

INDO-IRAN RELATIONS

Collected Papers

Presented at the Seminar held in
February, 2001

Organised by

Iran Culture House,
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Editor

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Forward

It was in 2001 that the Iran Culture House, New Delhi, organised a Seminar on Indo-Iran relations which was well attended. A large number of dignitaries including scholars, and researchers and students attended the seminar. A number of Papers dealing with various aspects of Indo-Iran relations were presented by the scholars.

The credit for the success of the seminar goes to the then Cultural Counsellor, H.E. Issa Rezazadeh and Mr. Hasan Mozaffari, Director of the Culture House.

Keeping in view, the merits of the well-researched papers, we are publishing this volume.

I write to thank all those who were helpful in holding this event. I also thank Prof. Shah Waseem for editing the volume.

Jalal Tamleh
Director
Iran Culture House
New Delhi

PROLOGUE

India and Iran culturally rich and economically progressing, have been taking concerted action in the interest of socio-economic justice for their people. They have been enjoying warm and friendly relations touching cultural, economic and social spheres. It was, therefore, appropriate for the Iran Culture House, New Delhi, India to hold a Seminar so actively in February, 2001, on Indo-Iran Relations, offering opportunity to the scholars and researchers to dwell deep upon the whole gamut of Indo-Iran Relations to explore avenues of further positive steps in appreciating each other's point of view for still better understanding leading to the development and consolidation of the already existing friendly relations between them. A review of the past and assessment of the future is indeed valuable and of great help. The event has been of interest to scholars particularly in view of the UN's acceptance of the theme of 'Dialogue among Civilisations', proposed by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H. E. Hojatul

Islam Syed Muhammad Khatemi.

India and Iran continue to maintain their warm friendly relations on a sustained basis. The Mughal-Safavid relations have been friendly excepting the problem over Qandhar. Babur's friendly relations with Shah Ismail, and then Humayun's return with appreciation of the Iranians, added to the existing warmth and further development of these relations, particularly with the coming of Irani *Umara* and *Ulema* beginning from 1550s. The Iranian appreciation of the richness of India's socio-cultural milieu, scholarship and above all an all-embracing hospitality, provided ground for development of mutual relations. Akbar's acceptance of Iranian scholars, more particularly Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani, Fatehullah Shirazi, Mir Murtaza Shirazi, Saiyid Nurullah Shustari and others, added to the enrichment of cultural components, Agra being the first point of contact. Not only that, as the time passed by the Persian literary influence on India was distinctly manifested in diction, style and writings including chronicles. Translations into Persian were also made including that of *Mahabharat*. Hamayun's Court had among others Mir Abdul Hayy and his brother Mir Abdullah, who were *Sadr* and jurist respectively. Nazim

of Nishapur, a poet and merchant, adored Jahangir's Court.

Iran's overland trade with India finds expression in Ibn Battuta's travel account. Ronald Ferrier mentions "the growing importance of Agra", thus:

"An indication of the rising power of the Mughals was the growing importance of Agra, which had become a great resort of merchants from Persia and out of India, and very much merchandise, silk and cloth and of precious stones both rubbies and diamonds and pearls."

Nitin found extensive trade in horses between Persia and India through the sea route 'particularly at the Daibal in Sind'. Venetian Nicolo de Conti recorded 'widespread Persian involvement in the maritime trade with India'. Further, he has described Calicut as 'a very noble emporium of the Persians'.

India and Iran having their identity in the comity of nations, have much to gain with the expansion and consolidation of their relations. Both of them fall within the category of 'developing economy'. Thus, mutually beneficial flow of trade is indeed one of the realm where gains can be utilised leading to increased exchange of

good and services, and transfer of technology to help add to mutual developmental strides.

The authors who presented their Papers at the Seminar, have thoroughly examined various aspects of the multi-faceted Indo-Iran Relations. “India is a secular country” says H. E. Isa Rezazadeh “and Iran after Islamic Revolution is following the principles of Islam, based on Freedom, Justice, Unity, Love, Brotherhood, Peace and Equality which lead human society to a happy and prosperous life”.

Needless to emphasize that democratic ideals, unity of purpose and development imperatives, offer immense opportunities for further cooperation between these two nations. Asian identity and intra-Asian cooperation imperatives demand growing mutual relations on a sustained basis in the interest of world peace and global cooperation. Therefore, India and Iran have to understand each other’s development perspective and view-point for joining hands for ‘mutual existence’ and not merely for ‘co-existing’.

I am indebted to H.E. Isa Rezazadeh, Cultural Counsellor, Iran Culture House, New Delhi, and Mr. M.H. Mozafari, Director, Iran Culture House, New Delhi, for their

asking me to edit the volume. It is valuable and encouraging indeed that they have been regularly holding Seminars/Lectures providing opportunities to Indian and Iranian scholars, working in the field to discuss, analyse and suggest areas of further cooperation and research in the relevant field to help add further to the existing warmth of Indo-Iran Relations.

It is earnestly hoped that the volume will be of use to the policy makers, researchers, students and the general readers alike.

Aligarh
July 22, 2002

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Indo-Iran Relations: Wisdom's View Point Religious, Spiritual and Illuminative

H.E. Isa Rezazadeh

India is a secular country and Iran after Islamic revolution is following the principles of Islam which are based on Freedom, Justice, Unity, Love, Brotherhood, Peace and Equality which lead human society to a happy and prosperous life by following the said norms. The scholars of different religions in India and also the political leaders have admired the principles of Islam placed before mankind by Imam Ali (A.S.) in Nahjul Balagha which is a book in which both the unities i.e., unity among religions as well as unity of mankind are found, giving directions of unity and harmony for the people of the world. Unity which is the basic/fundamental as well as deep rooted requirement, is more precious than the differences which are just superficial and subsidiary.

Wisdom demands creating such a feeling among mankind which enables to develop unanimity of culture, guiding towards the path of success and glory to enable

mankind to get rid of various evils. For this it is necessary to create awareness among mankind as regards accountability before God so that every person having faith, becomes duty bound to strive to translate the Islamic principles of Freedom, Justice, Unity, Love, Brotherhood, Peace and Equality into practice.

It is sometimes difficult even for the head of a family to control his own family members. But if you convey the principles of Islam then it is possible to develop a society which we find in the messages of Imam Khomeini, who, though not directly in contact with the Iranian nationals at the time got the response for revolution against the oppressor by propagating the Islamic teachings. In spite of the distance between him and the Iranian people, he was successful because his teachings were based on his wisdom nurtured under the banner of spirituality. Imam Khomeini's views based on Islamic principles invite human beings particularly in countries like India following secularism for unity among the countries and mankind.

Imam Khomeini said: "If mankind is self-constructed and perfected, everything will come out as spiritual. Even the materialist will become spiritual". Thus, he is inviting humanity to Islamic school of thought seeking to perfect and construct true human beings.

Imam Khomeini's view about spirituality is explained thus: "Almighty God has bestowed a favour upon mankind by sending His Messengers to train their spiritual side which is the most important one. The Prophets were assigned to purgate, purify and then teach human beings the Book and Wisdom as well as to teach to control the material aspects of them. Those who are materialists, regard materialism in unleashing terms. The Prophets were assigned to train human beings in such a way that the basic principle spirituality must apply to all aspect of life. No school of political thought or ruling clique in the world pays heed to it. This view explains to the human beings the importance of spirituality against materailistic way. Islam's attention to material life is simply because it can serve the spiritualities. Spiritualities are the criteria".

Imam Khomeini highlighting the difference among the people said: "All the differences among human beings are rooted in the rebellion of the self". Therefore, he further clarified that those who seek to train others in this world, should first purgate and purify themselves". And, he clearified further (that) "All differences and problems of humanity stem from the rebellion and selfish decision".

Imam Khomeini's view about the political and economic relations of society and establishment of Governments are the advices to the rulers to implement

them for the welfare of the mankind:

“The Wisdom of the Creator has decreed that man should live in accordance with justice and act within the limits set by Divine Law. This wisdom is eternal and immutable, and constitutes one of the norms from God Almighty, for today and always. Therefore, the existence of a holder of authority, a ruler, who acts as trustee and maintains the institutions and laws of Islam, is a necessity - a ruler who prevents cruelty, oppression and violation of the rights of others; the one who is a trustworthy and vigilant guardian of God’s creatures; who guides men to the teachings, doctrines, laws, and institutions of Islam; and who prevents the undesirable changes that atheists and the enemies of religion wish to introduce in the laws and institutions of Islam”.

In view of Imam Khomeini, the teachings of Islam are more important and relevant during these days, for these how the path to spiritual growth based on wisdom.

About oppression Imam Khomeini said: “Through the political agents they have been placed in power over the people; the imperialists have also imposed on us an unjust economic order, and thereby divided our people into two groups, oppressors and oppressed. Hundreds of millions of Muslims are hungry and deprived of all forms of health care and education, while a minority comprises the wealthy and

the powerful who live a life of indulgence, licentiousness, and corruption. The hungry and deprived have constantly struggled to free themselves from the oppression of their plundering overlords, and their struggle continues even to this day. But their way is blocked by the ruling minorities and the depressive governmental structures they head. It is our duty to save the oppressed and deprived. It is our duty to be a helper of the oppressed and an enemy to the oppressor. This is nothing other than the duty that the Commander of the Faithful (upon whom be peace) entrusted to his two great offsprings in his celebrated testament: "Be an enemy to the oppressor and a helper to the oppressed".

In this view Imam Khomeini has strived to make the oppressed people of the world believe that relying upon the exalted and dynamic Islamic Ideology, makes it possible to stay against the oppressors.

Regarding the Islamic Governments Imam Khomeini said: "The fundamental difference between Islamic Government, on the one hand, and constitutional monarchies and republics on the other, is this: Whereas the representatives of the people or the monarch in such regimes engage in legislation, in Islam the legislative power and competence to establish laws belongs exclusively to God Almighty. The sacred Legislator of Islam is the sole legislative Power. No one has the right to legislate and no law may be

executed except the law of the Divine Legislator. It is for this reason that in an Islamic Government, a simple planning body takes the place of the legislative assembly that is one of the three branches of government. This body draws up programs for the different ministries in the light of the Ordinances of Islam and thereby determines how public services are to be provided across the country”.

In this statement Imam Khomeini has explained the role of governments under the banner of Islam for equal rights and justice.

The view of Imam Khomeini about the human rights shows the importance of mankind and welfare. He says:

“Every country must be free and independent. The resources should be spent for the welfare of her own people. We want our country to belong to ourselves. We want to be independent and free. We want our resources to be spent for the welfare of the people. We want our hungry people to be fed. We want to give shelter to our people. We want to supply homes to the homeless. But oppressors do not agree with this policy.”

“What is it that human rights are prorogate. It is the, right of the oppressors to their way of thinking. ‘Human rights (to them) means to take all of our oil and pay the smallest amount possible for it”.

“Islam demands that the interests of all the people be taken into consideration, and that they be taken into consideration on the basis of equity and justice”.

Imam khomeini has covered all the aspects of human rights as per the Islamic principles for the welfare and sustenance of mankind.

Imam khomeini described the Islamic principles for mankind, in the light of Justice, Unity, Equality, Freedom and Peace.

“The straight path is the way of Islam which is the path of humanity and the way towards perfection which leads towards God.”

“Islam requires that the interests of all people be taken into consideration equally.”

“It is the power of Islam that has been able to gather peoples from various groups under one roof.”

“The religion of Islam is the religion of building human beings, true human beings. The Qura'n is the book guiding mankind to become true human beings; human beings in all human dimensions and not merely in material ones.”

“Islam is here to take people out of absolute darkness and help them enter the ocean of absolute light.”

“Islam is an ideal for all people. They can find there everything in it.”

“In Islam, the situation has prevailed from the very beginning that a ruler lives at a lower standard of living than the ordinary people or (at least) at the same level.”

“It is Islam which treats even its enemies well unless they (the enemies) form conspiracies against the interests of the country and against the interests of Islam. In that case, Islam treats them in a decisive and punitive manner.”

“In the Islamic government, there is no difference between a person who is heading the government and those who are in the army or in the government offices. They are all members of a nation where some members have joined the army and others have taken the responsibility of ruling the country.”

“Whichever country implements Islamic rules and regulations, will undoubtedly be considered to be one of the most progressive countries.”

“Whoever has studied Islam and the Qura'n will come to conclude that Islam trains society in all aspects.”

“The religion of Islam attaches great respect to the lives and the wealth of the people and any violation of it is forbidden and is regarded a great sin.”

“Islam is basically a religion which teaches mankind how to fight against oppression and inequalities, and how to build a healthy and progressive community.”

“Islam not only endorses the freedom of women but has also been the founder of women’s liberty in all dimensions of her being.”

“Islam respects religious minorities. They are free in our country. They even enjoy the right to vote and to elect their own deputies. The religious minorities enjoy respect and rights in Islam and their rights will be given to them. All the classes of people are free to implement their religious duties and they can vote and elect their own deputies.”

“Islam has emphasized the equality of man and woman and has given them the right to determine their destinies by themselves. In other words, both are eligible to enjoy all freedom and liberties.”

“Islam is at the service of the deprived and the oppressed.”

“Islam pays due attention to the welfare and prosperity of people and makes no difference between one group of people and another.”

“Islam is a religion of unity and unifications. It is the religion of brotherhood and equality.”

In the above explanation about Islam, Imam Khomeini has covered all the angles for the benefit of mankind to prove that Islam is light, a true path, ideal for all people; it extends welfare for people of all classes without any difference; declares no difference among ruler and nationals; creates cordial and friendly relations, liberty and freedom for minorities; extends help for the deprived and oppressed; teaches correct utilisation of wealth, control on corruption, Islamic rules for the progress of the country and rulers' responsibility, etc. "Under Islamic ideology the rulers and ordinary people's lives are similar. It stresses at good behaviour with other religions, minorities and even the enemies because Islam is the religion of brotherhood and equality".

All these views of Imam khomeini are as per the guidelines of Imam Ali's direction to his governors, given in Nahjul Balagha.

The said illuminative view of Imam Khomeini shows the path to unity among mankind, based on wisdom of religions and spirituality, and sustained by the Islamic principles covered by Imam Ali (A.S.) in Nahjul Balagha.

Similarly, Indian scholars have also appreciated the Islamic approach to inter-religious understanding through Imam Ali's (A.S.) Sayings in Nahjul Balagha. Hindu Scholar,

Swami Gokulananda, in his address on the occasion of Nahjul Balagha Congress at Hyderabad said: "In the present time when the world is full of chaos and is being fragmented by divisive forces, there could not have been a more appropriate subject for deliberation and understanding than the need for inter-unity of faith among the followers of different religions, as particularly enunciated by Amir Al Muminin Hazrat Ali and which we find in the collection of his works, namely Nahjul Balagha". About the tolerance Swamiji said: "Although Islam believes in the Oneness of Reality, it lays equal stress on the practice of tolerance in everyday dealings. Tolerance has been the rule throughout the history of Islam. It has, in fact, been one of the main underlying causes of its successful dissemination". About the teachings of religions Swamiji said: "There is much common in the preachings of all religious leaders. No, religion teaches divisiveness. All religions are true and each one of them is necessary to fulfil the need of different individuals." The Great Hindu Scholar, Swami Vivekananda's views were placed by Swamiji in his address, thus: "If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world, it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion

and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that in spite of resistance on the banner of every religion will soon be written: "Help and not Fight", "Assimilation and not Destruction", "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension".

The views of Imam khomeini and Hindu Scholars show the scope for the growth of Indo-Iran relations based on wisdom, draw from religions and spirituality.

The former President of India H. E. Dr.(Late) Shanker Dayal Sharma in his message on the occasion of Nahjul Balagha Congress at Delhi admired the views of Imam Ali (A.S.) which were adopted by Iranian Government after the Islamic revolution. H. E. Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma said: "Hazrat Ali (A.S.) gained great fame as a just ruler, concerned for the oppressed and dedicated to justice. He sought to build a society based on the rule of law, respect for the truth, and tolerance. In war and in peace, he was uncompromising in his observation of a code of conduct. A multifaceted genius, he was a philosopher and thinker, a wise administrator, a learned judge and a compassionate human being. During his life time, he spoke and wrote on a multitude of issues covering various aspects of human activity. The collection of his sermons, speeches, aphorisms and letters is known as 'Nahjul Balagha' - the Peak of Eloquence.

Hazrat Ali's preachings are venerated for their moral and ethical values. They are also regarded as masterpieces of literary expression. Their message is universal: Follow the righteous path, promoting good and resisting vice. Imam Ali made us realise that the world is transient, that we are accountable for our actions. Though articulated in a specific historical context, these messages have a relevance in a world of narrow thoughts and material pursuits. I am, therefore, very glad that an International Congress of Nahjul Balagha is being held in New Delhi in April, 1995, to understand and promote the message of human values and rights. I understand that the Congress will focus on themes of goals of human life, ideal character of man, ethical view points, tolerance, social justice, importance of education, democracy and government."

"I am particularly glad that Inter-religious Understanding will be a major aspect of deliberations at the Congress. The teachings of Imam Ali (A.S) are respected by numerous religions. It is not only that the truth, expressed by Hazrat Ali (A.S), finds reflection in other faiths. The Imam (A.S) himself was noted for his toleration. As the Caliph, he personally issued orders offering safety, security and religious freedom to minorities. One such example relating to Armenian Christians which is in his own handwriting is said to have been discovered earlier this century."

The views of political leaders of India confirm the scope of Inter-religious understanding among religions based on the Sayings of Imam Ali (A.S) which are followed by Iran. These are the bases for close relations between India, and Iran.

In this article a brief account of the views of Iranian and Indian Scholars and religious and political leaders, have been covered. This is the illuminated way to rule a country for the welfare of societies without any difference. Therefore, like the Taj Mahal which is regarded as a great gift for Indian people, and is splendid and marvellous, is liked by every one, we can develop Indo-Iran religious and spiritual relations with wisdom as a common point.

**Mughal Relations with Iran with
Special Reference to the Introduction of New
Education Policy in India by Irani Ulema during
Akbar's Reign (1556-1605 AD).**

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The establishment of the Mughal empire in India and the rise of the Safavids in Iran, were events of historical importance. Significant changes in the Indian polity, society, economy and culture were introduced. Babur developed friendly relations with Shah Ismail. After being defeated by Sher Shah, Humayun went to Iran. With the conquering of his lost empire in 1555, the relations of the Mughals with the Safavids were usually friendly; though it is true that there was often misunderstanding and friction over Qandhar. The Mughal emperors were also bound to the Safavids by ties of marriages. Besides, most of the Mughals, though Sunni, had a soft corner for the Jafari doctrines and consequently they had no religious objection to being closely allied with Iran, unlike the Sunni power of Uzbekistan and Turkey. Aurangzeb had a high opinion of the Iranis. He said: 'No

nation is better than the Persians”.

Earlier, with the establishment of Turkish rule in India, Hanfi fiqh was followed. There was total domination by the turks on the administration of the Sultanat. Barani who was an ‘alim and a historian, considered that the Sultanat belonged to ashraf, Sunnis only and no Non-sunni should be accomodated in the administration of Delhi Sultanat.

In the 13th century the madarsa-i-Nasiriya was established near masjid Quwwatul Islam. Then, Alauddin Khalji laid down the foundation of Alai Madarsa at the same site. Firoz Shah Tughluq founded a madarsa at Hauz-i-Khas. As far as the syllabus of these madarsas is concered, the emphasis was on uloom-i-din. Ziauddin Barani, the author of *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, was against the teaching of uloom-i-maqula’t. He was also against educating the lower class of Muslims. Describing Mohammad bin Tughluq’s interest in rationalist science (*Ilm-i-Maqul*) and also his fondness for the company of philosophers and rationalist thinkers, Barani tells us that under their influence the Sultan had lost faith in the recorded traditions and questioned the accepted truth. Barani is vary harsh in his criticism of the philosophers. He writes about the Sultan’s association with them and also his advocacy of rationalism, that Sad Mantaqi (logician) who was a misled person, Ubaid Shair (the poet), an atheist, and Najm Inteshar, had been his associates even before

his accession to the throne. Another person, Maulana Alimuddin, most learned of the philosophers, spent lot of time with him discussing philosophy. These scholars believed in rationalism and under their influence the Sultan had discarded traditional sciences (*Manqul*) and turned a great supporter of reason. It clearly suggests that a large section of the ulema were against uloom-i-maqulat and reason during the 14th century because Barani was not only expressing his own opinion but representing a large number of ulema. Barani had his own concept of how society should be organized. The ashra'f (elite) only should enjoy high positions in the government as well as in society. But how was this possible? Barani's suggested solution, was that knowledge should not be given to people of the lower sections of society. This was the perception and attitude of the ulema before and during the early part of Akbar's reign.

It is obvious that a society based upon such an idea would stagnate and then decay in the long run. New dimensions are therefore, needed for polity, society and culture.

In 1555 the gates of India were opened for Iranian umara and ulema, a significant development in the history of India. This decision provided a new dimension to Indian polity, society and culture. Iranian scholars welcomed the

idea. Saib became sentimental when the question of going to India was put before him: His Parsian Couplet purports to to to India, thus:

Like the desire to go to India which possesses every human heart, there is not a head which does not dance to the tune of love.

Similarly another Passion poet describes his love and appreciation of culture and beauty of India by expressing his high consideration of Delhi and Agra in his couplet which express as Under:

Therefore, it is no wonder that during the Mugal rule, particularly that of Humayun and Akbar a number of Ulemas, Calligraphists, poets and scholars of fame came to India.

Two hundred niches of kisra do not make a single brick of the city-wall of Delhi) and Khizr comes to the Agra road to be a guide for the traveller who loves Agra.

During Akbar's reign, some eminent Iranian scholars - Hakim Abdul Fateh Gilani, Fatehullah Shirazi, Mir Murtaza Shirazi, Saiyid Nurullah Shustari and others - came and settled down at Agra. But in the early part of his reign Akbar remained under the influence of some Sunni ulema such as Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri, Shaikh Abdun Nabi and others. Since the foundation of Turkish Sultanat in India,

there was a sense that both the Turkish Sultanat and Mughal empire belonged to the Sunnis only, and the other sects of Muslims had no right to get jobs in the administration. With the arrival of Iranian ulema and umara, sunni ulema and umara got alarmed. One such example is that of Muhammed Amin Khan. He wrote to Aurangzeb, "Hail ! saint and spiritual guide of the world and of its people ! Both the paymasterships have been conferred on heretical demon-natured Persians. If one of the paymasterships be given to this old and devoted servant; it would be a means of strengthening the (Sunni) faith and of snatching away employment from accursed misbelievers. O! ye faithful ! do not take as friends your own and our enemies. Across the sheet of the petition Aurangzeb wrote : 'What you have stated about your long service is true. It is being appreciated as far as possible. As far what you have written about the false creed of the Persians, "What connection have worldly affairs with religion ? And what right have matters of religion to enter into bigotry ? For you your own religion and for me mine". Such convictions were held by some Sunni ulema and umara also.

When Akbar became Mughal emperor there was a domination of Sunni ulema at the Mughal court. As already stated, in the early part of his reign Akbar remained under the influence of some Sunni ulema such as Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri and Shaikh Abdun Nabi. When an

Iranian 'alim, Murtaza Shirazi, died and was buried near the grave of Amir Khusrau, these ulema gave the *fatwa* that a Shia cannot be buried near a grave of a Sunni. Willingly or unwillingly, Akbar had to allow the execution of this *fatwa*. As a result, the remains of the 'alim were removed from there and buried elsewhere. Their real concern was not the burial, but their main objective was firstly, to convey a message to Akbar, because he welcomed Iranian ulema, and, to harrass and terrorise these ulema. Indirectly they wanted to close the gates of India to Iranians. The Mughal empire was passing through such a politico-religio condition during the early part of Akbar's reign. In their personal life these *ulema*, Shaikh Abdun Nabi and Makhdumul Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri, instead of following the *sharia* were trying to evade its regulations, such as the payment of *zakat* in proportion to the quantity of gold and silver in their possession. They had given a *fatwa* to declare *hajas saqit* (lagging) for two reasons - that if you go for *haj* by sea you will need a passport (from the portuguese) on which there was a picture of Christ. Since this was not allowed by the *Sharia*, one can not perform *haj* by sea. Likewise, the land-route led to Iran, which was under the domination of Shias, also was not allowed. As a result, *haj* was declared *saqit*. With the help of this *fatwa* these *ulema* wanted to restrict the movement of sunnis because they might establish contacts with Iranians and that relationship will bring Sunnis

and Shias together. The ulema-i-Deoband who were the part of the freedom movement of India, passed *fatwas* to restrict the visit of Sunnis at the houses of Shias and even if they had to visit Shia houses under forced circumstances, these *ulema* warned them not to eat anything at such houses. All these *fatwas* should be seen in this historical perspective. Sunni powers outside India also were apprehensive about Indo-Persian friendship. The Ottoman Sultans tried often but in vain to weaken the Indo-Persian friendship and to form a triple alliance against Iran to destroy it completely. But Akbar refused to become part of their designs. The region of Mawarun Nahr, afraid of an invasion from India, usually exploited the religious tolerance of the Mughal emperors and their deviation from the path of Sunni orthodoxy by extensive propaganda among the tribes of the North-West frontier of India; thereby trying to maintain a Sunni-independent and disaffected zone between Iran and India. The additional fear of Indo-Persian co-operation in case of an attack, drew them into closer alliance with the Ottoman Sultans. Mughals were facing internal and external threats against their friendship with Iran. Iran had no choice with enemies all around, but Akbar had a choice - to ally himself with other Sunni powers. His treaty with Abdullah Khan Uzbek about dividing Iran between them indicates that he had thought of this. So both the internal and external forces of Sunni orthodoxy tried to force Akbar to be allied to

them, but he rejected their ideas and followed the policy of *sulh-i-kul* (peace with all) both internally and externally. The policy of *sulh-i-kul* not only played a healthy role in the Mughal empire but also a significant role in keeping the balance of power and peace in South and West Asia during the 16th century. On the basis of confidence Abbas, the ruler of Iran, gave expression to his feeling of friendship in the following couplet: "Between us and you there cannot be trouble. There can be naught but love and trust". During Aurangzeb's reign, the Ottoman rulers again instigated the Mughal emperor against Iran. The Italian traveller Manucci observed that "If Ottoman armies, under the command of experienced captains, be despatched against Persia, the entire country will come under Your Majesty's (Aurangzeb's) possession. Then Shiism which has held sway in that region for ages, will perish and the rites of orthodoxy and the Hanafi set will again be restored".

