Night of Power in which the first revelation of Qur'an was sent down "is better than a thousand months".

Another early poet Abbas ibn al-Ahnaf used many religious references in praise of his beloved Fauz:

*"O you who ask about Fauz and her shape! Look up to the moon, if you don't see her! It is as if the Paradise was, her abode, and she came to mankind as a divine sign and example. God did not create the like of her on earth. I don't reckon her to be a human creature."*<sup>8</sup>

All these potential developments of the idea of love had taken place and shape and entered Persian poetry. Those who drink wine in an Islamic society would, of course, arouse the suspicion of the pious. They were given unfriendly names such as qalandar, ayyar, awbash, qallash or rind (rogue). Yet, instead of being ashamed they did not care and they even adopted these names as honourable gift and boasted of their rindi, their qalandardom. Actually, qalandari became the name of a mystical order, and great mystic poets like Sanai and Jalaluddin Rumi did not hesitate to call themselves rind and qalandar.



Here are some typical lines by Sanai showing the mixture of these elements:

*"Saqi, give wine, since nothing but wine breaks fasting,  
So I may rid myself for some time of that delusive  
asceticism. The riches of the family of man do not have  
any value."*<sup>9</sup>

This aspect is well taken by many contemporary scholars of the entire globe. Researchers give different interpretations to the fidelity or infidelity of poets towards their socio-religious approach to life. Professor Harbans Mukhia, a contemporary historian, deals with the subject in a different and peculiar way. According to him the dichotomy between the faith and kufr was, for the ulema but not for the ghazal-poets, though, for them it was *ishq* (love), manifest as *gham* that stood above all other antagonisms. He quotes an example from *Makhdoomul-Mulk*:

*"Whoever sets his foot firmly in ishq, passes beyond the  
boundaries of kufr and Islam."*<sup>10</sup>

"Ghalib is equally attracted by the force of Islam and of Kufr:

*Faith pulls me back  
Even as infidelity draws me with force,  
I stand transfixed, between the Kaaba and the Church*

And more challengingly

*In God's name draw not the veil away from the face of  
the Kaba;  
Lest the selfsame Kafir idol make its appearance  
underneath."*<sup>11</sup>

In the Persian ghazal compositions of the sufis, God is mostly portrayed as the woman, the beloved, and the man as the lover. The everlasting longing of the *sufi* soul for union with God finds utterance in the longing of the lover for the beloved. The expression of intensely emotional devotion to God in terms of the human feelings of love between man and woman points to its popular origins, similar to expressions in other cultural zones, such as the *Radha-Krishna* legends in literature, painting and sculpture.



Similarly, a woman has never been a shaping force in the Persian poetry. This is perhaps the most recent development that a woman, in a predominant Muslim society, is committed to poetic statements of frankness and self-revelation in the face of an equally challenged tradition of feminine approach and competitiveness in a male-dominated society.

*"From the prison confines of darkness  
Hear my needful thought  
O able, unique God,  
Rend this veil of blackness, and  
Perhaps you'll see within my breast of sin and corruption  
The heart you gave me isn't a heart  
Beating in blood; free it, or  
Keep it empty of all desires  
Or fill it with affection and fidelity  
From my eyes snatch away  
The eagerness to run to another  
O God, have mercy, and reach my eyes  
To shy away from the shining eyes of others"<sup>12</sup>*

"Face to face with God" is not particularly typical of an address to God, but its presentation of a desperate longing mood is typical, where emotion and images of romantic imagery is focused on the specific aspects of woman's love for a man. The reader confronts a new poetic speaker who is open to the charge of ignoring traditional bounds of literary decorum as an "I" who represents a society searching for complete freedom by not accepting any subjugation from a male-dominated perceptibility.

## CONCLUSION

The notion of erotic poetry implies the concept of moving from the inferior to the superior by degrees. In this case, a man is moving from inferior degree of addiction to total disintegration of his personality fallen prey to the spirit of the bottle. But let us now see the facts speak their distinct language devoid of ambiguities. The entire design of a ghazal writer can generally be divided into four stages.



First : Ways into addiction:

Given the sparse existence of satisfying source material, it may remain in the dark for ever which one of a larger number of reasons it is that finally makes the poet turn to the bottle. The poet's feeling of loneliness and being misunderstood drags him into desperation.

Second: Addiction and Revolt:

Being an educated man, the poet can not get rid of his deep-rooted wish to interact with people closer to his intellectual wants; in many verses, we find him desperately trying to leave this fatal substance and its object of cult alcohol. And thus he writes:

*"A hundred times, with the resolve of repentance, out of my hand the goblet, I put"*

In this context Hafiz says:

*Last night, I slept not on account of this thought that a sage uttered: If Hafiz be intoxicated, room for complaint is".<sup>13</sup>*

Third: The Withdrawal Treatment:

Here the poet gathers courage, radically articulating his unhappiness and the disastrous effects that alcoholism has had on all aspects of his life. The drinker's wild existence is now followed by a period of profound desperation, alternating with undesirable tendencies. And thus he says:

*"For this evil world is bent on that it may make a brick of our dust.*

Or

*The dark night, and the fear of the wave, and whirlpool so fearful. On the other hand, there are comfortable residents of the shore – how know they our state?"<sup>14</sup>*

Fourth: Resignation:

*"A hundred 0times, repentance, I made; again – I make not"<sup>15</sup>*

After all plans to live without the horrible poison have failed, the poet, surrenders totally to addiction. Earlier in his life, he may have wished to return to an existence in order, peace and sobriety. Now, we can observe his shocking obsession of ruining himself



totally. And therefore, he appears to be victim and culprit at the same time. This feeling is expressed commonly in the Persian poetry:

*"I and refusal of wine! What a tail this is! Doubtless, this degree of reason satisfaction is mine.*

*Or*

*For love at first appeared easy, but difficulties have occurred."*<sup>16</sup>

*"What is to be done, O my friends, for I do not know my own identity: I am neither a Christian, nor Jew, neither a Zoroastrian nor Muslim.*

*I hail neither from the East nor the West, neither from land nor from sea; neither from the mine of nature nor from the revolving spheres.*

*Neither from dust nor from water; neither from air nor from fire; neither from the throne of God nor the earth; neither from existence nor entity.*

*Neither from India nor China; neither from Bulgaria nor Scythia; neither from the land of the two Iraqs. Nor from the province of Khurasan.*

*Neither from this world nor the next; neither from heaven nor hell; neither from Adam nor Eve; neither from paradise nor the garden of Eden.*

*The placeless is my place; the traceless is my trace; I have neither body nor soul for I belong to the soul of beloved."*<sup>17</sup>

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This book is a culmination of the author's research pursuits in the area of Persian Studies during the last two decades. The author provides fresh readings into a number of issues such as problems of second language acquisition, the art of poetry composition, emerging trends in literature, Western influences on Persian poetry, towards an understanding of Omar Khayyam, the relevance of post-revolutionary Persian literature, the status of women, Nehru's impact on Iran, Western views of the *Shahnameh*, a new wave of the *Panchatantra*, the proper use of knowledge and education, means and ways of dissent, qualities of love and heroism and erotic mode of expression. The book deals with aspects of Persian language and literature, particularly the interactive literature and Indo-Iran relations. Through original insights, the author places special emphasis on the pertinence of teaching and research and on the most acute contemporary problems. The book addresses itself to the growing popular interest of the West in Oriental learning and to the Indian scholars interested in Persian language and literature as their own cultural heritage.

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