Akbar decided that it would be very difficult for him to go along with these short-sighted men of narrow mentality. The Mughal empire could not develop if he were to continue with these policies. Akbar decided to keep himself aloof from these *ulema*, and aligned with the progressive *ulema*. He gave them full patronage and support. These *ulema* were the experts of *uloom-i-din* (religious subjects) and *uloom-i-maqulat* (scientific subjects).

Two misunderstandings about Akbar are - firstly, that he was illiterate, secondly, that in the second phase of his reign he did not remain a faithful adherent to Islam and delinked himself from the *ulema*. Both have no basis. Akbar was not only literate but also a scholar, otherwise how could he have judged the importance of *uloom-i-maqulat* and *ulema-i-maqulin* ? Akbar had his own collection of rare books. He had constructed two buildings for libraries in Agra fort and Fatehpur Sikri, adjacent to his residence. These books were read regularly in his presence. He had started the tradition of the compilation of official history and assigned this project to Allama Abul Fazl. Akbar showed regular and keen interest in the compilation of *Akbar Nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari*, which is considered the first gazetteer of India. The information and details contained in it, had not been given by any scholar earlier. Abul Fazl obtained written information from the *umara*, and examined these accounts. The conflicting accounts were reported to the Emperor, who verified a particular account or made suggestions for necessary corrections. Similarly, the accounts which contradicted the personal knowledge and experience of the author, were also referred to the Emperor. Akbar had taken keen interest in the compilation of *Tarikh-i-Alfi* and *Akbar Nama*. He established the *Darut Tarjuma* (Department of Translation). He opened an *Ibadat Khana* (Seminar) for an open dialogue and discussion among scholars and the

followers of different sects and religions. All these could not have been done by an illiterate person. Also, Akbar never delinked himself from the *ulema*. He had given lavish grants to the *ulema*, so that they could work peacefully on their projects. He regularly consulted them and they were always around him. Akbar only disassociated himself from those *ulema* who were short sighted and were of narrow outlook.

Akbar took interest not only in the extension and consolidation of the empire but also to improve the system of education. His aim was to use education towards the unification of India in all aspects of life. He wanted education to be available to all people, irrespective of sect or caste. He had a great love for learning and respect for the learned. Numerous *madarsas* were founded and richly endowed. The most noteworthy of them was the one built by him in Fatehpur Sikri.

Akbar was fortunate that during his reign some eminent *ulema* from Iran came to India and settled down at Agra. Akbar gave them full patronage and support. They were the experts of *uloom-i-din* and *uloom-i-maqulat*. Under the imperial patronage, they laid the foundation of a new education policy and revised the syllabi of these *madarsas*. Akbar gave lavish grants in the form of *madad-i-maash* to run these *madarsas*, so that teachers and students could devote their time and energies to acquire knowledge. This

was the period when Akbar's *darbar* was considered to be a faculty of social and natural sciences. Akbar had his own collection of rare books. These *ulema* also brought with them rich collection of rare and newly written books. These *ulema* were scholars of great merit as Kalim, a Persian poet, observed that (The means of acquiring perfection do not exist in Iran : The *hina* dye acquires no colour till it comes to India).

Akbar established *Darut Tarjuma* (Department of Translation) and ordered that the principles of different religions, which were based on reason, should be translated into different languages. Mulla Ahmed Thattavi observed in the preface of *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, that the Emperor always made strenuous efforts to mobilize energies in making every one acquainted with 'perfect knowledge' and in making followers of different religions realise the truth underlying each religion and give up their innate bigotry'. Abul Fazl wrote in his preface to the Persian translation of the *Mahabharat*: "Akbar was anxious to introduce reforms among all classes of his subjects and did not discriminate between a friend and foe. As he found that there were exceedingly great differences between Hindus and Muslims, and there was no end to the polemics and refutations of each other, he decided to get the reliable books of both the religions translated in the language of their opponents, so that shaking off their enmity

they should try to search for truth. However, having been acquainted with their respective weaknesses, they should try to reform themselves. Secondly, in every religion there were a number of ignorant ones who always thought themselves to be great scholars and misrepresented the original works of the masters. The common people took these misrepresentations for the real religion and were often misled. Akbar thought it essential to protect the people from becoming victim to the nefarious designs of such “custodians” of the faith and came to the decision that if the books of different religions could be translated into a simple language, the common people would be able to know the truth themselves”. We only have a record of the works of Hinduism being translated into Persian. This statement shows that The Qura’n and other books on Islam were also translated into Sanskrit, but we do not have any direct evidence for this.

Among the scholars of eminence who came to India during the second half of the 16th century, were Mirza Qiwamuddin Jafar Beg, a scholar of considerable eminence and a free thinker, and Mir Ghiysuddin Ali Qazwini, the author of *Labbut Tawarikh*. He generally read out books to the Emperor and supervised the translation work into Persian. He excelled in the art of writing history. Mir Fatehullah Shirazi, was an eminent mathematician and scientist. His

name is associated with many inventions in the field of mechanics. He was invited by Akbar, and he joined the Mughal court in 1588. Hakim Ali Gilani, was proficient in medicine. Shaikh Mubarak was widely respected for his learning, and his broad and liberal views. Abul Fazl was gifted with extraordinary intelligence and knowledge. He was a philosopher and a historian. Faizi was a literary figure of the age and the librarian of Akbar's personal collection. Qazi Saiyid Nurullah Shustari had a command on *uloom-i-din* and *uloom-i-maqulat*. Thus, there were many *ulema* working under the patronage of Akbar.

Under Akbar's patronage *ulemas* like Fatehullah Shirazi, Hakim Abdul Fateh Gilani, Saiyid Nurullah Shustari, Maulana Peer Muhammed, Shaikh Mubarak, Abul Fazl and others, took great interest in the development of education. As a result of which change also came in the perception and understanding of the students studying those subjects. Under the imperial patronage, they laid the foundation of a new education policy and revised the syllabus of these *madarsas*. Apart from *uloom-i-din*, *uloom-i-maqulat* were also introduced. The emphasis was on *uloom-i-maqulat* in the new syllabus. The new subjects which were introduced, were Mathematics, Measurement, Geometry, Ethics, Agriculture, Counting, Ordinances of the government, Natural Sciences, Medicine, Philosophy, History and, among

languages, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit.

With the revision of the syllabus, the system of education was revolutionized. The curriculum was so modified as to enable the students to acquire education according to their particular objectives. This reform of education was fraught with far-reaching consequences. It led to mutual love and respect, and started the process of the creation of an intellectual unity where formerly there was none.

In Iran all the leading poets like Firdausi, Asadi, Nizami, Khayyam, Rumi, Sadi, Hafiz and others had already sung a new song of liberalism, humanity, peace and prosperity. They composed verses of love and of freedom of man from all aspects of slavery without any hatred and dislike. Persian poetry had also played an important role in strengthening the relations between India and Iran. The message of peace and love contained in Persian poetry is truly remarkable. And this was the real and original achievement of the Persian language and poetry which was accepted by the followers of all religions and sects. These *ulema* coming from Iran to India were already influenced by these concepts.

After the introduction and teaching of *uloom-i-maqulat*, certain new questions were raised, and the concept

of *taqlid* (faithful following) was challenged. The study of philosophy and other social sciences does not allow the concept of *taqlid*. The chief claim of these scholars to the title of a distinguished scholar and teacher is due mainly to the predominantly intellectual element in their writings, to their unfailing appeal to reason as against religious and cultural traditions, to their broader view of society. They adopted the new methodology which they sought to apply to their task and to the unique and masterly literary style of their prose and poetry. The decade between 1575 and 1585 constitutes the most tumultuous and, at the same time, the most formative period of Akbar's reign. The progressive *ulema* discredited the short sighted *ulema* in the eyes of Akbar by their superior reasoning and immense learning, and eventually brought about their fall from the position of power. They introduced the lessons of toleration, which brought about a profound change in the social and religious ideas of the students. The ideas of religious toleration runs like a thread throughout their writings both in prose and poetry. It also served as the basis of friendship of these *ulema* like Hakim Abdul Fateh Gilani, Fatehullah Shirazi, Abul Fazl and others with Akbar, and provided a new concept of Indian society and culture. It is under these circumstances that Akbar declared the policy of *Sulh-i-kul* in 1580.

As a result of this change the domination of those *ulema* who were short-sighted and of a narrow outlook, started diminishing in the *madarsas*, because they failed to comprehend the objectives of the new education policy, and the domination of *ulema-i-maqulin* was established. A reaction was natural because preference began to be given to those *ulema* who had completed their studies with the new syllabus. It was a loss of authority and resources for those whose knowledge was restricted to *uloom-i-din* only and lacking knowledge of *uloom-i-maqulat*. Secondly, the development of rational thinking and the use of reason was an open challenge to the authority of those *ulema* who were reigning over people in India on the principle of *taqlid* since the 13th century. These *ulema* were against the popularization of education among the masses. They preferred followers with limited knowledge or those totally ignorant. Advantage was taken of this situation by Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi and other *ulema* of the same bent of mind. They attacked both *uloom-i-maqulat* and *ulema-i-maqulin*. Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi writes that by studying mathematics and geometry you can not achieve nearness to God. These are all useless subjects. Akbar was declared as *kafir* and the *ulema-i-maqulin* who were mostly Iranis adhering to Shia doctrine, were also declared as *kafirs*. Mirza Makhdum Sharifi, who also served as Prime Minister of Shah Ismail Safavi of Iran in 1577-78, left Iran after the fall of Shah Ismail.

He wrote a book *Al-Nawaqiz fil Radd al-rawafizin* 1979-80 in Baghdad and dedicated it to Ottoman Sultan, Murad III. Copies of his books reached India and aroused considerable furore. Makhdumul Mulk was the first Indian 'alim to write a book - *Minhaj-al-din wa Marajul Muslimin* on the Shia-Sunni polemics. Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi also tried to divert the attention of the *ulema* from educational reforms towards religious debate by writing a book - *Radd-i-Rawafiz*. Once these books were available to scholars of Agra, Lahore and Srinagar, etc. Sunni-Shi'i polemics escalated. These debates played a damaging role against Akbar's educational reforms and his policy of Sulh-i-kul. However, these *ulema* could not succeed in their mission.

Hakim Abul Fateh and Fatehullah Shirazi, along with Abul Fazl and some other intellectuals weaved the Emperor away from dogmatism and made him the pioneer of the new education policy and universal peace. We agree with Jafar when he opines that "Akbar's passion of life was the creation of a nation in India, the aim of education could be nothing less than the unification of India - unification in every sense political, religious, social and cultural.

Indo-Iran Relations : Historical and Cultural Perspectives

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Indo-Iranian cultural relations have a long history and a pleasant past. It is interesting to note how the multi-dimensional contacts from the pre-historic times down to our own, had brought India and Iran so close to each other. In the letters exchanged between the Mughal Emperors and the Safavid rulers, the formal and the spiritual (*surri wa manavi*) friendship, amity and concord between the two royal houses had been consistently emphasised. Such expressions of mutual friendship and warmth are found not only in various letters exchanged between Abul Fazl and Mir Sharif 'Amuli but also in the notes of poets and calligraphists sent to each other. The *tazkiras* of poets, bibliographical sketches of men of talents (scholars, physicians, architects, painters, musicians, calligraphers and other artists available in the chronicles like *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Muntakhabut Tawarikh*, *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, *Ahbab Thufai Sami* etc.) confirm the continuous existence of Persians at the Mughal court and a

persistent exchange of ideas, men and commodities between the two lands. The Persian influence on the origin and growth of literary and *Sufi* traditions in India had already been nicely summed up in various valuable works. The Persian style of history writing had its impact on the pattern of historiography in India. There was a continuous exchange of ideas between the two lands. During the reign of Sikandar Lodi, “nobles, shaikhs and men of learning from the lands of Arabia, Persia and Bukhara induced to do so by his favour and benevolence, took up residence at Agra where the kind himself generally dwelt”. In his *guldasta* or *chahar chaman Chandra Bhan Brahmin* had rightly pointed out that “since this (Mughal) Empire was a rendezvous where the heart-felt wishes were fulfilled, a large number of men of sword and pen, the people of excellence, quality and learning, men of letters, poets and writers, skilled artisans and eminent persons from the cities of the world around like Istanbul, Aleppo, Egypt, Syria, Basrah, Baghdad, Hamdan, Shirwan, Sumakhi, Gilan, Mazandaran, Astarabad, Gunjah, Burdah, Tabriz, Ardabil, Qazwin, Qum, Sawah, Kashan, Tehran, Yezd, Isfahan, Shiraz, Kirman, Suman, Damghan, Bustam, Sabzwar, Nishapur, Merv, Mashhud, Tus, Tis, Qain, Tun, Isfarain, Jam, Herat, Khawaf, Bukhara, Siestan, Farah, Qandahar, Balkh, Badakhshan, Bukhara, Samarkand, Andijan, Tibbet, Kashghar and countries of Turkistan and various kinds of people of other places, came to this splendid

Empire with great hopes and anticipations. They entered with the service of this bountiful kingdom, which was an asylum for the people of the world.”

But this galaxy of meritorious men could not overshadow the radiance of Iranian eminence. The learned men, poets, scholars, painters, calligraphists, men of science and technology, distinguished themselves in the medley and left an indelible stamp on the cultural history of India.

India's linkages with Iran go back to pre-historic period. Aryan emergence was as much a great event in early history of India as their rise in Iran. The commonness found in the languages of Rigveda and Zendavasta are another confirmation of this affinity. Whether it was Darius the great or later on Shah Abbas the great, some kind of close relations always existed to vouchsafe for the age old ties. Since present cannot be delinked from its past and future, the emerging perspectives in continuity would also indicate towards further prospects. An earnest endeavour is, therefore, being made here to touch upon each sphere and to cover the various aspects of political, economic, social and (mainly) cultural relations, in order to determine our mutual contribution to the glories of our respective countries.

In the first place, the geographical proximity, the contiguous borders and the racial consanguinity had brought

the two different peoples together. The Iranians are neither semitic nor Turkic by origin. They belong to the Aryan stock confirming the famous legend that Persians, Indians and Central Asians are the offshoot of one family tree.

Iran's contribution to the world of Islam in general and to the Mughal India in particular had been nicely summed up in the words of G.M. Wickens that "the dominant function of the Persian mind has long been recognized as part-solvent and part-catalytic". As would be discussed subsequently, the political happenings further paved the way for close collaboration. The cultural interchange became essential as the political interests of the two regions were inter-linked. The geographical proximity and the political amity played a very vital role in the maintenance of continuous relations and brisk exchange of men, commodities and ideas. The geographical location further added to this cohesion as Persia had all along been accepted as a land bridge between Europe, Turkey and Mediterranean world on the one hand and Central Asia, South East Asia and India on the other hand.

The political amity and mutual understanding was carefully preserved and the balance of power in the region was accurately maintained by a series of rather strange and non-committal friendly embassies between the Mughals and the Persians. When Ubaidullah Khan Uzbek had written to

Sultan Salim (1508-20) about his proposed campaigns against Persia; with a view to avenge the martyrdom of Shaibani Khan, the Ottoman sultan showed his agreement with the Uzbek ruler over his criticism of Persian though no keenness for a joint military venture is noticeable in his reply. Similarly, Sultan Salim's campaign of Chaldiran was preceded by a similar indirect appeal though culminating in the same negative answers. When the Uzbek ruler Abdullah Khan requested for help from Akbar, the latter not only emphasised his policy of *Sulhi Kul* and non-alignment and non-imperialist attitude but reminded him of the relationship of Safavids with the Prophet. The pleas for ensuring safety of travellers to Mecca was met with an equally convincing reply that a shorter and cheaper route was then already available through Gujarat. Thus, the regional politics and local interests prevented the rulers from any military alliance which was neither possible nor feasible in view of balance of power so frequently changing in the region and so assiduously maintained by the rulers until a confrontation became inevitable. The Persians were befriended by the Russians and the Portuguese who had a common enmity against the Uzbeks and the Ottomans respectively. The only power which could really be of some help for the Persians in the region, was Mughal India. The Mughal ruler was the beneficiaries of the generous assistance given by Shah Ismail I in the hour of need; though

at a very high price because his alliance with the Persians, his appearance in Persian attire and reading of *Khutba* in the name of Twelve Imams and Shah of Persia coupled with the minting of coins with Shah's name, created furore in Central Asia. Wasifi and Haider Dughlat had given a picturesque description of the hue and cry followed by the mournings in the mosque. The ultimate eviction of Babar from his motherland was, therefore, expedited by this alliance with the 'heretics'.

Like Timur who is said to have valued the Khurasanis more than others, Babur also appreciated them but with certain reservations. In his hortatory letter April-May, 1526 (*Nasihah Nama*) to Kamran, Babur had warned him against the undue reliance and amicable faith on the Khurasanis for he was conscious of the sectarian susceptibilities of his kinsmen and compatriots. Yet, he admired them simultaneously, though trying to dissociate himself deliberately from such explosive attachments.

In case of Humayun, however, the story seems to be somewhat different as Shah Tahmasp found Humayun sailing in the same boat, grappling with the atrocious activities of his scheming brothers and their intriguing bobles. Contrary to expedient assistance accorded to Babur by Shah Ismail, the political exigencies did not play a role in the warm welcome accorded to Humayun. The anxiety of Shah to

accord a regal reception and hospitality to the royal refugee is well depicted in Shah Tahmasp's letter, and is amply confirmed by the accounts given in *Tazkiratul Waqiat* and *Akbarnama*; although the authenticity of Humayun's supplicatory letter sent to Ottoman Sultan, Sulaiman II (1520-1566), dated 13 October, 1548 through Amir Saiyid Ahmad Shah request him "not to put faith on the Qizilbash", had been challenged by Riazul Islam. The same historian had highlighted the ill treatment allegedly meted out to Humayun by Shah Tahmasp. Yet, the military assistance given to Humayun was enough to enable him recover his lost domain - a fact not denied by any source, and which is in itself a sufficient proof of friendly attitude of Persians towards the Mughals. But Qandahar continued to be the bone of contention between the two dynasties and the loss and gain of this region determined the nature of relationship between the two rulers. Akbar's attitude was rather cold towards Shah Tahmasp whose capture of Qandahar had created a thaw in the Mughal-Safavid relations. The attempts of Khudabanda and Shah Abbas to seek help from Akbar failed miserably and even the embassies sent by them remained unanswered till Qandahar was recovered by Akbar.

Shah Abbas too was no stranger to diplomacy. His friendship with Jahangir, consistent exchange of gifts and shower of expensive presents on the young prince and warm

assurances of assistance and moral support offered even during Salim's rebellion, were sufficient. The calculated civilities finally made Jahangir so confident and trusting that he fearlessly withdrew the force from Qandahar during Khurram's rebellion leaving the ground open for the Shah to occupy the land. The loss of Qandahar enraged the Mughals once again, and search for gullible allies was initiated. New methods were invented and Akbar's policy of *Sulh-i Kul* was doomed to be abandoned.

Ecclesiastical experiments of the middle ages, however, provide reasons for Perso-Mughal closeness. The ever-increasing spell of orthodoxy which had sharpened the sectarian bigotry to serve political ends, could only be counteracted through an indirect patronage to the *sufis* who could be turned into convenient mediums for orchestrating the messages of love, peace and universal brotherhood; although the relationship with the ruling family may not be expediently cordial, the attitude towards the *sufis* and the dervishes of Persia was *pragmatically ardent*. While expressing his paternal affection for Shah Abbas, Akbar advised him to pursue a policy of religious toleration and moderation and cited his own example and policy of making no distinction among his subjects on the basis of cult and creed and his ideal of *Sulh-i Kul*. Although Shah Abbas appreciated Akbar's "pleasant advices" (*nasayihi dilpasand*

wa pand-i sudmand) he did not forget to criticise Akbar's policy of Sulh-i Kul and was equally vociferous in justifying his actions on the plea that "each one of the Prophets urged war on the "*ashqiya*" (cruel criminals). In his farman to Mir Saiyid Safiuddin Ahmad Kasim, Akbar had categorically stated that "Love for the people of Iran (*tabaqa-i Iraniyan*) is deeply embedded in the imperial heart of Akbar and it is his desire that this exalted community (*guruhi-i wala*) should come close to him spiritually and materially, and the high and the low (that is, of all classes) thereof should partake of imperial favour". This "spiritual relationship" with the Iranians, however, was continued by Akbar through these *sufis*. The farman sent to Mir Safiuddin Kashi in November, 1584, is a good proof of Akbar's indirect approach:

"It is therefore fortunate that Amir Ahmad is present there so that he can guide the community on the right path. The Mir should constantly report his spiritual experience to and seek guidance from him (Akbar) who is indeed the solver of problems, spiritual and universal, *hallal-i mushkilat-i rumuz-i anfas wa afaqi*").

The Indo-Iranian cultural relations were further strengthened due to lingual affinity which hastened the process of amalgamation. Persian culture and language were adoringly of the ruling class not only under the Sultans of Delhi (who were said to be Truks) but also under the

Mughals. Originally both Persian and Sanskrit (with its changed and continued versions in Bengali and Hindi) belonged to Indo-European groups of languages. Hence, a certain commonness is noticeable between *Rig Veda* and *Zenda Vesta*. During the medieval period the lingual closeness bridged the gulf and paved the way for a quick assimilation culminating in total submersion.

The Safavids spoke Azari Turkish and Persian. The keenness of the Mughals to acquaint the princes with the Persian and the Turkish languages simultaneously is very well reflected through compilation of bilingual dictionaries, glossaries and directory of phraseology which are still extant. The chronicles, farmans, manshurs, pistles, dasturul amals were all written in Persian language, though they were studded with turkish terms. The adoption of Persian in India and its synthesis with *Prakrit* and other dialects finally contributed towards the emergence of a soldier's and trader's dialect like Urdu -a glaring example of lingual fusion. The Indo-Persian literature was produced through the medium of Persian language but with Indian ideas and Indian Background. The attempt of Amir Khusru in shaping this lingual fusion and his contribution towards the development of a new medium of expression i.e., Urdu, is significant.

Abul Fazl's presentation in India of Rudaki's view that "there are many hardships and difficulties on the way to

India but it pays”, is better explained by Ali Quli Salim’s version: “There exists not in Persia the means of acquiring perfection. Henna does not develop its colour until it comes to India”. While Badauni enumerated 170 poets of Persian descent living or born in India; Shibli gives a list of fifty one poets who came to India from Persia. Some confess that they are “captives of India”. Saib Tabrizi (d. 1677-8) says: “There is no head wherein desire for the visit danceth not, even as the determination to visit India is in every heart”. A similar thought is expressed by Abu Talib Kalim that “through longing for India, I turn my regretful eyes backwards in such fashion, that even if I set my face to the road I do not see what confronts me”. Occasionally, the poets “had a fling” at this exodus of poets. Qasim Kahi once objected to this: “O’ Kahi you are a nightingale in the garden of kabul - you are not a cow or a kite to flock to Hindustan”. Yet, Kahi was attracted and moved towards India only by his yearning for improving his knowledge of mysticism and to meet the famous mystic Mir Hafiz Kirman Shah Jahangir of Sind. The political unrest, wars and economic pressures also forced many to leave their homeland. Cultural starvation and home sickness often spoiled the intellectual satiation. There were men like Shaikh Ali Hazin whose nature “had no agreement with the fashions and manners of this country (India), nor any power of patiently enduring them” as the sight was “hateful” leading to his intense desire and continuous hope

for “escape”. Yet, he had to live in India for forty years - though refusing to reckon this (time of his residence) as “portion of his real life”. Perhaps it was the magnetism of Indian social milieu which seized and nurtured the external and internal talent to its full bloom receiving in turn a cosmopolitan outlook and a conglomeration of multi-dimensional culture.

Mir Masum of Bhakkar (a saiyyid from Tirmiz, settled in India) was not only a poet and a good historian but “also skilled as a composer and tracer of inscriptions”. If the author of *Riaz-ush-Shuara* is to be believed, “on his travel Masum was always accompanied by sculptors”. Abul Fazl adds that from “India to Isfahan and Tabriz, where he was presented to Shah Abbas, there are numerous mosques and public buildings which he adorned with metrical inscriptions”. Shah Abu Turab one of the great Saiyyids of Shiraz, was the “counsellor of the Sultan of Gujarat”.

The talented men who were with Humayun during his exile included such luminaries as Khwaja Ghazi of Tabriz, “a skillful accountant and also acquainted with histories and chronicles”, was appointed *Mushrif-i Diwan*. Another Khwaja Amiuddin Mahmud of Herat is said to have “surpassed all the world in the science of accounts (*fann-i siyaq*) and who also wrote in *Shikasta* admirably. He was very subtle (*mu shigaf* lit. Hair spitting) in matters of business and

knowledge of Arithmetic". He was appointed as Bakhshi and even received the title of Khwaja Jahan. Baba Dost Bakhshi was distinguished for his knowledge of accounts and always displayed great aptitude in the affairs of the *diwani*. Maulana Nuruddin was acquainted with mathematics, astronomy and the astrolabe.

On ceremonial occasions (Particularly on *Nawroz* days) Hakim Fathullah (d. 1589), the renowned philosopher, scientist and astronomer from Shiraz, always showed his newly invented mechanical devices. His books contain discussions on mechanical concepts and inventions and the force of movement. Inspired by the works of Nasiruddin Tusi and Bahauddin 'Amuli (1547-1621) Ustad Ahmad (d. 1649) and his three sons wrote a treatise on mathematics.

Shaikh Abulqasim Jurjani and Maulana Ilyas of Ardabil who were "adorned with external and internal knowledge also joined Humayun's service. During his sojourn in Meshed, the Mughal ruler particularly discussed "*durrat ul Taj*" with the above mentioned scholars. He held continuous long discussions with the learned and eloquent who waited upon him and were "benefited by the alchemy of his companionship". Maulana Jamshed who was an "aggregate of excellencies" repeatedly had the honour of getting an audience.

During Akbar's reign this Mir Fathullah of Shiraz (who "had been with great efforts brought to the court of Adil Khan of Bijapur") also received a farman "requiring his presence" at the Mughal court in 990 after the death of his patron. The Mir was an expert "in the regions of theology, mathematics and physics and in all branches of science both logical and traditional and in talismans and incantations, and discovering treasures - he was without his equal in that age". Mir Fathullah was called by Abul Fazl as "the wiseman of the age" who was elevated to the rank of Bakhshi and received the title of Azdud Daulah (arm of the empire). Mir was described as "singular for theoretical and practical knowledge" and "compendium of ancient sages". Khwaja Shah Mansur Shirazi "an adept at the mysteries of accounts was raised to the high office of Wazir."

The Iranian bureaucracy (the *ahliqalam*) were known in the east for their administrative efficiency and were frequently employed in the office as scribes. A number of letters inviting the men of learning and talents to the Mughal court by Emperors and their nobles are skill extant. One such letter sent from Herat by the famous chronicler Khwand Mir, to Babur in response to Emperor's invitation, shows how the talents were searched and valued. In many ways, the Mughals adopted the chancellery practices of Central Asia and Persia. The Na'me-nami drafted by Mir Khwand

seems to have had this simple justification.

Interesting information regarding Indo-Iranian cultural contacts could be gleaned from several farmans, dispatched to various persons in Persia. Akbar's farman to Mir Sadruddin Naqib sent through Khwaja Chalebi Qazwini on 23 October, 1590, from Lahore appreciates Mir's "high scholarship, excellence of disposition and piety and his sincere devotion to the Emperor". It was, therefore, recommended that 100 *tuman-i raiji* Iraqi be immediately given to the trader, Khwaja Chalebi Qazwini, to be conveyed to the Mir as his travelling allowance so that the Mir could come to the court at once. In case, the money was not sufficient, an additional sum could be requested from the Khwaja or even from the traders engaged in business transactions in India. Another farman sent by Akbar in 1591 to Chelepi Beg of Shiraz also refers to the praises of Chelepi which had reached to Akbar who invited him to join his court and issued instructions to Fattahi Shirazi to make necessary arrangement for the scholar's comfortable arrival.

Akbar's claims in the above farman that "this court's patronage of men of learning, especially of the nation and tribe (*aqwam-o ashair*) of the Mir is well known", is borne out sufficiently by his farmans despatched to various persons. Such was the alertness of Akbar's men in the search for talents that Abul Faiz Faizi who had been sent to

Deccan on a political mission, did not forget to look for men of excellence. Faizi's letter to Akbar sent from Ahmadnagar in 1591 further indicates the various shades of contact which Akbar wished to maintain with Persia. In this letter Faizi had given the information regarding the learned men and poets of Persia and the surrounding regions who could embellished the court of Akbar. The same letter refers to the arrival of three ships from Chaul (a port in south of Bombay in Nizamul Mulk's territory). Some of the travellers were the Qizilbash (comprising men like Husain Quli Afshar and Hasan Beg Lashkar-nawis) who had fled Iran. Having suffered considerably in Persia, they had decided to seek service under Akbar. They were devoid of enough resources and were keen for help. Faizi extracted from them valuable and relevant information not only about Shah Abbas and Persia but also about the neighbouring countries.

A full fledged department where philologists were constantly engaged in translating books from Persian into Hindi (and vice versa) was instituted by Akbar, Valuable works like a part of Zick-i Jadid-i Mirzai was translated under the superintendence of Amir Fathulla of Shiraz. Kishan Joshi, the Gangadhar, and Mohesh Mahananda were translated from sanskrit into Persian. The Mahabharat was translated from Hindi into Persian under the superintendence of scholars like Naqib Khan, Maulana Abdul Qadir Badauni

and Shaikh Sultan of Thaneshwar and was named Razmnama. The Ramayana was also rendered into Persian by the same scholars. In Abul Fazl's view it not only contained the life of Ram Chandra but was "full of interesting points of philosophy". Haji Ibrahim of Sirhind translated into Persian the Atharban. Similarly, Lilawati, one of the most excellent works written by Indian mathematicians on arithmetic "lost its Hindu veil and received a Persian garb" from the hand of Shaikh Faizi. In compliance with Akbar's orders, certain Mukammal Khan of Gujarat translated into Persian the Tajak, a famous work on astronomy.

In his Ain 34 'The arts of writing and painting', Abul Fazl had mentioned several Persian calligraphists - some of whom had served the Mughals in India also. These luminaries included Maulana Sultan Ali of Qayin Maulana Mir Ali who "brought his art to perfection by initiating the writing of Sultan Ali of Mashhad", Shah Mahmud of Nishapur, Maulana Muhammad Husain of Tabriz, Shamsuddin of Kirman, Maulana Hasan Ali of Mashhad, Mir Muizz of Kashan, Mirza Ibrahim of Isfahan, Nizami of Qazvin, and several others.

It is generally believed that the basis of theoretical knowledge in Unani (Greek) medicinal art was borrowed by the Indians from the Persian works of experts like Abu Muhammad Ibni Zakariya ar Razi (d. 925) and Ibni Sina

(980-1037). Persian contribution in treatment and pharmacy (not diagnosis) is commonly acknowledged. Humayun's secretary Yusuf Ibn-i Muhammad of Herat is credited with compilation of prescriptions and remedies for all diseases. Muhammad Riza of Shiraz dedicated his work on hygiene and health entitled "Riyaz-i alamigiri to Aurnagzib".

In India, the knowledge concerning astrolable was mainly drawn from Persian works of Nasiruddin Tusi (e.g. *Bist Bab dar asturlab*) and Qutubuddin Mahmud Shirazi. In Tabriz a funny event occurred due to Humayun's penchant for astronomy and keenness about astrolabes, spheres (Kura) and other instruments of observation. The Emperor ordered his equerry Paik Muhammad "to search diligently" in the city for spheres (Kura). That "simpleton" brought some colts (Karra Karra-Mares). The Ilkhanid envoy Rashiduddin Fazlullah is said to have come to India in search of Indian herbs and medicines. The gifts Abdurrazzaq Samarqandi, the envoy of Shahrukh, bought in plenty from Indian soil, consisted of medicines in bulk. The story of Hamara Pal and Avicenna given in Wasifi's *Badaiul Waqi* further confirms the regard Avicenna had for Indian medicines and practitioners. The *Charak Smhita* was translated in Persian, and is still extant. In the Mughal court, the Persian physicians were held in high estimation and Persian diagnosis and medicines were also appreciated. In *Ain-i Akbar*, and other

biographical sketches detailed information about Persian physicians and medical practitioners is available.

In Akbar's time Irani, European and Mongolian articles of wear were "in abundance". Skilled workmen and masters of this art were also settled in India "to teach people an improved system of manufacture so that "the imperial workshops furnish all those stuffs which are made in other countries. The gilims (carpets) were imported from Goshkan, Khuzistan, Kirman and Sabzwar. Takya namdas or woolen coverlets were also brought from Persia. The Persian carpets and textiles import continued; though Abul Fazl asserts that the carpets of Iran and Turan are no more thought of as "all kinds of carpet weavers have settled here and drive a flourishing trade".

Akbar looked upon fruits as "one of the greatest gifts of the Creator and used to pay much attention to them". The horticulturists of Iran and Turan had, therefore, been settled in India and the cultivation of trees was "in a flourishing state during Akbar's time. Melons, grape, water melons, peaches, almonds, pistachios, pomegranate were plentiful, excellent and could be found everywhere. Similarly, many flowers from Iran and Turan were also found in Mughal India e.g., gul-i surkh, nargis, violet, yasmin-i kabud, the susan (iris) the rayhan (sweet basil), the rana, the zeba, shaqayiq, the taji khurus, the qalgha, the nafarman, the

khatmi (holy hock and) the marsh mallow. A khurasani horticulturist was entrusted with the task of laying out the garden of Sultan Mahmud I of Gujarat at Champanir; the remains of which were excavated only recently. Horticulturists from Iran and Turan added much to the art of gardening. Not only Akbar had invited the horticulturists of Iran but on the other side also, Shah Abbas had requested Jahangir to send him the horticulturists who had specialized in dressing plants and who were indigo-planters, indigo dye makers etc.

The continuous exchange of ideas, technical skill and artistry between India and Iran is nowhere so candidly exhibited as in the sphere of fine arts. The Mughal paintings are an excellent emblem for Perso-Mughal artistic interaction and cultural amalgamation. During his exile in Persia, Humayun's intense admiration for Persian style of painting was bound to result in continuous borrowings from the Iranian art. Despite financial constraints, Humayun was keen to invite painters trained in the Bihzad School. Not only Humayun brought with him famous painters from Persia, the Indian representations like "Tree of Buddha" and "Mountains of India" were also illustrated in Jamiut tawarikh much earlier. The Persian school of painting had left a deep impact upon Mughal art of painting through experts like Maulana Dust, Maulana Yusuf, Maulana Darvesh

Muhammad, Mir Mansur and his son Mir Saiyid Ali and Aqa Riza. The art of book-making and eight styles of belles lettres and intricate Kufi, Naskh, Sulls, Riza Taugi, Perkam, Dobar, Nastaliq, decorated the Indian buildings.

Abul Fazl mentions that during Humayun's sojourn in Mashad, the exquisite and magical Khwaja Abdus Samad, the *Shirin qalam*, who was famous as painter, poet and calligraphist, came and entered in the service of Humayun and "was esteemed by that connoisseur of excellence". Although, he could not accompany Humayun immediately "from the hindrances of fate" he joined him later at Kabul. Abdul Samad hailed from Shiraz. Out of adoration for his own master, Emperor Akbar, Abul Fazl says that "though he had learnt the art before he was made a grandee of the court, his perfection was mainly due to the wonderful effect of a look of His Majesty which caused him to turn from that which is form to that which is spirit. From the instruction they received, the Khwaja's pupils became masters". One such promising painter Daswanth received training under Abdus Samad.

Several Persian books of both prose and poetry, were ornamented with pictures and a very large number of paintings were thus collected. The *Dastan-i Amir Hamzah* was richly illustrated and all its twelve volumes comprising one thousand and four hundred passages of the story, were

decorated “with most astonishing illustrations” by a team of one hundred painters, gilders and binders under the supervision of Saiyid Ali and Abdus Samad, both of Bihzad School. Although there were more than hundred painters who had “become famous masters of the art”, Abul Fazl mentions the names of Mir Saiyyid Ali of Tabriz alongwith twelve others including Khwaja Abdus Samad. Mir Saiyid Ali had learnt the art of painting from his father and had “made himself famous in his art and has met with much success”. Abul Fazl says that he “attained, under the care of His Majesty, the greatest perfection in the art of painting”. He illuminated the story of Amir Hamzah. He was also widely known as a poet under the pen name *Judai*’.

The two painters, Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad, cultivated the genre of a completely new style of portrait painting – the *Siyah-i qalam* which they could compare to the unique “espece de Sapia de Camaieu” e.g., the portraits of Muhammad Nadir in British Museum (1920 Nos. 9, 13, 17, 20, 32, 39). The system flourished even during the 17th century.

Akbar imported artists from Iran and a combination of Indo-Iranian style of painting encouraged a totally distinct mode of production. Although there were several painters carrying the name Farrukh, the one who entered Akbar’s service in 1585 at Rawalpindi, is said to be an “Iranian

émigré”. In Ain 34 on paintings, however, Abdul Fazl’s list of painters includes this name as Farrukh, the Calmuck.

In the splendour of Mughal architecture the inventive pattern is clearly exhibited as distinct from the novel features which characterize Persian art. In the Indian architecture are noticed a fusion and harmonious synthesis of conceptual scheme, technique, ornamentation and the décor which seem to bear the imprint of Iranian architectural features. The most astonishing were the underground and underwater structures. The Persian influence is clearly visible in the painted horse-shoe-shaped arch with radiating voussoirs in the Alai Darwaza added by Alauddin Khalji to the Delhi Mosque. Certain other imported features (carpet technique, flat arcuate roof decorated with stucco-deep niches, squinches, pendentives, spanudrels) or different kind of minarets (like angular, circular, fluted, statlectite, topering, attached and stunted), varied types of décor (e.g., arabesque pattern, abstract articulation, vegetable patterns and geometric designs seem to be common) and floral. The monumentalizing feature of double minarets found in many Indian buildings, was also perhaps inspired by an Iranian prototypes. Not only Jaunpur, the capital of the Sharqi rulers, was generally known as “the Shiraz of India”, but the Deccan architecture bears the impact of Iranian architecture. Similarly, Persian features are noticed in Sultan Zainul

Abidin's tomb also. The décor in Buland Darwaza, Chishti monuments and other buildings at Fathpur Sikri present a fine blend of Indo-Iranian art. Similarly, the traditional Indo-Persian foliage design is very well-reflected in the pietra dura work on the Taj Mahal. Similarities are also noticed in the Agra and Fathpur Sikri mosques, palaces, and Sarai Nur Mahal in Punjab. Even the architecture of provincial dynasties of Bengal, Jaunpur, Malwa, Gujarat and the Deccan also presented a fine blending of regional and indigenous workmanship with an inspiration from Persia and Central Asia (e.g., Saiyid tomb, Lodi Bara Gumbad Mosque, 1494 by Abu Amjad: Bidar Monuments of Gulbarga, Galconda and Bijapur).

Another sphere having traces of brisk and continuous exchange of ideas, artistry and expertise, is the field of vocal and instrumental music and dance. The process of artistic amalgamation is said to have started with Amir Khusrau or a little earlier and was carried further by patrons of art like Sultan Husain Sharqi of Jaunpur, Zainul Abidin of Kashmir, the Sur rulers, Akbar, the Great, Burhan Khan of Khandesh and the nawabs of Oudh. Several treatises and general works written both in India and Central Asia confirm a long standing contact between the two regions in the field of music and dance. Nearly twelve Perso-Arab airs (like aiman, qawl, hawa, basit, golbana, gul, zilaf, sarpardah, ghanam, sazgari,

ghara and sanam) were introduced in India by Amir Khusrau. Ali Quli Qutab Shah is said to have introduced Nauruz and Akbar the great is said to have composed over 200 of the Khwarazmian tunes (e.g., Jalashahi, Karat, Mahamir etc.) absorbing Iranian and Turanian rhythms with Indian systems. The new *ta/s*like sowari, pachelwan, jat, poshtu; ara chautali, qawwali, jald, sul, sul fakhta, ferodust, jald titala, jhumra were the homogenous forms of blending of Perso-Arab, Central Asian and Indian Musical notes. Apart from a number of well-known mixed *ragas* (e.g., eman, junglah and hijj – a corruption of Perso-Arab airs of Zangulah and Hijaz), various other products of indigenous and Perso-Arab scales have been mentioned in the sources with detailed description of the intricacies of each of these specialized versions. Incidentally, similarities are noticed in the tenor, contents and forms of Abhinav Gupta's *Nathya Shastra* and treatises of Abdurrahman Jami and Kaukabi. Needless to say that in this synthetic blending and mingling of Indian and Central Asian and Iranian schools, the original identity of many of the specialized art in music and dance were entirely or partially lost coalescing to assume an altogether different and new form. The fact is amply borne out by a number of works including *Mauji Mausiqi* and works of Safiuddin Latiki, Nishat Ara, Lahijat-I Sikandar Shahi and others.

Although the Perso-Indian overland trade is said to

have somewhat declined after the adventurous feats of Portuguese Bartolomeu Biaz (1487) and those of Vasco de Gama, the Armenian traders served as the major exporter. The state trading in a rudimentary form, the toy trade and the purchasing missions, confirm the mutual appreciation which the Indian and Persian rulers entertained for the rarities of each other's countries. The letter of Shah Abbas I sent to Prince Salim through Abdul Husain Alnasiri Al Tusi in 1603, confirms this fact.

A number of purchasing missions arrived from Deccan also. In this context Shah Safi's Missions are significant. In his letter sent to Shah Abbas I through Miyan Rafiq Tajir, Jahangir thanked the Shah profusely for the rare "qutubnuma" a yadbud which was "sure to augment Jahangir's love for the Shah". In return Salim sent him a wine cup of Venice make (Kari-vendik). The services rendered by a lesser mortal like Haji Rafik in promoting mutual friendship with the Shah, earned him the title of Malikut tajar from the Emperor.

II. CONSTERNATION OF IRANIAN TALENTS ON INDIAN HORIZON

From the land of Avicenna, many good physicians emerged, though most of them had multi-dimensional interests and professions. Hakim Abdul Fath's father Mulla

Abdurrazzaq of Gilan was a learned and talented man. He held the post of *sadr* of Gilan and met his death after the conquest of Gilan by Shah Tahmasp. His son Abul Fath came to India with his two talented and eminent brothers, namely Hakim Human and Hakim Nuruddin. From the post of *sadr* and *amin* "he rose higher and higher in Akbar's favour and possessed an immense influence in State matters and on the Emperor himself; though only a commander of one thousand, he is said to have had the power of a *vakil*". He was not only a man of pen but a man of sword also as he successfully participated in the expedition against Sawad, Bajnaur, Kashmir, Zabulistan. Both Abul Fazl and Badauni had admired the "vast attainments" of Abul Fath.

Hakim Fathullah of Gilan knew a great deal of medical literature, and also of astronomy. He wrote a Persian commentary to the Qura'n. He had extensively studied the works on medicine and his knowledge of astronomy was also great. Hakim Lutfullah of Gilan was also a clever practitioner with a great learning. His grandson Fathullah was also a physician at Shahjahan's court. Interestingly enough, there was a physician Hakim Sayfulmulik Lang who got the nickname of "Sayful Hukama" (the sword of doctors) because he helped his patients on their journey to the next world. He came from Damawand to Agra and wrote poems under the *takhallus* "Shujai". Badauni says that he had

“united a task for writing vilely scurrilous and satirical verses to great learning and knowledge of medicine; though he too mentions about the “ill luck” of Shujai before whose cure, like that of Shaikh Jalal before him, even messenger of death expressed helplessness saying “that where he kills one this physician kills many”. Although Shujai was “held in much honour in India,” he left the place because “he received neither patronage nor honour” and sent back a satirical poem to this effect.

Shamsuddin Hakimul Mulk of Gilan not only surpassed all his contemporaries in other branches of traditional learning, but “in medicine and healing art, he was the Galen of the age, and was endowed with the healing breath of the Messiah”. Despite the Hakim’s criticism of Badauni’s book, the latter had depicted him as a sincere, amiable person with a firm faith in God and dedication to the welfare of the people. He helped his students generously in their studies as much as with the financial resources. Hakim Ainul Mulk of Shiraz a relative from maternal side to renowned logician known as Muhaqqiqi Davvani, was said to be a “learned man”, a “clever writer” who held many important assignments and served well as *fawjdar* of Sambhal, Sadr of Bengal, Diwan and Bakhshi of Agra. Perhaps, he excelled in diplomatic assignments also and was sent as an envoy to Chingiz Khan of Gujrat and to Ali

Adil Shah of Bijapur. Both Akbar and his critic Badauni liked the Hakim alike and the latter is said to be a friend of Badauni. Occasionally, he composed nice verses and had the pen name *Davai*. He had built a masjid. The inscription shows that the date of its construction was 987 when Hakim held the *faujdari* of Sambhal.

Ever since Sultan Husain Baiqra and Ali Shir Navoi renewed the literary and artistic activities at Herat, the place turned into a rendezvous of talents which added to the development and glory of Indian fine arts. Khawaja Husian Sanai of Mashhad, the son of Ghiyasuddin Muhammad, had his admirers in its nook and corner. Badauni stressed that great men of his country used to secretly assemble at social gatherings to consider and discuss even one couplet by him and in each gathering his couplets were read by way of good augury, and all agreed both with his tongue and pen, in his pre-eminence in poetry, and recorded their opinions. Abdul Faiz Faizi was Sanai's pupil. Since his arrival in India all his poetic fancy has been frozen by envy, neglect and hundred shafts of criticism and wanders distracted in the way of the vulgar". The author of *Atashkadai Azar* contradicts it by saying that "whether no one understands the meaning of his verses or his verses have no meaning." His statement had been supported by others also. Yet, Badauni insists that his *divan* was well-known and contained a good *masnavi*

and that he had a poetic nature and in all subjects save unity, preaching, advice and direction, he had wonderful aptitude. He died at Lahore in 1591-92.

Saiyid Muhammad Fikri popularly known as “Mir Rubai” (because he was “distinguished for his quatrains”) came to India in 1561-62 and spent many years at the Court of Akbar. Although he was a cloth-weaver of Herat, “in the description of poetry, he was like the Umar Khayyan of the age”, and his verses were “well known”. Razi places his date of arrival in India in 969. His excellent *rubais* earned for him the title of “Khayyam of the age”.

Liqai of Astarabad is described as an “epitome of many accomplishments”. Muradi of Astarabad came to India in 1571-72 and “is remembered for many verses which he had left”.

Another Herat born talented person was Mir Dauri (Sultan Bayazid) who received the title “Katib-ul-Mulk (scribe of the Kingdom) as probable “nobody in Hindustan has written the *nastaliq* hand better than he and is said to have possessed “good taste in poetry”. His pupil, Khawaja Ibrahim Husian, was also well-known. Mirza Quli popularly known as Mayali or Maili of Herat was such a master of poetic style “that none of our later versifiers can be mentioned beside him”. Mayali of Herat came to India in 979 (according to

Nafais-ul Maasir in 983, as recorded by Taqi). He was brought up in Mashhad. After the death of his patron Sultan Ibrahim Mirza Safawi he came to India and joined the service of Nawrang Khan. The author of *Atash Kada* had described him as “one of his favourite poets”. Generally, his works had been highly appreciated. Nevertheless, the poet is said to have been poisoned in Malwa due to some suspicion, and that too by his own patron. A woman poetess “Nihani” who happened to be a “near one” (*qarina*) of Mahisti of Herat had also been mentioned by Badauni.

Maulana Sani Khan of Herat an Arlat by origin had been denounced by Nizamuddin as a “low fellow who was originally a qalandar and eventually rose to be an amir”; though Badauni says that he was “well known for his ability, scientific knowledge and wit”. He had served the Mughals for a long time. He was first in the service of Hindal and after his death (November 20, 1551) entered in Humayun’s service. Since his name Ali Akbar was partly similar to that of Akbar, he had made it an “excuse” for addressing him “treatises on heresy, in which agreeably to the system of Nuqtawis, he sets forth both the Emperor and himself as that promised person”, i.e., Mahdi. He had verified the *Kafiyah of Al Kifayyat fin nahw* by Shaikh Jamaluddin Ali Umar, popularly known as Ibnul Hajib, and a treatise on Sufism. Badauni says that Maulana Mir-i Kalan was

“endowed with both inward and outward perfection and was a profound sage, being especially proficient in the tradition in which respect he was wonder of the age and his angelic nature was manifestation of the nine attributes of God”. He was a disciple of Shaikh Jalal of Herat.

There were many good poets from other parts of Iran. Hayati of Gilan, though “free from the bad qualities of poets” was described as “a sympathetic friend”, who “excelled in all descriptions of poetry”. He had been highly appreciated for his depth of learning as: “a stream from the ocean of thought passed by his house; correctness and equity are visible on his forehead. Serenity and truth are in him united”. Having come to India “to better his circumstances”, he “was liked by Akbar” and got a *jagir*. He lived mostly at Burhanpur where he constructed a villa and a masjid called after him. Nasruddin Qarari of Gilan was another “man of understanding and of lofty thoughts”. Allegedly, he suffered from “a curious monomania that his elder brother was “personification of the world, and the Hakim Humam was “a man who represents the life to come”, due to which reason he kept aloof from them”.

Qazi Tawaisi of Khurasan, “a most trustworthy man”, perhaps being carried away by the philosophy of Sarbadran “would as far as possible show favour to the poorer party, even though he were in the wrong”. Badauni is of the opinion

that Qazi Tawaisi must have suffered much at the hands of the wealthy men of his time and was, therefore, always much prejudiced against them”.

Mir Murad of Juwayn had been in Deccan for quite a long time and was, therefore, called “Dakhini” also. Since he was an “excellent shot”, Akbar appointed him as “rifle instructor” to prince Khurram. He held the post of Bakhshi of Lahore. His son Qasim Khan was also an “excellent poet and rose to distinction” as treasurer of Bengal and also as the one whose two sons reduced the fort of Hugli in February 1632 and put down the Portuguese who “converted natives by force to Christianity”. He had built a Jama Masjid in the Atga Bazar of Agra.

Mulla Talib of Isfahan earned the reputation of a “thoughtful poet” with a “correct” taste both “in prose and poetry”. He is also credited with being “experienced in political matters”. He was sent as an envoy of the ruler of little Tibet. He spent thirty years of his life in Kashmir under the patronage of the Sultans. He was a “very sympathetic man” and was “much liked” in India. Originally, he lived like a “religious mendicant” and later on entered the service of Akabr. He was “often in the company” of Hakim Abul Fath, Zain Khan Kuka, Abul Fazl and Shaikh Faizi. He had been appointed as Sadr of Gujrat also. Another “well-known poet”, a pupil of Taqiuddin Muhammad of Shiraz, was Shakebi of

Isphahan. He was acquainted with chronology and the ordinary sciences; and the purity of his nature led him to philosophical independence". Besides, he had acquired good taste and wrote well. Shakebi was the son of Zahiruddin Abdullah Imami of Isphahan. As a young budding talent, he left his homeland for Herat and came into contact with poets like Sanai, Mayli and Wali Dasht Bayazi. When he came to India, he was attached to the literary circle of Abdurrahim Khan-i Khanan who had given him a reward of 18000 (or 10000 according to Haft-i qlim) for his Saqi Nama. Another composition which earned a present of 1000 *ashrafis* each from his patron, and Jani Beg both, was his *masnavi* on the conquest of Thatta. Even after writing a number of eulogies for his patron he fell out with his patron. Shakebi later on looked for greener pastures and through Mahabat Khan got entry into the Mughal court. Later he wanted to go back to Iran but Jahangir detained him and appointed him *Sadr* of Delhi and here that he breathed his last in 1023 AH. Another poet Wasifi of Isphahan sojourned in Kashmir and Lahore and finally joined the service of Zyan Khan. According to Badauni, he "possessed sparks of tastes". Daghistani alleged that his "impudent flattery was proverbial."

Sharif Sarmadi had distinguished himself as an upright and zealous performer of his duties. His "rhymes were excellent" and he understood arithmetic well. He held

many insignificant posts and participated in many campaigns. Mulla Tashbihi Kashani visited India two or three times. Mir Ali Akbar spent forty years of his life in Hindustan. Atashkada had given a very favourable account of this poet: a “decent man”, he was singular in his manners”. He was not “widely known” perhaps because (according to Daghistani) he was a “heretic and led a retired life”. His *masnavi* “the atom and the sun” (Zarra-o Khurshid) is well-known. Atashkada says that “whilst in Hindustan, he tried to improve the moral of the people, dressed as fakirs and did not visit kings”. Tashbihi’s divan is also extant.

In the bibliographical sketches of poets in Ain, he had been described as that one who belonged to the “Mehmudi sect” and also that his mind was rather unsettled. Badauni comments that Tasbbihi “attempted to reduce men to heresy and invited them to join the sect of Basakhwanis”. He had even gone to the extent of persuading Shaikh Abul Fazl that he is “an infallible spiritual guide”, and managed to present an ode to the Emperor and dedicated one treatise “after the manner of Nuqtawi sect” to Abul Fazl. Badauni suspected that the sole motive of Tashbihi was to misguide Akbar by inciting him to overthrow “self-styled orthodox” so that truth might be confirmed in its central position and pure monotheism might be established.

Mir Rafiuddin Haidar of Kashan with his pen name

Rafii “was a composer of enigmas” whose “excellent understanding”, “correct taste” and “unrivalled” competence “in the art of composing enigmas and chronograms was well recognized. He is described as the one “well acquainted with the *ars poetica*” and was also “distinguished as a writer of riddles and *tarikhs*”. For one of his *tarikhs*, he received an award of 10000 rupees. Rafii wanted to return to his motherland after a sojourn of few years but the ship wreck near Makran Coast forced him to come back to India. Although the copies of Fayazi’s poetical works which Rafii was carrying with him were all safe, his own belongings amounting to two lakhs of rupees were destroyed in the catastrophe. However, his losses were compensated by the rich presents and rewards, which were showered upon him. After a total stay of two years, he returned and received rent free lands from Shah Abbas. He had come from Persia to India in AH 1000. For some “crime”, Akbar threw him into prison. Although, he was set free and went to Ahmadabad, but he found it unsafe to remain there and returned to Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur. Shah Abbas had a regard for his father and insisted that Sanjar should come back to his native land, but he died on 1021 before he could depart. Khusrawi of Qain (between Yazd and Herat) was in the service of Prince Salim, “excelled in music”, wrote *Shikasta* well and was “a good hand at shooting with the bow and match lock.”

Shaikh Hasan Ali of Mausil was a “faithful” disciple of Shaikh Fathullah shirazi. He joined the service of Akbar and was given the charge of Prince Salim’s initial education “until the young prince could repeat certain lessons from Persian and other treaties on philosophy”. Badauni had given a very interesting account of Shaikh’s sojourn in India which can be read best in Badauni’s own words: “Shaikh Abul Fazl also for sometime secretly received instructions from him in the exact sciences and in physics and other branches of philosophy, but notwithstanding this he never attempted to advance the Shaikh’s interests, so that while he himself has his place on the carpet in the imperial presence, his master takes his stand on the bare floor. Shaikh Hasan Ali finding that the conduct of such men was not in accord with his religious views, gave up the allowance which he used to receive and went to Gujrat, where he associated himself for a time with Mirza Nizamuddin Ahmad. The latter and his son, Muhammad Sharif, received much profitable instruction from him in those branches of knowledge which exercise the reasoning faculty, and in secular learning, so much so indeed that they advanced to perfection therein. After the death of Shaikh Fathullah, Shaikh Abul Fazl and others recounted Shaikh’s accomplishments and perfection in Akbar’s court assembly. The Emperor invited him and the Shaikh came to Lahore. On reaching the court, the Shaikh was instructed by Nizamuddin Ahmad to perform *Sijdah*

instead of *Kornish* which so displeased him that he made his release from the obligation of performing the ceremony of his attendance and even in his house he could not bear so many things which were abominations to him and on the pretext of visiting his mother he decided to leave India in 1589-90, when he reached Hormuz, he sent a message to the officers of Imperial Court saying "Praise be to God! I am freed from the hypocritical companionship of my friends".

Ghazalai of Mashad left his homeland during the reign of Shah Tahmasp. Badauni says that there was an attempt on his life "on account of infidelity and intemperance" which forced him to go to Deccan. Ghazali of Mashhad had been invited by Khan-i Zaman to Jaunpur; later on, he joined the service of Emperor Akbar and received the title of Malikush Shuara for the first time. *Muzzakkira-i Ahbab* simply says that "during those days his poems have acquired fame among the people. They are nice". He is, however, said to be unrivalled in depth of understanding and sweetness of language and was well acquainted with the noble thoughts of the *Sufis*. There are different opinions about the number of books written by him. Atash Kadai Azari reports that he compiled sixteen books; Miratul Alam says he had two books to his credit, entitled *Asrar-i Maktum* and the *Rushhatul Hayat* to which one other name *Miratul Kainat* is added by Haft-iqlim. Badauni states that the poet had compiled several

divans and a book of *masnavis*. It is said that he has written no fewer than forty or fifty thousand couplets. Nizamuddin gives the number of his poems as 100,000, Atashkadai Azri puts it at 40,000 and Haft-iqlim at 70,000. Whatever, be the exact number of his poems, Badauni concedes that "he had great faculty of expression in the language of mystics", although his composition did not rank very high and his poems "as regards both quality and number, are superior to those of any of his contemporaries". He died in Ahmadabad in 1572.

Mirza Jafar Beg Asif Khan of Qazwin who came to India in 985; was initially made the commander of two thousand and got the title of Asaf Khan. He led several campaigns (i.e., against Raushnais) successfully. He also held the posts of Thanadar of Swat; Vakil and Commander of 5000 and Ataliq to prince Parvez. Although, Jahangir bestowed upon him a pen box studded with jewels as insignia of the post of *divan*; yet the beneficiary never trusted his benefactor. He was, however, a "man of the greatest genius, and able financier, a good accountant", so that "a glance is said to have been sufficient for him to know" contents of a page. Being a great horticulturist, he painted and lopped off branches with his own hands in his gardens. In religious matters, he was "a free thinker, and one of Akbar's disciples". He was one of the most eminent poets

of Akbar's age, an age "most fruitful" in great poets. His "masnavi," entitled "Nurnama" is ranked after Nizami's Shirin Khusraw.

Another person from Oazwin was Khawaja Ghayasuddin Ali Khan, a man of learning and also of sword as is well reflected through his military calibre shown in Gujrat. He was also appointed as Bakhshi, and arranged the introduction of branding (*dagh*) system with Shihab Khan.

Mir Yahya a saifi Saiyid of Qazvin was a "well known theologian and philosopher" whose son, Mir Abdul Latif of Qazvin, joined the imperial service and "was gladdened by the emoluments which he received through the boundless liberality and generosity of the Emperor". Although Badauni says that Akbar took some lessons from him in various passages of the *divan* of Khawaja Hafiz and other books, it is generally accepted that the Mir went to Hindustan at the invitation of Humayun but reached that land just after Akbar had ascended the throne. Akbar had extended a very warm welcome to Mir who was appointed in the second year of his reign as his preceptor. At that time, Akbar "knew not how to read and write but shortly afterwards he was able to repeat some odes of Hafiz. The Mir was a man of great eloquence and of excellent disposition and so moderate in his religious sentiments that each party used to revile him for his indifference". Mir Abdul Latif of Qazvin said to have

tutored Akbar in the precept of Sulh-i Kul or peace with all. Abul Fazl says that "Abdul Latif was accused in Persia of being a Sunni and in Hindustan of being a Shiah". Mir died in 981 at Fathpur Sikri. His son Mir Ghayasuddin was a "personal friend of the Emperor". Although, he did not "rise above the rank of a Hazari, he possessed great influence at the court and was given the title of Naqib Khan. Like his grandfather, Naqib is reported to have "excelled in history". It is said that he learnt all the seven volumes of the *Rauzatus Safa* by herat. Badauni, a school fellow of Naqib, says that "no man in Arabia or Persia was as proficient in history as Naqib". Jahangir praised him for his extra ordinary and remarkable memory. Naqib's son Abdul Latif was also "distinguished for his acquirements".

Haidari of Tabriz whose Ode on elephant was liked by Akbar, visited India thrice. He breathed his last in 1593-94. After his death, his son Samiri came to India and took up service with Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan who appointed him as Mir Saman of his household. He was "also a good officer and was killed during the wars in the Deccan."

Maulana Mansur Tabrizi originally belonged to Sawah. He become famous as Tabrizi. Since he had a love for travelling, he went to India and joined the service of Bairam Khan. He had a *divan* and composed Ghazals and *qasida* with equal ease and eloquence.

Khawaja Saiyid Muhammad Urfi came from Shiraz where his father had to look after Shari and Urfi matters being darogha to the magistrate of Shiraz. Khwaja had taken this takhallus Urfi from the occupation of his father. Urfi had first gone to Deccan where he got highly disappointed, as his talents were not recognized.

Urfi Shirazi distinguished himself as a “man of sound understanding and composed poetry of all kinds well”. He was attached to the court of Shaikh Faizi for a brief period and then joined the services of Hakim Abul Fateh Gilani at whose recommendation he got an entry into Khan-i Khanan’s court where “both his poetry and the esteem in which he was held, made great progress”. Urfi had a collection of his poems and *masnavis* in the metre of the Makhzanulasrar to his credit. His *masnavi* Majmaul Akbar had often been called “Majmaul Afkar”. Hakim Haziq had admired Urfi’s ghazals to an extent that he estimated Urfi’s ghazals as better than his own odes.

Khawaja Shah Mansur of Shiraz was one of the several skilful and talented persons. Azduddaula Amir Fathulla of Shiraz acquired a special name and fame for himself and came to India at the invitation of Adil Shah of Bijapur. He was a disciple of Khawaja Jamaluddin Mahmud, Kamaluddin of Shirwan, and Mir Ghiyasuddin Mansoor of Shiraz. He decided to come to Deccan from where after the

death of Adil Shah (991), he was invited by Akbar, who elevated him to the rank of *Sadr* and honoured him by the title Aminul Mulk and later Azduddaula. He helped Todarmal and “rendered good service in working up the old revenue books. As *Sadr*, he could not function personally as he was sent to Deccan and his servant Kamal looked after the work in his officiating capacity. Khawaja “so excelled in all branches of natural philosophy, especially mechanics, that Abul Fazl said to him “if the books of antiquity should be lost, the Amir will restore them”. He had introduced many reforms in the monetary system under the Mughals, the details of which are given in *Ain-i Akabri*. Under the guidance of Amir Fathulla Shirazi, a part of the *Zich-i Jadid-i Mirzai* was translated. The Mir had been bitterly criticized by Badauni for his staunch belief in Shiism and for being in his view “a worldly office hunter and worshiper of mammon”.

Khawaja abdu Samad *Shirin qalam* hailed from Shiraz where his father Khawaja Nizamul Mulk worked as the Vazir to Shah Shuja. During Humanyun’s sojourn in Persia, Abdus Samad, a well-known painter and calligraphist, met Humayun at Tabriz. Despite Humayun’s insistence Khawaja could not accompany him and only managed to follow him in 956 to Kabul. Although, Khawaja held an ordinary low mansab of 400, he enjoyed “great influence” at the Court. His varied assignments like charge

of the mint at Fathpur Sikri or the Diwani of Multan, could hardly hamper his artistic progress. Such was his skill that he wrote the Surat-i Ikhlas (Qura'n Sur. CXII) on a poppy seed (danah-y Khashkhash).

Miyan Kamaluddin Husain (son of Maulana Hasan) of Shiraz had arrived in India during the reign of Sikandar Lodi. Later, he came to Agra with the caravan of Siyid Rafiuddin, the traditionist, and Miyan Abul Fath of Khurasan, the father of Miyan Budh, and settled there. Shaikh Zainuddin Vafai had praised him because he "combined in himself the knowledge of sciences both of reason and tradition". Since Akbar recognized his worth, he was "exceedingly desirous that the Shaikh should join the imperial service. Badauni had known him for forty years. "With all his excellence and perfection in religious matters, he had the highest ability and perfect eloquence, excellent penmanship, skill in orthography and a masterly style which are his by inheritance. Khawaja Shah Mansur of Shiraz surpassed many in his administrative talents. He started his career as Mushrif (accountant) of the Khushbu Khana (perfume department) and later served as Diwan under Khan-i Zaman and Munim Khan. In 983 when he was appointed as Vazir, he started his ambitious projects which excited jealousy and anger of the people. The account in Ain is worth quoting: "He worked up Ain I No. 122 475-7. Ghayrati of Shiraz was

well acquainted with the history of the past and his diction was also good. Pairvi of Sawa was a skilful painter and had attained by hidden essence a political treatise”.

It is said that the Persian poet Naziri of Nishapur possessed “poetical talent and the garden of thought has a door open for him”. Similar ideas have been expressed by Jahangir also. Jahangir writes in his memoir early in 1611 that he had invited to his court Naziri of Nishapur “who is well known for his poems and poetical genius, and at present lives in Gujrat as a merchant”. He presented to Jahangir an encomiastic *qasidah* in the model of a *qasidah* of Anvari, in return for which Jahangir “presented him with a thousand rupees, a horse and robe of honour”. Naziri had left his homeland at an early age for Kashan where he attended Mushairas with several poets like Fahmi, Hatim, etc. In India he enjoyed the patronage of Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan. He went on a Haj pilgrimage in 1012 AH for a short while. After his return, he settled down at Ahmadabad where he died in 1022 AH.

Jafar Beg Qazvini was “a man of profound thought, has learnt a good deal and describes very well the events of past ages”. As an accountant also he surpassed many experts and was “unique”. He was a disciple of Akbar’s *Tauhid-i Ilahi*.

From amongst the lesser known talented men and poets may be mentioned the names of the following:

Sarmadi of Isphahan who had “some poetic genius”. Mir Sharif Amani of Isphahan “spent twenty years of his life in India living in religious retirement and wrote charming verses”.

Asadullah Khan of Tabriz merely excelled as a good military man. Amir Qazi Asiri of Ray was a “man of education” and best pupil of Hakim Ainul Mulk. He left India after a brief stay partly because he did not find Akbar’s patronage and partly because the climate did not suit him. Maulana Anani of Herat who spent 60 years in Kashmir, was also described as “az mustaidan-i zaman”.

Fahmi of Tehran had also “some poetical genius”, was widely travelled; though he visited India for a brief period. Vidai of Herat who died in India also possessed some attainments”. Although Jafar a Saiyid of Herat had not been mentioned by Abul Fazl or Nizamuddin, Badauni says he had “good taste in poetry and in the composition of enigmas. He also wrote an ode and composed an enigma which he dedicated to Mirza Aziz Kuka containing a list of his titles and prayers for his long life and prosperity. Other poets from the region were Vuqii of Herat who was in the service of Akbar, Vafai of Isphahan. Tali of Yazd was a “pen man” who

wrote nastaliq well. Amir Qazi Asiri of Ray was “the best of all the pupils of Hakimul Mulk under whom the former studied for some years. He possessed both learning and accomplishments and was a “man of education”. He belonged to the intimate circle of Akbar and was one of the most “entertaining” of his times. Since the climate of India did not suit him and also because he did not receive promotion in the imperial service, he left India and died at his native place Ray. Ulfati of Yazd was also “well skilled and exact in sciences” and received one thousand rupees from Khan-i Zaman for composing one couplet. Mir Waiz Vuqufi of Herat who originally belonged to Badakhshan, was famous for his art of preaching and “held stirring meetings for preaching”. Tahir Muhammad Khawaja Tatar Khan held the posts of Vazir and Governor of Delhi.

Nuvidi of Nishapur was “a man of considerable attainments and was highly regarded as a poet. He died in Ujjain in 1565-66, Mirza Mirak Razawi, Khan of Mashhad was made the Diwan of Jaunpur and later on a Bakhshi of Bengal.

There were many persons from Khawaf, the revenue district of Nishapur, who joined the service of the Mughal Emperors. Many Persian families attached to the Mughal Court exhibited their talents in variegated forms and in different fields. With their multifarious capacities, they outshone and

surpassed their contemporaries both in the sphere of fine arts, management and administrative talents.

Mir Saiyid Muhammad Jamabaf was one of the famous scholars of his age whose excellence in *ikhtira-i, maani-o Iqtirai Alfaz* though he was *dar surato Khilqat tarkib-i Khas buda*. He came to India in 969; was richly rewarded and spent his time in comfort till his death in 970. Many Iranians were tempted to visit India suddenly because “the seed of wandering was sown in their heart”. Danishi of Nishapur wrote poems often in “rustic dialect” though sometimes composed “odes in more polished language. Being famous for their penmanship and expertise in accountancy, Persians were working as scribes and book-keepers, etc. Mr. Azizullah of Saifi Saiyids of Qazvin is said to have come first “among accountants and scribes”. possessed “some proficiency in those branches of learning which are not treated of in Arabic literature”. He was appointed as *Divan-i Saaddat* (clerk to Sadr). Fusuni of Shiraz was also an “excellent accountant” and knew astronomy well”. Inayatullah Shirazi was appointed in the imperial library as a librarian. Nurullah Qasim Arslan hailed from Tus (or Moshed) and was brought up in Transoxiana. He was a poet “sweet of song, welcome to all both great and small for his beauty and graceful wit, open and cheerful disposition, sociability and social amiability”. He was unique

in writing chronograms. He was a “renowned calligraphists of the age” and “possessed some talent”. He wrote the *nastaliq* script well. He was broad minded on matters of religion. He died in 1587 at Lahore.

Muhammad Asghar Ashraf Khan Mir Munshi was a Hussaini Saiyid from Mashhad (or Sabzvar). Apart from his “natural poetical ability” he was well versed in the seven different styles of penmanship and was “well-qualified to instruct the best calligraphists of the world”. He was “a clever writer, exact in style, was a renowned calligrapher who improved taliq. He was perhaps the first of his age in writing the taliq and Nastaliq character. He was also well versed in “*Ilme Jaf’r*”. Being in Humayun’s service he got the posts of *Mir-i Arzand Mir-i Mal* and title of *munshi*. He went away to Mecca when Bairam imprisoned him. On his return in 1560-61, he received a *mansab* and title of . He died at Gaur in 1575.

Humayun’s court was decorated by the talented duo – Mir Abdul Hayy of Persia and his brother Mir Abdullah – the former held the rank of *Sadr* while the latter was the jurist and “one of Humayun’s intimate and specially honoured confidant” though both were “endowed with administrative ability (*nizamat*), piety, sanctity and regularity of life. The expertise of Mir Abdul Hayy in writing the Baburi script had been a controversial issue. Although Alauddaula

categorically reported that Mir Abdul Hayy “devoted some attention to the study of accomplishment and that nobody had learnt to write in the difficult Baburi style more quickly or better than he, Mirza Aziz Kuka wrote in the margin of the memoir that Mir Abdul Hayy had no knowledge of any branch of learning and that his one accomplishment was some knowledge of the Baburi script, with which he was very imperfectly acquainted”. Badauni agrees with Mirza Kuka who was in his view being “better known” to Abdul Hayy, was “nearer to the truth”. Nevertheless, Mirza Aziz Kuka’s prejudices against the Persians are well known and well reflected through his letter to Jahangir. Even if we believe his words that Abdul Hayy was imperfectly acquainted with the Baburi script, the excellence of Abdul Hayy in other forms of calligraphy was very well proved by the books transcribed by him.

As part of his religious innovations, Akbar had “sent money to Iran to bring to India a wise Zoroastrian of the name of Ardsheer (Ain 220). Abul Fazl appreciated Akbar for his “sagacity that he employed in his service people of all classes – Jews, Persians, Turani, etc”.

Excellent handicraftsmen hailed from Iran. Maulana Maqsd of Herat was one of the servants of Humayun who wrote well the “*riqa*” and “*nastaliq*” characters. The astrolable globes and various mistars which he made were much

appreciated by people of experience. Abul Fazl boasts that the “patronage of his Majesty (Akbar) perfected his art”. Similarly, Maulana Ibrahim of Yazd who “excelled in the art of cutting of cornelians”, was the brother of Sharaf of Yazd. In the estimation of Abul Fazl, Ibrahim surpasses the ancient engravers, and it is impossible to distinguish his *riqa* and *nastaliq* from the masterpieces of the best calligraphers. He engraved the word “*Lal'l Jalali*”, or the glorious ruby, upon all imperial rubies of value. It is in Ain 6, Abul Fazl had mentioned that there were Persian wrestlers and boxers at (Akbar's) Court. In the “best wrestlers of the age” included were the names of Mirza Khan of Gilan, Muhammad Quli of Tabriz, to whom Akbar gave the name of *Shir-i hamla*, or lion attacker, Ali of Tabriz, Fulad of Tabriz, Qasim of Tabriz and Mirza Kuhina Sawar of Tabriz.

Amina Okada had decisively placed “The Origin of Mughal Painting” in the reign of Humayun with the arrival of two “Safavid painters namely Abdul Samad and Mir Saiyid Ali ignoring Babar's penchant for painting. With the establishment of a Kitab Khana by Akbar “the Mughal Style” is said to have emerged which was “clearly distinct from previous painting traditions proper to Turkey and Iran”. Yet, the fact that these “painters from various backgrounds and diverse pictorial traditions” were “guided” by the Persian masters, Abdus Samad and Mir Saiyid Ali and that the former

“doggedly acquired the art of drawing by attempting to outdo one another in faithfully initiating the work of earlier primarily Persian masters”. Abdus Samad, *Shirin Qalam*, born in Shiraz and brought up in Tabriz, joined Humayun at Kabul. He “produced elegant, masterful compositions characterized by superb control and skilful construction in the manner of Persian masterpieces”. Both Abdus Samad and Mir Saiyid Ali were expected “to teach Safavid artistic canons to Indian painters”. Humayun had appreciated Mir Saiyid Ali’s skill in miniature paintings which he learnt from his father). Mir Musavvir, and noted that the painter could portray an entire group of riders playing Polo “on a grain of rice”.

Another versatile but controversial person was Mir Saiyid Ali of Tabriz, son of Mir Mansur, whose pen name was *Judai*. As explained earlier, he was more well known for his paintings; each page of which was said to be “a masterpiece” and he himself was described as a “Second Mani”. The sixteen volumes “Dastan-i Amir Hamza” were illuminated and completed under him, being one of the supervisors. Each volume of it fills a box, and each page of it measures a yard wide by a yard long, and on each page is a picture”. He was given the title of Nadirul Mulk.

Mir Saiyid Ali of Tabriz learnt the art of painting from his father. According to Abul Fazl, Mir Saiyid Ali “had made himself famous in his art, and has met with much success”

and that “from the time of his introduction at court the ray of royal favour has shown upon him”. He illuminated the story of Amir Hamza which was represented in twelve volumes and the clever painter made the most astonishing illustrations for no less than one thousand and four hundred passages of the story. The Court historian writes that “Persian books, both prose and poetry, were ornamented with pictures and a very large number of paintings was thus collected”. Many books like *Razmnama* (the *Ramayana*), the *Nal Daman*, the *Kalilah Damnah*, the *Ayar-i Danish* etc., were all illustrated.

In the list of 17 “finest painters of Akbar’s Court”, Abul Fazl “awarded” the first place to Mir Saiyid Ali. Blochmann had referred to him “as the first of the court painters”. Abul Fazl also commented that “among the forerunners on the right road of art, I may mention first Mir Saiyid Ali of Tabriz who learnt this art from his father. From the time of his introduction at court, the ray of royal favour had shone upon him. He has made himself famous in his art and has met with much success”. Controversy surrounds his position as a poet. While Badauni is silent about it, certain others (including Mulla Tariqi of Sava, as given in his couplet) had alleged that he had stolen Ashiki’s poems. On his death-bed, Ashki had handed over his more than 10000 verses to Judai to arrange them. Judai selected the best ones and got them published in his own name; whereas the rest of

them were allegedly thrown into water. Apparently, it seems that the confusion had been created due to similar pen name as there did exist another Judai of Sava whose involvement in the affair seems to be more likely as they both belonged to one place. Both Atash Kadai Azari and Taqi's Tazkira have mentioned his name. Yet the fact quoted by Daghistani that Ashki died in Mir Judai's house, prevents a complete exoneration of latter from the above charge.

Mir Ashki was the son of Mir Saiyid Ali Muhtasib of Qum in Persia. His elder brother Huzuri was also known as a poet. The number of his poems are said to have exceeded 10000. In Badauni's estimation, "he displayed a pleasing fertility of imagination" in his poetry, though "he was an imitator of Asafi". Ashki was interested in coming to India mainly because of Ghazali whose fame was then on the ascendance; though he could not meet him.

Many artists like Maulana Yusuf Shah, Maulana Shah Muhammad Amin of Mashhad, Maulana Ibrahim of Astrabad, Maulana Fazl-i Haqq of Nizami, Munshi Jamaluddin of Qazvin and Mirza Ibrahim of Isphahan, have been described as the famous calligraphist attached to the court of Akbar. Maulana Muhammad of Awbah is said to be "an excellent writer" of Nastaliq. Maulana Mir Ali the "illustrious" calligrapher was perhaps the pupil of Maulana Zaynuddin. He "brought his art to perfection by imitating the

writing of Sultan Ali of Mashhad. The new method which he established, is a proof of his genius; he has left many masterpieces". Abul Fazl says that once someone asked him "what the difference was between his writing and that of the Maulana"? He said: "I also have brought writing to perfection but yet his method has a peculiar charm". Maulana Mir Ali was a Saiyid of Herat (d.924). He excelled in composing poems and "as a poet his name is often mentioned together with Mir Ahmad son of Mir Khusru of Delhi and Bairam Khanan as master of *dakhl* poetry. *Dakhl* or entering is the skilful use which a poet makes of verses, or parts of verses, of another poet.

Akbar was fond of acquisition of knowledge. Abul Fazl records that "among, books of renown, there are few that are not read in his Majesty's assembly hall; and there are no historical facts of the past ages or curiosities of service; or interesting points of philosophy with which His Majesty is unacquainted". The valuable Pesian works like "*Akhlaq-i Nasiri*, *Kimia-i Saadat*, like *Qabusnama*, the works of Sharaf of Munayr, the *Gulistan*, the *Hadiqa* of Hakim Sanai, the *Masnawi* of Munanawi, the *Jami Jam*, the *Bustan*, the *Shahnama*, the collected *masnawis* of Shaikh Nizami, the works of Khusrau and Maulana Jami, the *Diwans* of Khaqani, Anwari and several works on history, are continually read out to His Majesty".

Maulana Nuruddin Tarkhan was born in Jam in Khurasan and received his education at Mashhad. He was first introduced to Babur and thereafter became a friend of Humayun, as both of them shared the love for astronomy and astrolabe. He accompanied Humayun during the exile and remained in his service for twenty years. Afterwards, he became the Mutawalli of his master Humayun's tomb in Delhi. Akbar gave him the title of *Khan* and *Tarkhan* and appointed him to Samana. He is described as "a man of great erudition", a poet with the pen name "Nuri". He was known as "*Nuri Safidun*" as he had for sometime held Safidun as his jagir. He was also a good mathematician and astronomer.

Despite his personal merit, Fathullah had been criticized by Badauni as "a Staunch shiah, and at the same time such a worldly office hunter, and such a worshipper of mammon and of the nobility that he would not give up a jot of the title of bigoted Shiism. Even in the State hall he said with the greatest composure, his Shiah prayers - a thing which no one else would have dared to do. His Majesty, therefore, put him among the class of the bigots: but he connived at his practice, because he thought it desirable to encourage a man of such attainments and practical knowledge.

The Persian nobles enjoyed an extraordinary

importance at the Court of Deccan rulers. In the Deccan, many Persian poets flourished. Most of them finally left for the Mughal court. Malik of Qum, “supposed to be the king of words” lived the life of a *dervish* in the Dakan. Badauni had seen the copy of his works which Shaikh Faizi had brought from the Deccan. All of his creations were said to be “after the fashion of that of the poets of his age and he had not departed from their set forms. No odour of love, of sympathy, or of any fresh subject has touched his verse”.

Saiyid Muhammad of Najaf had spent some of his time in Deccan where he was “honoured” for his poems and then decided to leave for Allahabad to join Akbar’s Court. Since he was “bold” and “slovenly” (*Bebak-o Naamwar*), his comment that in the Dakhin, he would not have looked at a fellow like Fathullah – ignited Akbar who got him imprisoned in Gwalior fort for ten years and ordered a search of his papers to see if there were any satires written by him on other persons. It was only at the intercession of Prince Salim and some other courtiers that he was made free and summoned to Lahore. But Itabi perhaps continued to annoy Akbar who had then given 1000 rupees to him and instructed Qalij Khan to send him from Surat to Hijaz but Itabi managed to go back to Deccan. He was a “clever Katib” and letter writer and composed excellent in Arabic and Persian.

There were many controversial personalities

between Indo-Persian contacts. One such person was a Mulla Qazi Nurullah of Sushtar who was well known for his learning, clemency, quickness of understanding, singleness of heart, cleanness of perception and acumen. Badauni says that although he was by religion a Shiah, he was distinguished for his justice, virtue, modesty, piety, quantinence and such qualities as are possessed by noble men. He wrote several good works and also a monograph on the undotted commentary of impressive poetry.

Qazi Nurullah was introduced to Akbar by the instrumentality of Abul Fateh Gilani, the physician. When the imperial cavalcade reached Lahore, Qazi Muin was replaced by Qazi Nurullah due to former's "feebleness of old age and the failture of his natural powers". During his qaziship at Lahore, Qazi Nurullah had "reduced the insolent Muftis and the crafty and subtle *muhtasibs* of Lahore who ventured to give lessons to the teachers of the angels, to order and has closed to them the avenues of bribery and restrained them within due bounds as closely as a nut is enclosed in its shell and to such a degree that stricter discipline could not be imagined". *Nawai* of Mashhad was also a "poet of talent" and "wrote well".

Some of the Persian families continued to be the steadfast and faithful friends and supporters of the Mughal rulers. Khawaja Maqsud Ali of Herat was a servant of Akbar's

mother Hameeda Banu Begam. Khawaja's mother Picha Jan Anaga was one of Akbar's nurses. "On Humayun's flight to Persia Maqsd was always near the *howdah* of Akbar's mother and remained attached to her in all her misfortunes". His brother Khawaja Maqsd Ali's son Zayn Khan Koka undertook the challenging campaigns against the Yusuf Zai whom he put down with a heavy hand.

Yol Quli Anisi of "Shamlu Turkoman who served earlier as the librarian of Ali Quli Khan Shamlu, the Persian Governor of Herat, was not only a good poet but also a gallant warrior. His pen name was changed from Jahi to Anisi by his patron Ibrahim Mirza. When Abdullah Khan Uzbek conquered Herat in 1588-89, Anisi was captured and taken to Transoxiana from where he fled to India and joined the service of Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan who appointed him first as Miri Arz and later promoted him to the post of Mir Bakhshi. His wars with Suhail Habshi had won laurels for him. Despite his preoccupations of battles, he managed to write several *qasidas* in praise of Khan-i Khanan, a *masnavi* in Khusru Shirin metre and a *diwan*. He was much liked by the people of Kashmir. Mirza Yusuf Khan son of Mir Ahmad-I Razawi had served as the anchor of the Mughal rulers in Kashmir where he conciliated Shams Chak, the claimant to the throne and persuaded him to go to the Court; though later on his activities made Akbar suspicious.

Yet, he was made the *darogha* of Topkhana, of Jaunpur, *ataliq* of Prince Murad. He distinguished himself in the Deccan wars and is described to have been “more energetic than other grandees”.

Muzaffar Khan Turbati of Khurasan is well known for his revenue reforms, abolition of *Jama-i Raqmi* and introduction of new rent roll called *Jami Hasil-i Hall* or the roll of the present actual income and fixation of numbers of soldiers. He was given important assignments like *vakilship* of the Empire with the title *Jumlatul Mulk*, Governorship of Bihar and later of Bengal. He is said to have constructed a Mosque in Agra. In certain respects, the attitude of Muzaffar often ignited and enraged Akbar whose wrath was almost always conquered by Muzaffar through his efficient handling of affairs. Muzaffar’s brother Sayf Khan distinguished himself in bravery and died while fighting gallantly against Muhammad Husain Mirza. Akbar held him in high esteem and “having heard that he was heavily involved, he paid, on his return to Agra, every debt due by him”.

Muhammad Qasim Khan – a rich landowner of Nishapur, fled to India after Uzbek invasion. He had first served Bairam Khan and then joined the group of Chaghatai nobles. Asif Khan, Abdul Majid of Herat, a descendant of Shaykh Zaynuddin Tayabadi, served as a Grandee and *Diwan* of Humayun. After suppression of Bairam Khan’s

rebellion, he got the title of Asaf Khan; was appointed governor of Delhi; received a flag and drum. Later on, he was given the governorship of Manikpur.

Like his forefathers who served the Timurids sincerely, a nephew of Mirza Dost Khurasan named Wasim Khan Mir Bahr was also an ardent supporter of Mughal ruler. When Mirza Kamran was besieged in Kabul and Humayun was yet to conquer India, Qasim Khan and his younger brother Khawajagi Muhammad Husain had jumped down the walls of the fort to join Humayun who gave them an honorable reception. Later on, Qasim Khan enjoyed the rank of the three thousand and held various other important posts like Commander of Agra, Governor of Kabul, and led expeditions to Kashmir. He also superintended the construction of the fort of Agra at a cost of 7 crores of *tankas* (or 35 lacs of rupees). The fort was built of red stones being well joined together and fastened to each other by iron rings which passed through them. On every side, its foundations reached water. Ashraf Khan Mir Munshi, held the position of Mir Arz.

Mir Muizzul Mulki Musawi of Mashhad was another who had successfully suppressed Khan-i Zaman not merely because "the rancour of the Khurasanis towards the Uzbeks decided the matter," but also because his younger brother, Mir Ali Akbar, had prepared a *mauludnama* (history of the

birth of Akbar) and presented it to Akbar. They both were talented, but as they rebelled against Akbar, they met their doom.

The family of Ghiyas Beg of Tehran had particularly been very famous in India. His father Khawaja Muhammad Sharif served as Vizir to Tatar Sultan son of Sharafuddin Taklu a beglarbegi of Khurasan. Khawaja continued in the office even during the regime of his son Qazaq Khan after whose death, he was made by Tahmasp a Vizir of Yazd. His two brothers namely Khawaja Mirza Ahmad and Khawajagi Khawaja were not so famous but their sons distinguished themselves in various capacities. The son of Khawaja Mirza Ahmad was the famous Khawaja Amin Ahmad Razi, the author of an excellent work, entitled "*Haft iqlim*," the Kalantar of Ray. Khawajagi Khawaja's son Khawaja Shapur was also a literary man. Khwaja Ghiyas Beg was made *Diwan* of Kabul and later on *Diwan-i buyutat*. He was given the *mansab* of 1000 and title of *Itimadud Dawala*. Although, Khwaja Ghiyas distinguished himself as a poet, a clever correspondint and an expert in *shikkasta* and his position as Wakil-i Kul (or prime minister) and rare privileges of flag, drum beaten at the Court and his mansabs of 6000/3000, dwindled before his daughter's position as "Empress of Hindostan". The son of Ghiyas Beg namely Asaf Khan Abdul Hasan held the *mansab* of Ghiyas of 9000 and title of *Yaminuddaulah* and

Khan-i Khanan *sipahsalar* under his son-in-law in Shahjahan's reign. It was in the memory of Mumtaz Mahal, the daughter of Asaf Khan, that the famous Taj Mahal was built. Ghiyas Beg's other son namely Ibrahim Khan Fath Jang was Governor of Bihar and Bengal. Farighi of Shiraz (a brother of famous Mir Fathullah Shirazi) came to India twice and died here. His two sons namely Mir Taqi, a man of noble disposition and high aspirations, and Mir Sharif who had many excellences and perfections, were also associated with the Mughal Court. Mir Taqi was "another Shah Fathullah in his knowledge of astronomy and astrology". Badauni had presented to Mir a part of twenty chapters which the former had written on astrolabe. Some of the Salami Saiyids of Shiraz settled in Gujrat also. Mir Abu Turab came to Gujrat during the reign of Shah Ismail Safavi. He again came back to Gujrat during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Bigara and settled in Champanir, Mahmudabad, was set up as a teacher and writer of school books (*Darsiya Kutub*). The family was attached to the precincts of Shikh Ahmad-i Khattu.

Although the Iranians were famous as "men of pen" (*ahli qalam*) than as men of sword (*ahli saif*), they had got reserved for themselves a special status in the cadres of the nobility and the military aristocracy. They were good politicians and dominated the Mughal Court and State as much as the sphere of fine arts.

As is evident from the subsequent description, the Iranians were scattered throughout the Mughal domain and even outside within India holding varied positions and ranks of all brands Surprisingly most of the Persians excelled in several arts almost equally good; though they may be a master of just one trade. With their multifarious capabilities, they could handle different assignments, professions and creative hobbies with ease and dexterity.

Indo-Iran Trade Relations - An Analysis

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Indo-Iran socio-cultural and commercial relations are age-old. Both of these countries have been offering messages of their civilisation and cultural values to humanity at large, and have been nurturing the feelings of goodwill for each other. Likewise, they have been confronting the problems of development necessitated by their desire to remove the widespread disparities in income, wealth and opportunities available to their peoples. Indo-Iran relations, after India won her freedom, were marked by the existence of two different systems of monarchy and democracy. Then, after the Islamic revolution in Iran, abolishing monarchy and establishing the rule of democracy, leading to further expansion of their commercial relations, Iran and India each opened their doors for greater understanding and friendship, leading to further expansion of their commercial relations within the framework of their policy options aiming at development and consolidation of economic relations with

developing countries. Indo-Iran commercial relations deserve to be consolidated and diversified further for strengthening the bilateral ties and for achieving greater cooperation and mutual understanding in the context of global multilateralism.

Ibn Battuta has mentioned Iran's extensive overland trade in horses, "exported to India (in droves), each one numbering six thousand or less or more," taking to Sind through Multan, the capital.

The Iranians under the Mongols, the Timurs, Turkmans and the Safavids, continued to pursue better commercial relationship by importing from and exporting to a number of countries including India. Iran's overland trade with India which was of long standing, gained further impetus with the rise of Mughal empire in India. "An indication of the rising power of the Mughals was the growing importance of Agra, which had become a great resort of merchants from Persia and out of India, and very much merchandise silk and cloth and of precious stones, both rubbies and Diamond and Pearls."¹

Tabriz emerged as an important trade centre under the Mongols. "Since the supersession of the port of Siraf on the Persian Gulf by Hurmuz through which the whole sea traffic between India and the Levant immediately began to flow, the trade route between Sultaniyya and Hurmuz not

only represented the north-south axis of internal Iranian trade, but made Iran the point of intersection of all existing trade links by land and sea between Europe and in 14th Century.”²

Under the Timurids commerce did not stop at Iran’s borders. “Tabriz, due to its peripheral situation, was indeed not able to continue to play same part in east-west trade as it had under the Mongols. ... The trade route to the east and the north, to China and the Golden Horde, ran Samarqand and in part also via Herat, which was in addition an important stage on the trade route via Kabul to and from India.”³

Nikitin found extensive trade in horses between Persia and India by sea, ‘particularly at the port of Daibal in Sind’. Other travellers such as Venetian Nicolo de’ Conti have established ‘widespread Persian involvement in the maritime trade with India’. He described Calicut as ‘a very noble emporium of the Persians.’ Referring to Travels to Tana and Persia (p. 79), we find that another Venetian mentions of Persia’s trade with India saying that “the merchants that travaill either out of India into Persia or out of Persia into India, for the more parte do all arryve in this ilande.” Duarte Barbosa describing the island in its zenith in the beginning of the 16th Century said: “In this city are many merchants of substance, and many very great ships. It has a right good harbour where many sorts of goods are handled

which come hither from many lands, and from here they barter them with many parts of India. They bring hither spices of all sorts, and diverse kinds, to wit pepper, cloves, ginger, cardamoms, eagle-wood, sandal-wood, brasil-wood myrobalans, tumarinds, saffron, indigo, wax, iron, sugar, rice (great store) and cocoa-nut, as well as great abundance of precious stones, procelain and benzoin, by all of which they gain much money. They have also great plenty of combaya, Chaul and Dabul cloths, and from Bengala they bring many *synbafos*, which are a sort of very thin cotton cloth greatly prized among them and highly valued for turbans and shirts and from the cities of Arabia a great number of horses come, which they carry hence to India, whither every year they used to take one and at times two thousand horses And in the ships in which these horses are taken, carry also abundance of dates, raisins, salt and sulphur, also coarse seed pearls in which the Moors of Narsingua take great delight.”⁴

The Persian trade during the second decade of the 17th Century, developed because “within four years Shah ‘Abbas had effectively freed Persia from the Turkish menace and the Portuguese blockade. and the very same year he took Qandahar. All the frontiers were open and the routes free, two indispensable conditions for an expansion of Persian trade.”⁵

Indian goods coming to Persia included 'metals such as copper, iron and steel'⁶ white calicoes in particular and other Indian cloth in general, Sashes of different qualities (from Agra, and Patna), coloured cloths from Ahmadabad, Agra and Lahore, powdered sugar from Bengal, Surat, Agra and Lahore, and Sugar candy,' transported by ship or brought overland from India'. Goods exported to India included runars (madder), a red dye, saltpere, pearls furnished off Bahrain, rosewater and other essences, beside silk and textiles'⁷ including Yazdi and Kashani velvets.

II

Iran and India, both fall within the group of developing countries, sharing the common view to give a better living to their people by developing their economy and by alleviating poverty. Needless to say that economic development necessitates large scale imports and an expanding export surplus by consolidating the export base.

Since the beginning of the commercial oil exploration in 1909 at the hands of Anglo-Persian Oil Company (renamed Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1935), Iran has been mainly dependant on one commodity (oil) export - India being one of the importers. The post revolution Iran has been working hard to reduce her dependency on oil exports alone. "Although the oil sector has accounted for a diminishing

share of gross domestic product (GDP) in recent years, the Government remains heavily dependent on oil revenues in its quest to improve the living standards of Iran's large population."⁸ "In early January 1994 (Hojatal Islam) Rafsanjani declared that the Iranian economy was no longer totally dependent on oil revenues and could survive even if oil exports were completely cut off; falling oil prices would not hurt Iran so much as other oil exporters. He pointed to Iran's success in increasing its non-oil exports, which he estimated would earn US \$ 5000 mn. in 1993-94, nearly one-third of total hard currency revenues."⁹ This could come with increasing diversification of the Iranian economy.

Just after the revolution, Iran suffered under the burden of an imposed war. The Indo-Iran trade also suffered, coming down to around 0.48% of their total trade. It was in 1992 that Indo-Iran trade began looking up. It touched a figure of 2.0% and 1.8% of the total trade of Iran and India respectively in that year, as against 5.12% and 5.9% in 1980 for Iran and India respectively. The data for 1980-92 reveal that average annual growth of total trade of Iran stands at 3.75% as against India's annual average growth of 7.5%.

The data given below, give India's imports from and exports to Iran, and imports from and export to OPEC. The figures in bracket depict percentage share in the total import and export trade of India:

Data pertaining to India's imports from Iran reveal that these accounted for 2.6% of the total imports in 1960-61, 2.4% in 1990-91, 1.5% in 1997-98 and 1.2% in 1998-99. As against this, India's exports to Iran accounted for 0.8% of her total exports in 1960-61, 0.4% in 1990-91, 0.5% in 1997-98 and 0.5% in 1998-99.

Composition of Indo-Iran Trade

India's exports to Iran stand diversified now. Tea which has been the principal export to Iran, is not dominating the list. Machinery and equipment, iron ore, transport equipment, manufactures of metals, processed minerals, rubber manufactured products are also being exported to the Islamic Republic. Besides these, other items exported to Iran by India, include project goods, machine tools, residual chemicals and allied products, yarn and fabrics, etc.

Similarly, India's imports from Iran consist of petroleum, crude and products, sulphur and unroasted Iron pyrites, fruits and nuts excluding cashew nuts, pulses, organic and inorganic chemicals, etc.

India is one of the principal trading partners of Iran; though it ranked 29th in matter of Iran's import in 1995-96 and 11th in the list of Iran's principal export destinations

during the same year.

Economic data reveal that after the Islamic revolution, Iran has been working to establish closer economic relations (as also) political relations with the developing countries. "The share of the Western bloc declined from 86% in her economy in 1977 to 66% in 1981. And, it is on a decline since then. Iran has been consolidating her relations with a number of African, Asian and Latin American countries. She inherited a situation where the economic dependencies ranged from 29.1% ... to 84.8% in raw materials, and 46.9% ... to 89.7% ... in spare parts and component Today Iran is taking strides in a number of industries including the infrastructure. She is self-sufficient in power equipments; has become less dependent on oil revenues; despite the sanctions countries like Japan, CIS (countries), EU countries like U.K. and Germany, and a number of African and Latin American countries are consolidating and expanding their economic relations with Iran."¹⁰ Iran has developed her helicopter (Shaheed X-5). Her agriculture is growing and has "experienced a revival by the mid-1990s after decades of decline, achieving higher farm output and greater efficiency". "The trade surplus increased from US \$ 5,586 mn. in 1995-96 to \$ 7,402 mn. in 1996-97, while the current account surplus increased from \$ 3,358 mn. to \$ 5,232 mn. over the same period. The

IMF acknowledged Iran's achievements in curbing inflation (by nearly 5% in 1996-97), reducing the external debt and meeting foreign debt payments, and registering GDP growth of 4.7% in 1996-97 (against an annual average of 3.8% over the previous four years), with growth in the non-oil sector increasing to 5.3%".¹¹

Looking to the need to reconstruct and develop the war damaged areas in Iran, it is evident that friendly countries like India can play a very constructive role in developing Iran's transport. IRCON can play a leading role in developing Iranian Railways. As agreed in the Indo-Iranian Joint Commission's meeting in November, 1991, and as expressed during the visit of an Iranian Commerce Ministry delegation in 1997, joint ventures may be setup in various fields. "Besides, the joint ventures between the KRIBHCO-IFFCO and Qeshm Free Trade Zone(QFTZ) in fertilizers and the one between OSWALS and QFTZ in chemicals (were) going to be set up soon. Indian companies will hold 60% of the equity and the QFTZ will hold the remaining 40% in the \$ 400 million Indo-Iran Fertilizer Project with an annual capacity of producing 7.26 lakh metric tons of urea."¹² India agreed to import 60% of the produce from the joint venture (MOU, November 26, 1996).

Similarly, India and Iran can tie up in the proposed gas pipe-line. Any other country or countries may also be

involved in a tripartite/multilateral set up.¹³

In short, Indo-Iran commercial relations can be consolidated further in view of their desire (as expressed by the Indian Minister of Commerce in December, 1996) to “exchange the list of their exports and imports and hold mutual exhibitions to introduce their production to each other,” and that (as expressed by the Iranian Minister) “if the two countries know each other’s economy and products, it is possible to increase the trade between them 2-3 folds of the present level.”¹⁴ Iran and India signed an agreement in 1996 for purchasing 30,000 tons of rice, \$ 10 mn. worth of rubber, \$ 20 mn. worth of Jute. The possibility of higher export quantities of rice and sugar exist, subject to quality control and strict adherence to terms of agreements touching a number of aspects viz., delivery schedule, etc.

Indo-Iran commercial cooperation can be further expanded in view of the Indian expertise and its competitiveness in rural electrification, existence of Irano-Hind Shipping Corporation, India’s petroleum needs, and Iran’s offer to develop Qeshm and Kish Islands. Iran and India have expressed their desire to exchange optical fibre also. Furthermore, as announced by Iran’s Investment and Technical and Economic Assistance Organisation, Iran has permitted FDI from 1 to 99% with 6-12 year’s tax exemption. As stated, the tax will not be more than 10%.

III

It is, therefore, suggested that :

1. India and Iran can join with any third country in the production of those products in which they face intensive competition from such countries in their respective export markets... This while adding to efficiency and technological and managerial break-through, will be helpful in avoiding undue and wasteful competition.
2. India and Iran can consider signing a long term oil purchase contract with provision to review and provide for, inflation and price rise after agreed intervals, to safeguard each other's interests.
3. As most of the developing countries' economies are competitive rather than complementary, it is advisable that areas of mutual interest may be identified and an integrated regional development strategy may be developed, offering to lead to mutual economic understanding in a scheme envisaging each other's economic and financial interests and stability rather than merely resorting to operate their shopping lists.
4. SAARC and Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO)¹⁵ member nations can cooperate in each other's industrial ventures. India and Iran being important members in the SAARC and ECO respectively, can play prominent

role in expanding intra-regional/inter-regional cooperation for smoothening growth and flow of trade. The transit facility through Bandar Abbas for reaching to the Central Asian market provides basis for such an endeavour. It is suggested that an 'Expert Committee' may be appointed to study the problems and prospects of trade and its flow, and consolidation and expansion of economic cooperation between India and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

5. Que'shm Free Trade Zone, which "will be free of all business regulations applying on the mainland, with foreign business people able to travel and conduct foreign, exchange transactions in any currency at will. (Where) there will be no corporate personal taxation,"¹⁶ offers opportunities for furthering, diversifying and consolidating Indo-Iran commercial relations. As stated above, India is to invest more and more in this Island.

Similarly, Kish Island which is also being developed as a free trade zone, offers "foreign business people... seven days visas on arrival at (the) airport, (and facilities to) set up offices and operate...."¹⁷

As the legislations offer incentives including 15 years' exemption in corporate taxes, minimal customs duties and guarantees against nationalisation, Indian industries and large scale corporates can take advantages¹⁸ and proceed ahead as already decided.

To conclude, it may be said that a truly working commercial relation must be the aim of both India and the Islamic Republic of Iran, whose commercial and cultural relations are age-old and who have been offering mutual benefits to each other in a spirit of goodwill and understanding.

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Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 423-424.

5. Ibid, p. 446.
6. It was expensive in Persia because it was one of the commodities whose trading was prohibited by the Portuguese. It was carried into Persia overland from India.
7. The Cambridge History of Persia records that “manufacturing centres at Yazd, Kashan, Isfahan, Shiraz, Kirman, Tabriz, to mention the major centres, produced a wide variety of textiles, ceramics, leather work and metal work for local consumption and exports”.
8. The Middle East and North Africa, 1999, p. 492.
9. Ibid, p. 494.
10. See author’s Paper ‘Iran’s Islamic Revolution and Its Impact’ p. 4.
11. Middle East and North Africa, 1999, p. 495.
12. Economic News from Iran, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, New Delhi, August, 1997, pp. 1-2.
13. India and Iran can set up a joint venture on the pattern of Irano-Hind Shipping Corporation, or

can have a tripartite (or multilateral) venture. Matt McDonald (U.K.) and Booken Hill Petroleum (Australia) have already offered to construct the pipeline. This under-water or overland pipeline when constructed, will carry 50 million cubic metres of gas daily over 30 years. The estimated cost would be \$ 4,000 mn. to \$ 5,000 mn.

14. Economic News from Iran, New Delhi, December, 1996, p. 4.
15. Besides Iran, Turkey and Pakistan as its members, ECO now also includes Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgystan.
16. MEED, Special Report : Iran, March 1, 1991, p. 16.
17. Ibid, p. 16.
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Imam Khomeini, Gandhiji and Women

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Indo-Iranian relations - be it cultural, political or economic. - are of importance to both, India and Iran. A befitting tribute to the great revolutionary leader of Iran could be in narrating some of the similarities between the two great personalities i.e., Gandhiji and Imam Khomeini.

The Ambassador of Iran H.E. Mochfegh Kazemi expressed his feelings about the Indo-Iranian relations in 1958 in these words: "Iranians have always looked upon India as a land of wisdom and philosophy as well as the cradle of meditation and deep thinking. I am confident that the close cultural, spiritual and historic ties which bind our two people, will grow more and more friendly and the two countries under the auspices of their great leaders will march forward on the way to progress."

The excavations in 1957 at Navda Toli in Madhya Pradesh had unearthed valuable clues indicating three thousand years' old contacts between Central India and Iran. The people of India and Iran originally belonged to

the same stock. There had been a continuous flow of cultural and intellectual contacts and exchange of knowledge between the two countries.

For quite some time, the author had been toying with the idea of finding a few of the similarities between the two great leaders of India and Iran - the leaders who are important and are respected by their respective countrymen: These leaders are Mahatma Gandhi and Imam Khomeini. Paper mainly discusses one aspect i.e., their views regarding the women and their role in the freedom struggle.

It is a well known fact that with the help and guidance of Imam Aytollah Khomeini the Iranians achieved their goal in February, 1979, when they overthrew 2500 years old monarchical regime. The well-planned struggle for freedom which began on 5th June, 1963, led to Imam's exile first to Turkey and then to Iraq, gained momentum and reached its peak in 1978. The people had realized that his words were rooted in realities despite the fact that all popular uprisings had been ruthlessly suppressed at that time. This was the time when the Imam sent a message to his countrymen and women and appreciated the enthusiasm and courage shown by them. He assured them that victory would be theirs sooner or later. His prophecy came out to be true in February, 1979. The day of the success of the revolution in February, is being celebrated every year.

While discussing the policies and attitudes of the two leaders, one can say that Imam Khomeini was against oppression and aggression. This made him to lead his countrymen to the revolution. He visualised a country where no one suffers at the hands of any oppressor. He also made it clear that he never wanted war to achieve these goals. He was interested in winning the hearts of the people with love and not the land by violence. He wanted women to participate in the outside world too, but he could never accept the homes and children to be neglected. He, like others, was for the better future of the country, and wanted women to be efficient in their work. But this could be possible only when their children are looked after properly, when the mothers are busy with their duties outside their homes. To facilitate this Khomeini wanted creches to be opened near their work place.

Mahatma Gandhi also recommends the same. Gandhiji believed in the equality of both, men and women. He wanted economic and political freedom for women as well. He strongly felt that the age-old traditions that brought bondage and slavery for women, should be done away with. But, at the same time he was of the view that to look after the house, was a women's job which should not be neglected at any cost. To quote him: "In my opinion it is degrading for man and woman that a woman should be called to forsake

the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of that hearth. There is as much bravery in keeping one's house in order and condition as there is in defending it against an attack from outside (Harijan, February 24, 1940).

At another place he has been quoted thus (Young India, December 15, 1921): "Let it be a man's privilege to protect women but let no woman of India feel helpless in the absence of a man and in the event of his failing to perform the sacred duty of protecting her". Gandhiji did not like the idea of discrimination between a boy and a girl. He said: "I fail to see any reason for jubilation over the birth of a son and for mourning over that of a daughter. Both are God's gifts. They have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the world going." He accepted that a woman may be physically weak but she possesses such a moral strength that even a powerful man loses his courage and cannot stand her gaze."

Imam Khomeini wanted women to play a decisive role in the revolution. He said that since the country belongs to both, men and women, women too are justified in fighting for the freedom of their country. While appreciating the role of women in this national struggle, the Imam said that men achieve their goals through women. Women succeed where at times men fail. It was because of the Imam and his personality that thousands of women of Iran came out on

the streets with babes in their arms to give a tough fight to their enemies. It is believed that men and women have accepted willingly and happily the teachings of Imam Khomeini which are based on Islamic injunctions.

On the other hand, Gandhiji who had full faith in the *Shastras* and *Smritis*, was very much revolutionary in his thoughts. He did not hesitate in asking women to change those scriptures, which are interpreted as against the well-being of women, and which harm their personality. He was of the view that a woman has the same capacity which a man has. Therefore, a woman can rewrite the *Shastras* and improve the fate of women who have been oppressed and neglected by her own people and society. He said: "Woman has been suppressed under the custom and law for which man was responsible, in the shaping of which she had no hand. A woman has as much right to shape her own destiny as man has to shape his. They have considered themselves to be lords and masters of women, instead of considering them as their friends and co-workers."

While discussing the efforts made by Gandhiji and Imam Khomeini in the emancipation of women, one cannot forget those who had to adopt to prostitution as their profession. When no body had the courage to take up the cause of the so called "fallen women", it was Gandhiji who talked to them, confronted them and suggested them to

earn their livelihood by spinning and live life of *sanyasins* or hermits if they chose to be away from such a profession. He said that these women did not choose their “fallen life” but it is the man who drove them into it. For the gratification of his desires, he committed great atrocities on women”. (Navjiavan, September 11, 1921). He wanted women to come forward to help such women. To him, Swaraj means the emancipation of the fallen.

It is said that the revolutionary women of Iran are examples of true Muslim women. In addition to taking care of their families, they also participate in many social activities and contribute to the growth and advancement of their society. While reviewing the results of the Islamic revolution, it is said that once the Islamic Republic was established the status of women also changed. They are better off now. It is believed that during the Shah’s regime there were 60,000 prostitutes who have been rehabilitated as respectable members of the society, which is a remarkable achievement of the revolution.

Gandhiji believed in liberty for women from the clutches of old tradition and false notions. He wanted girls to be educated and economically independent. He was of the view that while children should be obedient to their parents, the parents should not force their daughters always to be subservient to man. Contrary to this Gandhiji

said that women should not look for protection to men. They must rely on their own strength and purity of character and on God. Gandhiji favoured monogamous and inter-caste marriages. He also resented lavish expenditure on marriage ceremonies and feast and appealed to all sections of society to reduce the expenditure to barest minimum.

Imam Khomeini too wanted women of Iran to be financially independent like women of other countries but without losing their dignity and honour. Women of Iran are modern but within limits. Imam Khomeini was a source of inspiration to all women of Iran. He attributed ultimate victory to women rather than men. The women of Iran, he said, have proved that women who believe in values and humanity, will not be misled and that they will not accept any damages to their country. It is believed that the Islamic revolution changed the status of women of Iran. According to the new Constitution, when a man remarries, the custody of the children is given to their mothers which was not so earlier. The polygamous marriages could not be checked but at least children and destitute women do not suffer any more. This was innovation made in the Constitution because of the efforts of Imam Khomeini.

While talking of Gandhiji one can say that he was a farsighted man. What the people saw at the end of 20th Century, he could foresee it in 1931. He believed that both -

boys and girls - should be physically and mentally mature enough at the time of marriage and they should have a right to choose their life-partner. Young widows and young mothers dying in childbirth are some of the evil consequences of childmarriages. He was of the view that such marriages harm mother and the child and hence the race and "such marriages should be declared null and void from the very beginning". (Young India, November 11, 1926) Gandhiji wanted a society, which was based on social justice, peace and equality. He was for the social customs and conventions but at the same time wanted that these things should not be imposed on individuals. There could not be two sets of law or weights and measures for men and women. In 1920 Gandhiji's message was: "What is considered desirable for men, should be equally for women and that a widow should have the same discretion as a widower about remarriage."

Imam Khomeini did what Gandhiji had been doing for the people of his country. The Imam wanted to share the fruits of Revolution with every citizen of his country. The success of the revolution brought hopes to the poor people of Iran. Now a poor man was provided with 3500 rials a month and two meals a day. The Iranian Revolution was a movement that involved all the Iranians - rich poor, educated illiterate, labour-class, bourgeois and the students. In the

same way with the call of Gandhiji India's struggle for freedom turned into a struggle of the masses. Imam Khomeini and Gandhiji asked their countrymen to keep united and forget about their differences in this critical juncture.

Gandhiji, keeping in mind the needs of the middle and poor classes and like a sharp observation, suggested a dress for women-folk which required the "smallest amount of cloth" but, of course, consistently with the demand of decency. (Young India, February 2, 1928). At another place he said: "India cannot make progress until her women do their duty." It was Gandhiji who thought of women liberation and the help she renders at home which though does not bring any money, yet is equally important to run the house smoothly. He summed up that a husband's property is not his alone but is joint property of husband and wife. As regards whether a wife's labour at home is to be given any consideration or not, Gandhiji said that a husband could not make money without the assistance of his wife. Therefore, indirectly a husband's earning is his wife's too. (The Diary of Mahadev Desai, p.189). When Mahatma Gandhi came from South Africa, the ground for woman's emancipation was prepared. He inspired and encouraged women to fight for freedom and women could not have "wished a better champion of their cause." Gandhiji appreciated the role played by women in the struggle for freedom. He said that the

contribution made by these women to this struggle can never be forgotten and will be written in golden letters. It was at the instance of Ganhiji that women were actively involved in this struggle for freedom. A resolution passed by the Indian National Congress on January 26, 1931, at the initiative of Pt. Motilal Nehru stated: "We record our homage and deep admiration for the womanhood of India who in the peril for the motherland gave up the shelter of their homes and with unflinching courage and endurance stood shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in the front line of India's National Army to share with them the sacrifice and triumph of the struggle." The heroic role played by women in all the struggles for freedom right from 1919 to 1942 helped in the approach of dawn of a new age which culminated in the independence of India in 1947.

One can not help to notice almost similar statements made by Imam Khomeini while praising the women of Iran. He said that women of Iran had great share in the Islamic movement. They are the foundation of the nation and a source of support for the country's future. To quote him: "Hail to women throughout the country, who spiritually inspired men in this cherished emancipation movement. The women's role in the society is much superior than that of men. We attribute our ultimate victory to women rather than men, since these respectful women were in the front line

pioneered towards national liberty - when young women rushed to the streets to stage political demonstrations in front of tanks and cannon balls, men assumed greater initiative and power.” The Imam said: “They were not only walking shoulder to shoulder with men but even moved in front of all. The women of Iran not only made material sacrifices but human sacrifices too.” On July 17, 1979, Imam said: ” Our people with bare hands and without weapons arose and resisted against modern weapons and military powers”. For the success of any movement, women must be prepared to participate directly or indirectly and make sacrifices for it. women in Islamic Iran have proved their strength, unity and solidarity. It was the sacrifices of these women that made the Imam call them “the pillars of Iran.” At another place he said: “We are indebted to women for the victory of Islamic Revolution of Iran. Our dear women paved the way for our men to become courageous and brave. I always pray for them.”

One the other hand, we see that Gandhiji raised his powerful voice against the injustices done to women in the name pf tradition, law and religion.

“Woman”, he said, “is the embodiment of love and inner strength. She may be weaker than man in physical strength but she is his superior in the strength of inner spirit. The force of love which a woman can command is far

superior to brute force.”

Gandhiji and Imam Khomeini both wanted their respective countries to be free from the clutches and influence of foreign powers. They did not work for any personal gains from their freedom struggles, nor they held any office in their free country. They always worked for the upliftment of poor, orphans and the down trodden. Gandhiji and the Imam both wanted that the world should know about their respective country's struggle for freedom and be an example to those who love freedom. What they preached, was brought in practice too. Imam Khomeini wished and asked his people to call him a 'servant' and not a leader. He loved Iran and Iranians. According to him there is no difference between a person who is heading the government and those who are in the army or in the government offices. The same can be seen when we try to analyse Gandhiji's views. He too never wanted and never held any office till his end. He wanted not only his own country but all the countries and all human beings to live in freedom and as free citizens with all the love and non-violence. Gandhiji always preached and directed the path of non-violence or '*ahimsa*'. Imam Khomeini too wanted victory without any bloodshed. Gandhiji is known as '*Mahatma*', great soul and '*Bapu*' i.e., a father. He is also known as the father of the nation. Imam too because of his age was always looked upon as a fatherly

figure and respected by his countrymen and women in the same way. Both the leaders led a very simple life, based on economy with no place for luxury, a life style that astonished the media and the observers the world over.

The Word Arya (Ayra) and its Linkages with Iran

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The discussions and debates on the word Arya have increased considerably at the hands of certain people during the last few years. They challenge the validity of certain theories in Social Sciences, which they feel and believe are detrimental to the growth of 'Hindu Nation' of their conception. They challenge the age-old theory of the advent of Aryans into the land of India i. e., *Bharat* from any foreign land, and secondly plan to grab the Mohenjodaro and Harappan civilizations as part of the *Vedic* civilization. In this context, they are busy exploring the so-called river *Swarasvati* and its route, so that they may be able to link up the remnants of the Mohenjodaro and Harappan settlements with the *Vedic* literature.

In the background of the above mentioned facts, it is worthwhile to refer to certain evidences in the Buddhist texts. Whatever might have been the reasons, it is a fact

that by the time of the Buddha (6th and 5th centuries B.C.), the word *Arya* (*Pali Ariya*) had acquired a respectful connotation. The Buddha, as he was highly pragmatic, seized the opportunity and used the term in the following three senses: (1) Noble (as Adjective), (2) Owner, Lord, and (3) Name of a particular people or race.

The usage of the word *Ariya* (Skt. *Arya*) in the *Mahavagga*, *Samyatha Nikaya* and other early Buddhist texts, when he designates his newly discovered doctrines of Sorrow and its Cessation, is purely in an adjectival form, i. e., in the sense of the highly noble or respectable. He calls them *Cattari Ariya-Seccani* (the Four Noble Truths). Here the phrase may be interpreted in two ways: (1) The truths that he had discovered, were highly noble and respected, and (2) secondly in the sense of the Trust which belonged to the *Ariya-s* (or *Arya-s*) i. e., the categories of the Buddhist practitioners other than the ignorant and the uninitiated ones. These are the *Sotapanne*. *Sakadagami*, *Anagami*, *Arahavta*, *Paccekabuddha* and finally *Sammāsambuddha*.

In the *Assatayana Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikaya*, the Buddha is reported to have been faced with a situation where Brahmin debater, *Assatayana* by name, challenged him on the question of the caste hierarchy. The Buddha held the view that the claim of the *Brahmana-s* that they are born

superior to the rest of the humanity, as they are born from the mouth of the Creator God (Brahma) unlike the rest of the human kind, was totally false and baseless. It was his contention that the Brahmin women are also found sharing the bed with their husbands (or other loved ones), conceiving as other women do, giving birth to their children, suckling them and so on. Then, how do they claim that they were born from the mouth of the Creator God ? In fact, it is a common experience that they too undergo the same biological process of giving birth to a child as others do. He further claimed and asserted that all are born equal and there is no distinction between man and man in this respect. While repudiating the idea of the caste hierarchy, he cited the example of the countries like *Yavana* and *Kamboja* and other countries across the borders, where there were only two *Varna*-s, the *Ariya* (Skt. *Arya*) and *Dasa*. An *Ariya* in a changed situation might become a *Dasa* and vice versa. *Assatayana* on his part did confirm the statement (news) and told the Buddha that he too had heard that news.

Now the question arises: What were the countries which were called as *Yavana* and *Kamboja* in those days. It appears that the Buddha referred to *lonia*, an island country in the vicinity of Greece, and the region around it, while *Kamboja* was the name of Iran or Afghanistan. Since ancient Iran was the country that did not recognize caste system of

the Brahmanic order, there is every likelihood that the Buddha referred to ancient Iran as *Kamboja*.

The Buddhist canon (*Tipitaka*) refers to the existence of the sixteen *Mahayanapada*-s during the period of the Buddha (see the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* and other text of the *Tipitaka*), the name of *Kamboja* finding a place in the list. This country is referred to along with *Gandhara* which has been identified by the historians today as part of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Thus, the location of *Kamboja* might have been beyond the borders of Afghanistan of the present day. This too amounts to identification of *Kamboja* with the present day Islamic Republic of Iran.

The linkage of the term *Arya* (*Ariya*) with Iran is very obvious. Linguistically both words *Ariya* (*Arya* Skt.) and Iran are derived from the same root word. The long 'a' (in *Nagan*) in the word *Arya* became shortened through development and acquired the form *Ariya* by the time when *Pali* was a spoken language in the northern India. In due course of time, the initial letter 'a' in Pali word *Ariya* was replaced with I in the Persian language. The second problem that one faces in the word 'Iran', is the induction of the letter 'n'. Since both Persian and Sanskrit/Pali belong to the same family of languages; they have similar case-endings in many cases (*Karaka*-s), particularly in case of the Genitive Case Plural Number (*Sasthi Vibhakti Bohu-Vacena*). The genitive case

plural number forms in Sanskrit - in Pali - are '*Aryanam*' and '*Ariyanam*' respectively. The dropping of the last nasal sound is very common in *Pali* such as in the *Elam Buddhana Sasanam* (*Dhammapada* the last nasal sound in *Buddhanam* has been dropped here). Thus, the '*Ariyanam*' becomes '*Ariyana*'. In parallel development in Persian, it becomes '*Iriyan*'. In the case of *Iriyan* there has been further development where the letters 'iy' are dropped and the form becomes IRAN. The whole development had taken place in the following lines ARYANAM> ARIYANAM> ARIYANA> IRIYANA> IRAN.

Thus, both Arya and Iran belong to the same stock and share a common history and civilization. Fortunately, the people of both the countries carry forward the same tradition till today.

A Congenial Space: The Cultural Context of Indo-Persian Synthesis in Medieval North Indian Music

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This Paper is a study of the cultural synthesis of Indian and Persian cultural traditions and performance practices in the realm of musical arts in medieval north India from the thirteenth to the early nineteenth century. The process of synthesisation, a long drawn process, began with the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi with a new ruling elite from Turko-Persian cultural background. This phase of active interaction came to an end in 1856 A.D., with the extinction of the H, whose rulers owed their origin to Nishapur in Persia.

The establishment of the Sultanate at Delhi initiated a new era in the development of Indian art and culture and brought about a change in the socio-cultural environment and patronage patterns in northern India. The early Sultans firmly clung to the Persian traditions. They encouraged

Persian culture and held courts with the magnificence of Iranian monarchs. These traditions were further reinforced when Delhi became refuge of all kind of professional groups from all over the Islamic world and specially from Khurasanian cities such as Balkh, Nishapur, Ray, Hirat, Marv, Isfahan, Shiraz, Hamadan and Tirmiz, etc. Chingiz Khan had overrun these centres of art and culture that were renowned from the time of the Samanids and the Saljuqs, in 1220-21, A.D., and subjected the population to slaughter and rapine. Urban life came to a standstill in all these places, forcing scholars, artisans and the performing artistes to seek patronage elsewhere.¹ Delhi, deemed to be the safest of all the places, attracted men of arts and letters in large numbers. In fact, no other medieval city exercised such a strong pull of the finest talent at one time and place, or enjoys a cultural fluorescence, as did Delhi in the thirteenth century. It soon emerged as a mega city and rivalled Baghdad, Cairo, Constantinople and *Baitu'l Muqaddas* (Jerusalem).² Indian art and culture began to grow in a cultural setting which had the richness of the Samanid and Saljuqian traditions and the vibrant resilience of Indian culture. These characteristics are best reflected and preserved in musical arts. The rich musical heritage of the period under review, is displayed well in the Persian chronicles and musical texts, Sufi *akhyan*s in Awadhi, *Vaishnava* and *Riti* miniatures which portray contemporary times. These works provide sufficient

details about music and also the clues to several traits of contemporary musical culture.

The transition from the Turko-Persian to the Indo-Persian forms is an interesting phenomenon of the later decades of the thirteenth century. It occurred more markedly during the reign of Sultan Kaiqubad (1287-90). In him the performing artistes found an agreeable patron. A colony of musicians, pretty faced entertainers, jesters and *bhands* from every region emerged in the vicinity of the palace Kilukhari.³ Barani refers about the musicians who had expertise in Persian and Indian music (*mahir-i sarud ruftan-i Parsi-u-Hindavi*) and 'who composed eulogies to the Sultan in every musical mode (*parda*)'. He also mentions those Indian courtesans (*jalabkashan-i Hindustan*), slave girls (*kaniz bachgans*) and slaves who were trained in the Persian language and music and instructed in the manners and customs of the court. In a picturesque style he describes how some of the 'artful girls' of the community of *gadaghazis* were selected for the purpose of presentation to the Sultan. They were instructed in singing (*sarud*), dance-art (*pakoftan*), tuneful recitation of *ghazals* (*ghazal-khwanī*), playing of *chang*, *rubab*, *kamancha*, *maskak* (miskal), *mayand tambur* as well as telling jokes (*amda guftan*) and in the game of *nard* and *shatranj* (backgammon and chess).⁴

Barani's observations are extremely significant. In

particular, they reflect the efforts of the Indian artistes to adapt to the demands of the period and match the tastes of the new patrons. They mastered the Persian language which had emerged as the spoken language of the new aristocratic circle; they became experts in the latest styles and techniques of musical arts popularised by the Central Asian and Khurasani musicians. The *gadaghazians* described by Barani, are none other than the *natas*, the traditional instructors of *sangit*. By adapting themselves to the new artistic requirements they were able to retain their status as instructors of musical arts until the end of the seventeenth century. The courtesans described by Barani are apparently *paturs*, the representatives of the new synthesised *Parsi* and *Hindavi* cultural traditions, which were evolving about this time. The highly cultivated Indian courtesan *ganika*, who lost her pride of place in the new scheme of entertainment, regained her status in her new incarnation as *patur*.

A fair picture of the developments in the realm of vocal and instrumental music during the fourteenth century is available in *A'ijaz-i Khusravi* of Amir Khusrau.⁵ About the royal entertainers (*bazm arayan-i majlis-i sultan*), Khusrau remarks 'instrumentalists and vocalists...enchant the listeners with their humming and graceful string-play. Their melodies are comparable, in sweetness, to the lyrics of the Persian poet Jilab and attract the people as honey seizes

bees.⁶ He further writes that the rendering of Arabic *qauls* by these vocalists astonished the musicians of Baghdad and Cairo, while the intricate play on *chang* accompanied by Persian *ghazals* reminded one of the art of Nikisa and *Barbud*. The rendering of *mukhalif*, *rah-i rud* and *shad* (Persian airs) on *barbat* he found superb.⁷

According to Amir Khusrau, Nadima Turmati Khatun was the most distinguished performing artiste in the court of Sultan Alauddin Khalji. Her fingers wove on her *change* patterns of *dwazdah parda* as fine as *pumiyan* (a variety of painted Chinese silk). Her expertise had made her the *amir-i mutriban* (head musician) of the royal court which was full of musicians and dancers from different territories and countries.⁸ Khusrau has also admired the performance of the Khurasani singers such as Daud-i Jabali, Sha'ban Qamri, and Abul Farrukhi *nayi* of Khurasan.⁹ He is also full of praise for the *kalanvatan-i Hindi* (*kalavant*, Indian musicians) whose skilful play on the *alawan* (a variety of the *vina*, *alabu*) could mesmerise musicians like Momin.¹⁰

Khusrau further commented that the musicians and dancers (*ash'ab-i tarab*) attached to the royal court, as well as those who had arrived here from outside the sub-continent, possessed rare treasures of techniques of song and rhythm; that their traditional as well as additional skills and knowledge of art were synthesised in a manner that

they created new styles. For this they received royal favour.¹¹

Khusrau's statement prompts us to suggest that though musicians at the royal court adhered to the Turko-Persian musical forms and techniques, a new musical culture was evolving. This was the result of interactions among the descendants and successors of renowned non-Indian performing artistes like Amir Khasa, Mahmud, Maqri and Muhammad Shah *changi*, and the musicians of Delhi, whose number was considerably large. One notices a clear departure from pure Turko-Persian techniques of music at this juncture.

It was a unique phenomenon of the fourteenth century that court and folk culture came in lively contact with the persons who were intimate with both the circles, Khusrau being the foremost among them. He was a master of the Persian language and had command over every lyric genre. He also had strong links with the Sufi circle and was well versed in the practices related to *sama'*. Barani refers him as *sahib-i sama*. *Sahib-i wajd* and *Sahib-i hal*.¹² Barani mentions his great expertise in the art of singing and melody making (*'ilm musiqi guftan u sakhtan*). He enjoyed the largest tenure of association with the Court and had the rare opportunity of acquiring knowledge of exclusive Court techniques as well as Indian-classical and folk traditions which were taking roots in the *sama'* music. The *khanqah*

of Shaikh Nizamuddin Chishti was in fact the most active venue of the cultural sharing especially in the realm of music. This resulted in the evolution of some new musical genres and the strengthening of the others. *Qaul, tarana, fard, farsi, tillana, naqsh, basit* and *sohla* were the product of this synthesis. These musical styles were evolved by Amir Khusrau who blended in these forms Indian and Persian musical techniques and lyric genres (*saut u naqsh-i Farsi u Hindi*).¹³ These were composed in *desi*, the language of the Delhi region (*darzaban-i desi-i an waqt-i Delhi*). Among the musical patterns evolved by Amir Khusrau, the *basit* was like *chhand*, while *fard* and *farsi* were the persianised version of *tillana* and included verses from Persian *ghazal* and *qasida* along with rhythmic syllables. *Naqsh* was the equivalent of *ma'n*, a musical composition in *prakrit*. It is to be noted that the Arabic *qaul* and Persian *tarana* became similar to *git* in their rhythmic structures.¹⁴ Some of the *marg* compositions were also presented in Persian setting, for instance *nigar*, which was Persian version of *svar-avartini*. Traditions have it that these innovations were made at the time of Khusrau's competition with Nayak Gopal.¹⁵ These forms mark the culmination of the Indianisation of *sama'* music which was initiated at the *khanqah* of Multan by Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya Multani, who used *chhand*, a folk literary genre for the composition of devotional verses and rendered Persian couplets in it, employing *rag-raginis*. The repositories

of these new musical styles were the *qawwals*, who successfully synthesised in their repertoire the voice cultures of *sapt-svar* and *dwazdah-parda*. Henceforth, *qawwal* became a generic term for those who performed *qaul-terana* and allied variants. *Sama*' music was Indianised and attained a status of its own through this class of performers.

Khusrau's immense knowledge of Indian and Persian musical systems resulted in the fashioning of various new melodies and tunes; wherein he combined Indian *rag*s and Persian *muqams*, or blended different Indian and Persian airs (*ahangs*). Saif Khan gives a long list of such *rag*s, which were created by Khusrau who combined *rag*s with *muqam-i Fars*. Khusrau in fact tried to link two diverse musical cultures which became the foundation stone of Hindustani music.

Among the Turko-Persian instruments, *daff*, *rubab*, *nay* and *tambur* were gradually assimilated into the Indian musical system. The *Shahnay* or *Shahnai* came to be associated with Indian rituals and became intergral to Hindu devotional music. No other instrument has acquired such sanctity. The *naubat* music also began to be played in the temples.

These traditions which evolved with the *Khakjis*, continued to flourish during the fourteenth century under

the Tughlaqs. The musicians (*ahl al tarab*) of Dehli lived in a separate colony called Tarababad which was located near *Hauz-i-Khas*. According to Ibn-i Battuta, it was one of the largest in the world.¹⁶ A similar locality/market existed at Daulatabad. Interestingly, both these places had mosques, which were frequented by women musicians in large numbers; they even recited the *taravih* (congregational prayers) during the month of Ramzan.¹⁷

Not only the ancient tradition of rigorous training persisted for the refinement and good breeding of the courtesans, Indian slave-girls were also trained in the same manner from early childhood. Shahbuddin al 'Umari, an Arab traveller, mentions that the Indian slave-girls could read and write, recite verses and stories, play chess and backgammon. They also excelled in music and the playing of lute, fetching a very high price of upto twenty thousand *tankas* and more.¹⁸ These probably were the *kanizak-i-Kinari* (a singing girl, or a concubine) referred by Barani.¹⁹ This period also witnessed, to some extent, the revival of the theatrical arts. While in the pre-Sultanante days, knowledge of stage-craft was considered an essential accomplishment for the fashionable people of society; it had no place among the *majlisi hunars* in the Islamic cultural traditions. The tradition of theatre, however, survived and emerged in various forms; *paturbazi*, *swang*, *bhagatbazi*, *bhandeti* and

bahurup. *Patur*s were trained artistes, and it is likely that the term *patur* stemmed from Sanskrit *patri*. Malik Muhammad Jayasi refers to one *patur*, from the *akhara* (assembly) of Sultan Alauddin Khalji, who was a *swangi* and excelled in the acting and make-up of a *jogan* (*yogini*).²⁰ This also suggests that different kinds of costumes were used in musical shows, which were called *paturbazi*. It became a popular mode of entertainment with the upper classes and came to be called *akharas* during the sixteenth century. Abdul Qadir Badauni clearly states that *akharas* were called *paturbazi* at the time of Firuz Shah. He also refers to a number of Sanskrit works, translated in the name of Firuz Shah on this kind of entertainment.²¹

The *bhagatiya* or the *bhagatbaz* caste of the Hindus practised *bhagatbazi*. They used to disguise themselves in various forms and performed mimicry. *Bhagatbazi* survived, until the close of the eighteenth century, as a favourite pastime of the upper classes. It was similar to *bhandeti* or *naqqali* in its essentials except in respect of make up.

The fifteenth century was a period of political upheaval. The dimensions and resources of the Sultanate of Delhi shrank considerably under the later Tughlaqs (1388-1412) and strong principalities emerged in its close vicinity. Among these, the Sharqi Sultanate was the most resourceful. Jaunpur under the Sharqi Sultans came to be

known as the Shiraz of the East. The Court of Gwalior also enjoyed considerable prestige for its generous patronage to men of arts and letters.

Musical arts witnessed unprecedented progress in both the centres during the second half of the fifteenth century; one under Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi (1458-1505) and another under Raja Man Singh Tomar (1486-1516). Both were extraordinary musicians. The origin of the leading musical genres *chutkula* and *dhrupad* is associated with Jaunpur and Gwalior respectively.

Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi had a thorough insight in music and he is referred as an *ustad and a gandharv*.²² Miza Khan, the author of *Tuhfat al-Hind* attributed the origin of *Khayal* to him, while according to Saif Khan, the author of *Rag Darpan*, Husain Shah Sharqi evolved the form of *chutkula*, a variant of *Khayal* out of the existing musical patterns of the Jaunpur region.²³ The Sharqi Sultan created many new *rags*; several of these were the combinations of Indian *rags* and Persian *muqams*. He also classicised folk musical patterns such as *gondai*, *panghat* and *ballabh*. He popularised a Persian *muqam*, *zangula*, which later developed as a distinct musical pattern.²⁴

Raja Man Singh Tomar evolved the form of *dhrupad* in collaboration with composers Nayak Bhinnu, Nayak

Bakshu, Nayak Pandavi, Nayak Mahmud, Nayak Lohang and Nayak Karan.²⁵ It is significant that *dhrupad* was evolved jointly by a group of Hindu and Muslim musicians (*goyanda-i baladust*) from the north and south.

Raja Man Singh, who had an expert knowledge of music, used to hold discussion with the luminaries of his Court. Realising well that it is difficult to get hold of the finest music talents at one time and one place, as his Court had he asked them to compile an authentic treatise regarding the numbers and the characteristics of *rag-ragini*, *putras* so that inquirers should not face any problem. Thus, *Man Kutuhal* was produced which was a unique project because in its compilation musicians from different regions sat together and interacted.²⁶

During the second half of the fifteenth century the Lodis re-established the glory of the Delhi Sultanate. Among the Lodi Sultans, Sikandar Shah regularly listened to music. He was extremely fond of *shahnai* and, as we are told by a contemporary historian Rizqullah Mushtaqi, ten expert *shahnai* players used to perform every night near his private chamber (*sara parda-i khas*). They were ordered not to play anything other than the following four *muqams*: *gaura*, followed by *kalyan*, then *kanhra*, and lastly, *muqam husaini*.²⁷ Thereafter, among the Sur Sultans Muhammad Adil Shah Sur, commonly known as 'Adili (r. 1553-56), was reputed to

have excelled in all branches of music. He was so highly skilled in singing and dancing that Mian Tansen, the well known *kalan-vat* who is a past master in this art, used to own being his pupil, and Baz Bahadur, son of Sajawal Khan, who was also one of the most gifted man of his age...had acquired the art (of music) from 'Adili,'²⁸.

By this time the connoisseurs of musical arts began to take interest in the study of Sanskrit texts on music and a number of Persian treatises were produced on the basis of these works, specially *Sangit Ratnakar* of Sarangdeva (13th century). Great care was taken in the preparation of these works. Language experts (*zubandanan-i Hindavi*) and practising music scholars from far and near assisted the authors.

Ghuniyat ul Munya was the first of its kind in Indo-Persian tradition. Written about 1374-5 under the patronage of Malik Shamusuddin Abu Raja, the Governor of Gujrat, to delineate 'all about the art in its details' (*kul u juz u asl u furu*).²⁹ The anonymous author and his patron were well versed in *sama-i Parsi* and *Sarud-i Hindavi*. This work was written for the training of the *as'hab-i majlis* in order to enable them appreciate the intricacies of music and dance art, and also with the expectations that practising artistes and scholars will appreciate the work and it will gain currency amongst them.³⁰ The author observes that since

he has written a separate treatise on the types of Persian music, *Kitab-i Farid-uz-zaman fi ma'rifat-il ilhan*, he has not discussed it in the present work, and it exclusively deals with Indian music.³¹ Although, the author is faithful to the textual material in the delineation of Indian music to the extent that he calls himself a *mutarajjim*. However, at places he differs with these in the perspective of contemporary practised art (*bar zuft 'aml ki zahir me shawad an ast*), giving his own explanations (*kul u juz-i an az ru-i 'ilm u amal i' ttala uftad*) and also making some important observations.³² For instance, he says that the neck of the *vina* (*dasta-i bin*) has become longer; that the five varieties of *pramath*, musical form, have gone out of vogue; that the *panchtalesur* (*panch taleshvar*, a *marg* musical form) was the most fascinating musical composition amongst the *prabandhs*.³³ He also notices that *suravathi* (*suravartini*, a *marg* musical form) had two variants *shuddh* and *sankirn*; the latter did not involve all seven notes in the performance. He also refers to a musical form, *harbilas* that was rendered by the Hindu womenfolk on auspicious occasions in the manner of the *sohla* of the Mussalmans.³⁴ *Sohla* later on became associated with the socio-religious rituals of the Sikhs. Also, the author uses the terminology of the performing artistes: *Kharaj* (*shadaj*), *rikhab* (*rishabh*), *nikhad* (*nishad*), *surat* (*shruti*), *dhurat* (*drut*), *ugah* (*udgrah*) and so on.³⁵ The author mentions two styles of dance: *tand* (*tandav*) and *las* (*lasya*).

He discusses the latter in great detail.³⁶

Lahjat-i Sikandarshahi was compiled by Yahya Kabuli during the reign of Lodi Sultan Sikandar Shah (r.1489-1517). *Lahjat-i Sikandarshahi* was composed on the basis of a number of Sanskrit treatises, such as *Sangit Ratnakar*, *Nritt Sangrah*, *Adi Bharat*, *Sudha Nidhi*, *Sangit Samaya*, *Sangit Samiksha*, *Sangit Kalpadrum*, *Sangit Matang*, *i. e.*, *Brahatdesi*, etc. The impact of *Sangit Ratnakar* appears to be more profound on the author of the *Lehjat* to the extent that not only he follows the same pattern at places, he refers to his work as the translation of *Sangit Ratnakar*.³⁷ A close study of the text of the *Lehjat*, however, reveals that it is distinct from *Sangit Ratnakar* in many respects. The author has added his own observations and interpretations in the form of *sawal-u jawab* (queries and their answers). This showed the stamp of his immense knowledge of Indian and Persian musical traditions that, apparently, had the approval of the leading Sanskritists and musicologists who were invited by his patron, Mian Bhauwa, to collaborate with him. The notes with the caption of *'imla* (dictation) were prepared by Yahya Kabuli on the basis of discussions with his learned patron. The terms used in the Sanskrit treatises are given with their persian variants 'so that persian knowing people may have familiarity with their exact connotation' and also that 'this treatise should get currency among the Muslims

and the *mushriks* (non-believers), alike'.³⁸ He uses the term *julangari* for *chari* (to and fro rhythmic movement of the dancer), *paikubi* for *nritt* (footwork or *layakari*), *raqqasa* (dancer) for *patur* and so on. Besides, he has used the vocabulary of the performing artistes and thus writes *kharaj* for *shdaj*, *sukhir* for *sushir*, *vad* for *vadya*, *alap* for *alapti*, *sikhya* for *shiksha*. Similarly, for describing the measurement of *laya* he uses the terms *chhagun* (six-fold), *chaugun* (four-fold), *dugun* (double) etc. He provides a detailed discussion on *murccana*, the technique of spanning *svar*. This he has devised in the form of *swal-ujawab* (queries and their answers). While describing the two styles of rendering the *prabandh*, *gandharv* (*gandharv*) and *gan*, he makes an important statement that the performing artistes of his day categorise *desi-rags* as *gan*. He also says that in the *gan* type, the *prabandh* was rendered in various styles, in different *tal*s and accompanied with a variety of instruments. Thus, he has also projected the contemporary opinion. Yahya also speaks about the *hast-pat* in great detail. These were current in his time and used in *raqs*. Further, there were forty-three varieties of the compositions of *hast pat*, also known as *prabandh*, such as *yati prabandh*, *uta prabandh*, *gajra prabandh*, *ragotini prabandh*, *uttovini prabandh*, and *uchched prabandh*. The last three varieties were used in dance. Yahya Kabuli refers to a composition, *tal prabandh*, which was composed of the Deccani *marg*. We also

come across the terms like *talipat*. Yahya Kabuli elaborates the technique of *binan (vina)* playing in great detail and describes *sruvi vina* and *swar vina*, and nine varieties of the latter.

All these details prompt us to suggest that by this time the synthesis of the Turko-Persian and Indian Court and folk techniques and traditions was effected in such a manner that it contributed to the emergence of a common musical culture favoured by the masses and the classes. The term *muqam* began to be used in the connotation of *rag*. The patrons and their companions were expected to appreciate the subtleties of Persian as well as Indian music. Indian classical music and dance repertoires were the essential items of relaxation in the *majlises*. Thus, the process of synthesis was already underway at a deep level in the sixteenth century when the Mughals appeared on the scene.

The early Mughal rulers Babur (1526-1530) and Humayun (1530-1556) conformed to the cultural traditions of Herat, the seat of the Timurid prince Husain Mirza Baiqara in Khurasan. Under him Herat bloomed as one of the greatest centres of art and culture in the Islamic world. Babur, who was a sensitive music critic, had great praise for the musicians of Herat and left a detailed account of the performers of *nay*, the *aud* (a form of lute) and *ghichak* (a

guitar like instrument). He praises them for their themes (*saut*), musical airs (*naqsh*) and preludes and compositions (*pehrau u aishtar*).³⁹

With Humayun, a highly cultured person like his father, arrived many artists and craftsmen, musicians and other performing artistes from Herat. Indian artistes, however, still waited for an opportunity to be at service at the court. It was under Akbar (1556-1605) that they could flourish anew. Akbar patronised musicians and singers from different regions and countries on a grand scale: Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris, both men and women.⁴⁰ Abul Fazl has enlisted thirty-six imperial musicians, many of these were from Central Asia, Iran, Iraq and even China.⁴¹

The Mughal rulers as great patrons of art and culture forged an elaborate and synthesized version of Indian and Persian culture known to us as Mughal. One may notice the unprecedented heights of artistic developments in the realm of visual and performing arts with a distinct Mughal identity; the foundation for which as laid by Akbar whose period was one of the most creative and historically decisive periods in Indian history. He virtually carved out the Mughal Empire and strengthened it by creating an atmosphere of trust and co-operation among communities. He inherited Persian and Timurid sense of artistic appreciation and synthesized Indian and Persian aesthetics and Indian cultural values. Akbar

also provided a forum for the interaction of different schools, indigenous and exotic, and created atmosphere of eclecticism. His court was a great confluence of the musical geniuses of India as well as from all around the Persian cultural spheres. Pandarika Vitthala the famous musicologist from South calls his royal court *sangitamava mandir*.⁴²

Under the patronage of Akbar, a number of Sanskrit and Persian texts were written on music. These included *Nartannirnaya*, *Ragmala* and *Ragsagar*. The details about the latter were not found except that the list of its rags differed from the list given in *Man Kutuhal*.⁴³

During the reign of Akbar the *naubat* ensemble was enlarged and had the inclusion of *nafirs* of the Persian, Indian and European kinds.⁴⁴ *Naubat* was a West Asian tradition associated as a symbol of political authority. Sultan Iltutmish (1210-36) introduced it in India. It consisted of trumpets, horns and drums (*tabl* and especially the *naqqara*). Initially, the *naubat* was performed five times a day coinciding with the time of Muslim prayers. During the Mughal period it came to be performed in accordance with the Indian system of dividing the day in eight *pahar* or *Ghari* and each *Ghari* different instruments were used. The *naubat* began to be performed in the temples also.

Among other Mughal rulers, Shah Jahan (1627-58)

was exceedingly fond of music. Under him the Court life reached a very high level of sophistication. The Mughal nobles were also well versed in many arts and sciences such as music and painting and poetic compositions. It is to be noted that Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan was a renowned *Braj-bhasha* poet and the patron of Tulsidas.

Shah Jahan took initiative in the collection and compilation, one thousand in number and in four ragas and forty six *raginis*, of the authentic and original *dhrupad* compositions of Nayak Bakshu.. The treatise is known as *Sahas Dhrupad*. Many of the musicians of the *reign* of Shah Jahan, excelled in *marg* music. Foremost among them was Shaikh Bahauddin Barnawa, who was well known for his knowledge of *marg* music, even in Deccan. Others were Nayak Fazl Gunsen, one of the descendants of Nayak Bhannu, of the Court of Raja Man Singh, and Mridang Rai.⁴⁵ Idi singh excelled in the style of Amir Khusrao and the Sharqi Sultan.⁴⁶

The reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707) is known as a lean period for performing artistes. However, there are many evidences to support that he was exceedingly fond of music and held an expert's knowledge of music.⁴⁷ According to Saqi Musta'id Khan, Aurangzeb was well versed in *Braj-bhasha* and was aware of the musicality of that language.⁴⁸ During the initial ten years of his reign Aurangzeb had extended

patronage to many vocalists and instrumentalists. Among these Khushal Khan *Kalawant* was the most renowned. Manucci provides interesting details about the women musicians in Aurangzeb's imperial household. According to him Aurangzeb conferred names on the female superintendents of the women musicians and dancers, such as Chanchal Bai, Surosh Bai, Dhyani Bai etc.⁴⁹

Music at this time did not remain merely a channel of entertainment. Many connoisseurs of music, including the high grandees, developed interest in the theories and principles of music and 'amal without 'ilm was not acceptable to them. The curiosity to attain knowledge of music as a science reveals itself in the compilation of a number of musical treatises. Most of these were written during the period of Aurangzeb. Some of the treatises were based on Persian and Indian works of music, while others were translation of Sanskrit works. These include *Tuhfat al-Adwar*, *Risalah dar 'amal-i bin u that-i ragha-i Hindi*, *Risalah-i Kamil Khani*, *Tarjuma-i Parijata*, etc. *Rag Darpan* and *Tuhfat al-Hind* were the most important Persian treatises of the seventeenth century. *Rag Darpan* was not merely the translation of *Man Kutuhal*; in it the author Saif Khan added 'a few details (*zaruriyat-i sangit*) which he considered to be useful to the inquirers. These details, he says, were not available in *Bharat Sangit*, *Sangit Darpan*, *Sangit Patanakar*,

and were based on his own observations of the current performance practices. A few *rags* were added to the detailed list given in *Man Kutuhal* for which he consulted expert instrumentalists and vocalists.⁵⁰ The *Tuhfat al-Hind*, 'a rare work on the fine arts and sciences of the Hindus' was compiled by Mirza Khan Ibn Fakhruddin Muhammad, about 1675, for prince Muhammad Jahandar Shah, which attests to the fact that Mughal princes and nobles used to learn Braj-bhasha poetics and prosody, and they were also trained in subjects like *nayikabhed*, which also became a popular theme in Mughal paintings. These works provide important details about the musical forms and instruments, various categories of musicians and popular traditions. One also gets to know that performing women were acquiring an identity of their own and many of them were recognised as *ustads*.

Mirza Khan devotes an entire section on Indian *tal* patterns and Persian *usuls*, or *tals*, also called *bahar u दौरا*. He mentions seventeen patterns, such as *bahar-i turk zarb* or *tarkashi zarb* and *bahar-i fakhta*, or *usul-i fakhta*. The latter is a popular *tal* in Hindustani music even today and is known as *sul fakhta* or *sul tal*.

We can discern on the basis of the visual sources some of the traits of the musical culture of the seventeenth century. In Mughal times men and women in the Court

context cultivated separate dance traditions. The mixed male and female ensemble is depicted only in those paintings where ancient or legendary time, in Central Asian cultural sphere, is portrayed. The Turkish dancers do not wear ankle bells and use castanets for rhythmic punctuation. The dance style is characteristic of arid standing without much bending of knees or torso. They are generally portrayed in stereotypical poses. *Nai*, *daira* and *rubab* provide music.

One may mark the continuity of the classical dance traditions in the seventeenth century. There was, however, a change in the accompanying instrument to dance. Upto the sixteenth century, the *desi patah*⁵¹ was used and was replaced by *mridang*.⁵² Earlier, the dancer used to pronounce the rhythmic phases (*hast pat*) herself.⁵³ Now these were recited by the *goyanda*. *Tal* was used for keeping time and also because *pats* of almost all *mazamirs* (instruments) could be produced on it.⁵⁴ The male dancers performed the tradition of *nritt*, while women dancers performed in a group as many of the Mughal paintings reveal.

A departure from the past may be noticed in their description of the song forms which aren't described in a conventionally accepted order; *sudakrama*, *alikhrama* and *viprakirna*.⁵⁵ Instead, these are described under the generic term *margi* and *desi*. Mirza Khan defines these terms as *qadim* (ancient) and *jadid* (modern) respectively.⁵⁶ In fact,

the term *desi* appears to be used in a very large context in this period. It denotes the recognition, classification as well as standardisation of folk, regional and exotic melodic material under its garb that led to the evolution of new forms, *qual-tarana*, *khayal*, *dhrupad*, *bishnupad* and a variety of new *rags*. From the account of Faqirullah Saif Khan, it becomes clear that *desi rags* and compositions (*tasani-i desi*) became popular even in the Deccan about this time.

A new trend had taken place in the contemporary practice of musical arts to establish correspondence or relationship between modal forms of Persian and Indian music and to establish relationship between *rag* and *parda* or *muqam*, which was initiated by Pandit Pandarika Vitthal, a music scholar from the South. He was well versed in the Southern and North Indian systems of music, dance, lexicography and dramaturgy. In *Nartananirnaya* and *Ragmala* he characterises some of the Indian *rags* as the friend or relative of the Persian modes. For instance, he says that the *bhairav* is the follower of the Persian mode *ujjhala* (*ujjhalasyanuyayi*); *desikari* is the friend (*janammitra*) of *bakharej* (*bakharez*); *desi ragini* is the great granddaughter of the Persian mode *ahang* (*ahangasyaprapautri*), and *dhannasi ragini* is the companion of *dhaval rag*, born under the name *Irak* (Iraq). About *truruskatodi* he says that she wears the guise and dress of a *yavana* (a term used for

the Persian people) woman (*Yavan-suvanita-vastraveshadikadhya*).⁵⁷ In *Ragmanjari* he takes note of the Persian modes (*parsikeya ragah paradnamakah*, or *parda*) and their Indian equivalents, fourteen in number. Synonimisation of the term *parda* with Indian *rags* became common even among the Southern music scholars. Pandit Somnath, the author of the renowned Sanskrit work, *Rag Vibodh*, also uses the term *parda* as an alternative (*pariyaya*) of *rag* in popular usage. Even though the Persian melody is not exactly similar to Indian *rag*, it shows an affinity in their scale (*mel or thata*)⁵⁸.

The Persian texts also tried to examine this context of similarity. Saif Khan discusses the similarity of Persian *naghma* with Indian *rags*. He remarked: I could not recognise some of the Persian *naghmas*, and I inquired about these from those instrumentalists and musicians who were conversant with Persian performance traditions. Till now, I can trace eleven *naghmas* that were found similar to one or the other Indian *rags*. *Ghazal* has striking similarity with *khat-rag*. *Mukhalifis* is similar to *ramkali*. *Nairez* and *kalyan*, *isfahan* and *bidhans*, *do-gah* and *shuddha-tori*, *nava* and *sarang* and *nat* and *rast* were similar. '*Iryan* and *puria dhanasri*, *shahnaz* and *sri-rag*, *maghlub* and *basanth* were closely associated. The *mujadat* and *naghmat* in which *pardah*, or musical airs, were rendered in current language of the populace were similar to *birwa*, and called *thumri* by some

people.⁵⁹ *Thumri* is referred for the first time in *Rag Darpan* and that too in the capacity of a *rag* and not a musical genre. Saif Khan tells that in Kashmir, Indian *rags* were not current.⁶⁰

These texts also delineate changes and continuity in instrumentarium. *Bin* and *pakhawaj* became the prominent instruments; the *patah* and *huruk* became out-dated. The *rubab* was one of the most popular instruments and used as accompaniment of *khayal* and *chutkula*. These two forms used to be rendered in high register for this reason extra wires were added to the *rubab*.⁶¹ *Rubab* was also adopted as an accompaniment to devotional music of the Sikhs and a class of singers emerged in Punjab known as *rubabi*. *Tambur* was used both as a drone and as a melody-making instrument. *Rudra vina* appears to have attained prominence as an accompanying as well as a solo instrument. Saif Khan refers to the *jal-tarang* and informs that in Persia this instrument had no name and was known as *chini nawaz*.⁶² *Sarangi* was also gaining importance as a solo instrument.⁶³

Mirza Khan describes the Persian *muqams*, *sho'ba* and *gosha*.⁶⁴ He equates them with *rag-ragini* and *putra*. He has devoted a section of his work to the description of those *rags* that have the blending of *rag* and *muqams*, and also a comparison of these two. According to him the number of those Persian *muqams* that had similarity or association with Indian *rags*, was quite large. For instance, he opines that

husaini, do-gah and *nau-roz* of Ajam have the sound of *kafi*, while *zungula* sound is similar to *todi (ahang-i tori darad)*. He has mentioned twenty such *muqams*.⁶⁵

The shift of the Mughal capital from Arga to Shahjahanabad towards the middle of the seventeenth century, paved way for confluence of rich classical traditions of the Mughal Court with the regional patterns of Delhi. Delhi became the centre of cultural activities during the reign of Muhammad Shah (1719-48). This period witnessed the full fruition of the skill of the Delhi singers - *qawwals*, who intergrated *qaul-tarana* and other regional patterns of Delhi in a compact performance tradition which was known *qawwali* after them. Basant, the festival of spring, was a great occasion for the performing artistes of Shahjahanabad, especially for the *qawwals* who performed music as a form of tribute in the Qadam Sharif and various other religious centres and *dargahs*.⁶⁶ There was a great rise in the status of the performing women. The high class courtesans lived in great style and began to dominate social life in the manner of the *ganika* of the early medieval period. Due to a crucial diminution in Court patronage after the invasion of Nadir Shah (1739), many of the Court artistes were obliged to seek patronage from new patrons who came to prominence in the changed social and political conditions. In music they demanded such styles which had the backing of the folk

traditions. In this process, the exclusive Court techniques of musical performance became accessible to a wider group, and strengthened the folk based varieties, though music lost its elitism to a certain extent. As a result, in Delhi, *dhrupad-gayaki* lost its favour and *khayal-gayaki* gained respectability. Urdu was emerging as a new poetic medium, which ultimately undermined the status of *Braj-bhasha* as a dominant medium of poetic and musical compositions.

The development of *marsiya-khwani* as a distinct genre belongs to the eighteenth century and it is contemporaneous to *mars yago'i*. In North India *marsiya* poetry developed in the Persian tradition, but its rendering was in the *dhrupad* style. The influence of the *desi-kavya* appears to be more pronounced in it which is attested by the fact that *marsiyas* were composed in *marwari*, *punjabi* and *purbi* dialects and included songs, narration and intonation in the manner of the recitational forms of drama, such as *alha* and *pandavi*. The vogue was for *murabba dohraband*; the four lines in uniform rhyme are followed by a *doha* in *Braj-bhasha*, and in some cases followed again by two lines of *tazmin* (insertion) of Persian couplet. It is significant that *marsiya-khawani* was performed by those who had formal training in music.⁶⁷

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the centre of art and culture shifted from Shahjahanabad to

Awadh. The Court initially located at Faizabad and then at Lucknow, is particularly noted for its patronage to classical and folk varieties of dance. Hence, regional patterns like *tappa*, *thumri* and *dadra* were also refined. At Lucknow, Urdu became highly Persianised and *ghazal* became a favourite literary and musical genre.

The pure dance techniques of the *nritt*, known as *thai thai nauch* and the forms of *desinritya* were crystallised in new dance style, the *kathak natwari nritya*, during the nineteenth century. It was developed and codified in the family of Prakash *nartak* by the Kalka-Bindadin team. This dance form took notice of the current literary form, the Urdu *ghazal* as an accompaniment to dance. It also encouraged the dramatic content, the *natyang*, in the form of *nayika-bhed*. Kathak was designed for an audience exclusively from the Court circle and it absorbed some of the Court etiquette under *amad* and *mujra*; the costume too was in the contemporary fashion. Sultan Wajid Ali Shah, skilled musician and dancer in his own right, choreographed 36 dance items, *chhattis ijad-i rahas-i sultani*, wherein he blended *kathak* and *ras*, a group dance of the Braj region performed by the male artistes of the *rahasdhari* community. He also developed *kaharva*, the folk dance of the *kahar* community, on classical lines.⁶⁸

Mian Ghulam Ali Shori, the grandson of the legendary

Taj Khan Qawwal, refined the folk form of *tappa*, a variety of *khayal* in Punjabi. Mian Shori devised a unique blend of indigenous classical and folk tradition with techniques used in Persian music. He used *tahrir* in it as ari (zig-zag *tan*).⁶⁹ The intricate art of *tappa* singing was called *tappa-bazi*. In the refinement of *thumri*, the two traditions contributed, those of the *qawwals* and the *tathaks*. Sadiq Ali Khan of the *Qawwal Bachcha Gharana* and Bindadin Kathak refined it. At Lucknow, Urdu verses were interwoven in *dadra* that gave it a literary bent.

Marsiya-khwani underwent considerable development at Lucknow and came to be denominated as *soz-khwani*. It was performed by a group of five in Persian tradition. However, the rendering was in Indian style except in the *marsiyas* of *tappa-ang* wherein Persian techniques were employed. In *marsiya* compositions also, Indian customs and traditions are represented.⁷⁰

A number of musical texts were written in Awadh in Persian and Urdu. The most important of these was the Persian works *Usul-ul Naghmat-al Asifi* by Mirza Muhammad Raza. He was a highly accomplished musician with a knowledge of Indian, Persian and Arab music. He was the first musician/scholar to raise objection against the old system of modal classification on *rag-ragini-putra* basis. He laid his own *mat* wherein relationship was to be established

on the basis of the structural similarity, the arrangement of the notes and the overall impact of the *rag*.⁷¹ Wajid Ali Shah, the king of Awadh, wrote a number of treatises in Persian and Urdu, Such as *Saut al-Mubarak*, *Parikhana*, *Bani and Najo*. Other important works in music in Urdu are *Ghuncha'-i Rag* by Muhammad Mardan Ali Khan and *Ma'dan al-Musiqi* by Muhammad Karam Imam Khan Unnami. Significantly, these texts are written in highly Persianised Urdu, which is in contrast to the language used by the authors of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Earlier scholars used a blend of Persian, Sanskrit and Braj-bhasha.

With the extinction of the Awadh kingdom in 1856, the process of synthesis was interrupted. However, the Indo-Persian traditions survived in an integrated form in many respects in Indian art and culture and contributed to the evolution of what is known today as Hindustani music.

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- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 248
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- 51 Also known as *addhavaj*; *avaj* seems to have functioned as a generic name for the class of instruments of the *mridang* type. For instance, *hurukka* was called *skandhavaj*. See, *Nartananimaya*, Vol. I, p. 293.
- 52 *Mirdang* is a barrel shaped membrane phone. The vernacular synonym for *mridang* was *paksavaja* or *pakhavaj* which, apparently, is used for the first time in *Nartananimaya*, pp. 172-3.
- 53 *Lehjat-e Sikandersshahi*, p. 479. *Hast-pats* are percussive syllables generated by striking the membranes with various parts of the hands. These sounds could be varied by varying the part of the left or right hand, tips of fingers, fingers, different regions

- of palms, base of the wrist, back of the hand etc. The *hast-pats* sounds (*pataksara*) bears resemblance to vocal sounds. These are combined variously into group and phrases and then recited. For details see, *Nartananirnaya*, Vol. I, Commentary, p. 295.
- 54 *Lehjat-e Sikandersshahi*, pp. 285, 511. These *hast-pats* are described in detail in this work.
- 55 By the end of the 12th century, Indian music had developed a conventionally accepted order (*kram*) in the performances of it's musical compositions. *Sudakrama* and *alikhrama* were such sequences. The *viprakima prabandhas* were associated with activities on special occasions. For detailed descriptions see R.K. Shringy and Premlata Sharma (eds.), *Sangit Ratnakar* of Sarangdeva, Delhi, 1989, Vol. II.
- 56 *Tuhfat al-Hind*, Vol. I, p. 358.
- 57 Pandarika Vitthala, *Nartananirnaya*, edited and translated by R.S. Sathyanarayana, Delhi 1994, pp. 24, 36, 40, 44.
- 58 For details see V.N. Bhatkhande, *A Comparative Study of Some of the Leading Music Systems of the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th Centuries*, Delhi reprint 1990, pp. 60, 88.

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- 60 *Ibid.*
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- 63 *Ibid.*
- 64 *Tuhfat al-Hind*, Vol. 1, p. 428. Mirza Khan describes the *muqams* like *rahavi*, *husaini*, *rast*, *hejaz*, *bakharez* and *zangula* etc. Every *muqam* has 2 *sho'ba* and every *sho'ba* has 2 *gosha*, making their number 24 & 48 respectively. For names of *sho'ba* and *gosha* see Mirza Khan, pp. 428-29.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 429. For details see, Madhu Trivedi, Writing Musical Traditions: A Study of Seventeenth Century Texts in Persian, Paper presented in the Panel Discussion organized by The International Association for the Study of Persian-Speaking Societies, at the Indian History Congress, 61st Session, Calcutta, 2-4 January 2001.
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Indo-Iran Relations in Education During The Medieval Period

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The Muslims' arrival in India and their settlement on the Indian soil had begun in the Seventh Century A.D., from Sindh, though it remained confined there for about three centuries. It was from the early Eleventh Century that they began their march to Delhi and by early Thirteenth Century they completed their conquest of Northern India. When the non-Arab influences in Baghdad were on the increase, the Turko-Iranian or the Pan-Iranian Culture flourished in the Eastern part of the Muslim world, and their *Madarasas*, *Khanqahs* and the private houses of the men of letters, were the main repositories of the culture, as was reflected in their rich and vibrant educational activities and accomplishments. The Muslim conquest of India brought with them the richness of their education and culture in the form of a particular education system, learned teachers, valuable literature, *Sufis* and the rich traditions of educational discourses¹, and as Tara Chand rightly says, this culture left profound effect on the evolution of the Indian culture.² It flourished in the 13th,

14th and 15th Centuries under the Persian speaking Turko-Iranian rulers of Delhi and then later under the Mughal Emperors of India.³ In Ghaznavid's Empire (989-1149AD) Persian became the official language of the State, and since then it remained the official and cultural language of India until the British domination in 19th Century.⁴ Change of political power with rich cultural incursions into the country, created favourable conditions for lasting relationship between Iran and India, particularly in the context of education. And, it resulted in marvellous developments in the whole educational set up of India during the medieval period. It is, therefore, of utmost importance to study the Indo-Iranian relationship in education during the medieval period. The task, however, is not so simple as Paul Monroe admits in the introductory remarks in his work, entitled "The Educational Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century". He observes: "It is with the greatest difficulty that one obtains concrete information concerning educational activities in the past, especially any connected and tolerably complete account of the details of school life."⁵ Shalaby asserts that the statement is equally valid for the information about education in the medieval Islamic world as the historians, court chroniclers and *Ulamas* of the time concentrated more on political and military activities and achievements of the rulers, and paid little attention to their educational enterprises.⁶ These observations of Monroe and Shalaby

hold true for the history of educational development in medieval India also. However, the contemporary historiographic records can be used to overcome this problem to a great extent. Ray rightly suggests that the study of any aspect of medieval Indian history including education must be based on the contemporary Persian chronicles, because the period of Muslim rule was very rich in the production of historical works as will be evident from the massive eight volumes of Elliot and Dowson's 'History of India as Told by Its Own Historians'. Though these Persian historical works are rather chronicles of political and military events, yet they offer considerable material for reconstructing the history of education during this period. Not that they deal with the theme of education *per se*, but in them we come across the reference of events which throw considerable light on the educational system of the age.

In these Persian chronicles references to *Madrasas* are very common.⁷ At the time of launch of medieval Muslim education system in India, the country was dotted with small kingdoms and education was promulgated through the institutions of *pathshalas* and *tols* which were supported by rulers of these kingdoms. These were limited in number and admitted only children of ruling classes and Brahmins for education.⁸ The Turko-Iranian rulers introduced *maktabs* and *madrasas* for imparting education in India. However,

educational activities during their reign were also carried out in circles in mosques, *Khanqahs* and houses of men of letters as a regular feature of the educational edifice in medieval India. While *maktabs* were engaged in imparting elementary education, the higher learning was offered in *madrasas* and at times in houses of men of letters also. The *maktabs* and *madrasas* admitted both Muslims and Hindus, particularly low caste Hindus. Ray relates that until the arrival of Muslim educational institutions in medieval India low caste Hindus were deprived of the benefits of education.⁹ In Iran and Khurasan no such discrimination in educational institution was observed. Even slaves were given the benefit of education there. Thus, education system in India became more open and accessible to all with the arrival of Turko-Iranian rulers. They also enlarged the scope and provision of education, which was hitherto confined to *pathshalas* and *to/s*, through non-formal and flexible mode of education, provided in *Khanqahs* and houses of men of letters in addition to formal *maktabs* and *madrasas*. It is stated that this 'open door education policy' of Turko-Iranian rulers, created an atmosphere of cohesion and understanding between Hindus and Muslims. The approach also helped in spreading literacy among the Indian masses irrespective of caste and creed. This education system had influenced the way of life in the medieval Indian society to the extent that in the days of Babar the Hindus and Muslims lived and

thought so much alike that he was forced to notice their peculiar Hindustani way of living.¹⁰

In Muslim India, explains Faruki, the aim of education was to equip the students with all that was absolutely necessary for their moral and mental development. In other words, the aim of education was to prepare the students for this world as well as for the next world.¹¹ As the main purpose of this education was self-improvement, argues Ray, the craze for degrees and certificates was comparatively very little.¹² Elaborating it further Ziauddin Alvi says that Islamic education system that accompanied Turko-Iranians, was aimed at stimulating the moral consciousness of the pupils by bringing about an organic relationship of education with the Islamic ethical system.... Also, in Islam science and religion existed side by side. We find many references in the Holy Qura'n to aspects of natural phenomenon, exhorting the people to see, to observe, to deduce and to employ nature in the service of mankind.¹³ There is great emphasis on the attainment of knowledge and learning. Hence, this was another important aim of education. A sizeable group of learned people having their allegiance to Iranian thinkers also, considered promotion of rational and scientific outlook as an important objective of education. As against these wide ranging aims of education, the then indigenous educational institutions were strictly utilitarian in their aims.

The desire to cultivate a higher mental life to develop an aesthetic sense was by and large absent. On the whole very little attention was paid to the moral and religious side of education."¹⁴

So far as the curriculum of *maktabs* and *madrasas* was concerned, it was the same as followed in Iran, Khurasan and Iraq etc., outside India. The *maktabs* imparted training in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.¹⁵ Thus, elementary education included learning of the Holy Qura'n followed by learning of Persian language and a little bit of Arabic. This was the first stage syllabus of education.¹⁶ Manazir Ahsan Geelani relates that elementary education was imparted in Persian and initially learning of *Gulistan wa Boostan* of Sheikh Sa'di and *Diwan-e-Hafiz Shirazi* was considered as compulsory at this stage, as has been reported by Sheikh Mohaddith Dehlavi in his work *Akhbarul-Akhyar* about his education.¹⁷ In *Ain-i-Akbari*, Abdul Fazal has related that in elementary school curriculum, besides other subjects, Computation and Arithmetic was also taught during Akbar's reign.¹⁸ Besides, there were a large number of Persian books which were also taught to children for developing in them proficiency in Persian language. These books, relates Geelani, included *Sikander Nama*, *Story of Yusuf Zulaikha*, *Badar Chach*, *Bahare Danish*, *Tughra*, *Meena Bazar*, *Ruqqat-e-Alamgiri*, *Seh Nasr-e-Zuhoori*

Tarsheezi, Abul Fazal's letters, writings of Caliphs, *Anwar, Saheli* and scores of simpler books.¹⁹ The scope of curriculum at higher levels in India was very wide and in addition to the compulsory Islamic subjects, it included Literature, Philosophy, Logic, Mathematics, Medicine, Astronomy, Astrology, Mensuration and even Music and Arts.²⁰ In fact, during the days of Mughal Empire even technical and vocational education was made a part of this curriculum. In fact, the *Dars-e-Nizami* curriculum, founded by Nizamul Mulk Tusi (1019-1092) which was in vogue in India also, was updated by two famous '*Alims*, Sheikh Abdullah and his brother Sheikh Azizullah in the days of Sikander Lodhi who added the subjects of Logic and Philosophy to the curriculum.²¹ During the days of Mohammad Bin Tughlaq enough expertise was also developed in Mathematics, Astronomy and Engineering.²² In the Behmani Courts in Deccan there were expert teachers of Mathematics, Engineering, Astrology and Music.²³

The most important development in the curriculum was introduced during the days of Abul Fazal Kazruni and Mir Fathullah Shirazi, both of whom hailed from Iran. Mir Fathullah Shirazi (d.1588) was an erudite scholar and a genius of his time who came from Iran to join the Court of Akbar and left a lasting mark of his presence in the areas of Education, Finance, Defence and Literature in the Indian

Sub-continent. The updated curriculum of that time had a distinct emphasis on rational and liberal Sciences, teaching of which flourished during the reign of Akbar and thereafter for about three centuries. Under the guidance of Mir Fathullah Shirazi, Akbar initiated some reforms in the curriculum. He laid down the principle that “every boy ought to read books on Morals, Arithmetic, Agriculture, Mensuration, Geometry, Astronomy, Physiognomy, Household Matters, Rules of Government, Medicine, Logic, *Tabii* (Physical Sciences), *Riyazi* (the Science that treats of quantity), Science and History, all of which may be gradually acquired.”²⁴ In the new regulations, Akbar laid down that “no one should be allowed to neglect those subjects which the present time requires.”²⁵

During this period many Hindus were admitted in the *maktabs* and *madrasas* meant for Muslims and thus a large number of Hindu scholars, historians and poets of Persian made their appearance in the course of next fifty years.²⁶ It has been reported that during the reign of Shahjahan Medicine and Art of Administration were also taught in *madrasas*.²⁷ The trend of curriculum reform continued during the reign of Aurangzeb also. During his time the educational reform was initiated by Mullah Nizamuddin Sihalvi, whom Aurangzeb had endowed the Farangi Mahal property of Lucknow. The new curriculum launched by Mulla

Nizamuddin in early Eighteenth century, which is popularly known as Dars-e-Nizami, incorporated the subjects of Astrology, Algebra and Physics etc. This curriculum in its modified form is in vogue in today's, *madrasas* also.²⁸ Qasmi argues that Mulla Nizamuddin Farangi Mahali, the founder of *Dars-e-Nizami* had, in fact, direct educational decedence from Mir Fathullah Shirazi, his progenitor, and that is why *Dars-e-Nizami* has an accent on Logic and Philosophy as was there in the curriculum framed by Fathullah Shirazi in the Sixteenth century.²⁹ While explaining the success of *Dars-e-Nizami*, Abdul Hai al-Hasani says that the book on Logic, *Musallam al-Thubut* written by Qazi Mahibullah, was highly valued by the scholars and more than forty commentaries on it, most of them in Persian, were written.³⁰ Thus, we see that the revolutionary changes in and modernisation of the curriculum of educational institutions in India was launched hundreds of years ago by the Iranian scholar much before the launch of the so-called modern education system in India and elsewhere by the European educationists.

The Iranian scholars also influenced the content of the above-discussed curriculum on a large scale. We find that a large number of books used to help implement the above-mentioned curriculum, were either written in Persian language or were compiled by the scholars of Iranian origin

in Persian and in other languages. For example, besides the *Gulistan*, *Boostan*, *Diwan-e-Hafiz* and other elementary books of reading which were all in Persian, in the second stage of education also most of the books of *Sarf* and *Nahw* including *Meezan*, *Munsha-at*, *Sarf-e-Mir*, *Panj Ganj*, *Zubda*, *Fusool-e-Akbari*, *Shafia*. *Nahw-e-Mir*, *Sharah Me-ad' Amil* and *Usami* were in Persian.³¹ Likewise, books for later stages like *Kafiyah*, *Majmua-al-Bahrain*, and *Sharah Shamsiya* and *Sharah Sahaif* on Logic and Philosophy, were written in Persian. The books *Sharah Kafiya*, *Kashshaf*, *Mashariqul Anwar*, *Miftahul Uloom*, *Tahzib al-Mantiq*, *Matali* and *Muafiq*, etc., were written by Iranian scholars. A few most reputed scholars of medieval period including Abdullah Usmani Tulanabbi, his brother Azizullah Sakkaki who were scholars of Logic, Syed Sharif, Allama Taftazani or Arif Jami, Mirza Jan, Sheikh Yaqoob bin Hasan and most of the writers of *Saha-e-Sitta*, to name a few, were of the Iranian origin, and they left an indelible mark on the history of educational development in medieval India.³²

Medium of instruction in any educational system plays a pivotal role in making it a success. Ever since Ghaznavids came to India they made Persian their official language and so it became the language of culture and education in India since the early 13th Century affecting deeply all spheres of life in the medieval Indian society. Persian not only

influenced the Muslim educational institutions and Court business of the time as the main vehicle of transaction, it also affected Indian classical language Sanskrit and also contributed in the development of many Indian regional languages which were used for educational and communication purposes in different parts of the country. In a short period of time Persian became so much prevalent in the Indian society that it began to produce great Persian poets, writers and litterateurs of its own. It is related that Sultan Sikander Lodhi was the first Muslim ruler who openly encouraged Hindus to learn Persian and directed the scholars to translate works of Indian languages into Persian.³³ As a result, observes Farooqi, during the reign of Sikander Lodhi the number of Persian knowing people in India shot up considerably and this included both, Hindus (particularly *Kayasthas*) and Muslims.³⁴ In the course of time, relates Law, Hindus became as proficient in this language as the Muslims and they produced real poets and writers in Persian later on.³⁵

In the Muslim educational institutions i.e., *maktabs* and *madrasas*, Persian was the sole medium of instruction. Geelani relates that in *madrasas* teachers taught Qura'nic Verses, Ahadith, Arabic poetry, Arabic phrases, uncommon words and rare works, etc., by translating them into Persian language;³⁶ though at times in senior classes a mix of Arabic

and Persian medium was also used by the learned scholars for teaching different subjects included in the curriculum. Learning of Persian language and its popularity received shot in the arm when, on the recommendation of Raja Todar Mal, Akbar declared that knowledge of Persian would be compulsory for all State employees. Consequently, as opined by Ray, besides Muslims, more Hindus began to study Persian with the same earnestness with which the Indians now study English.³⁷ In course of time, the Hindus began to compete with the Mohammadans for the higher positions in the country's administration.³⁸ This trend continued until Persian was replaced by English as the language of the Court.

In the opinion of Najibullah, in medieval period Persian was the first literary and administrative language of India and second international Islamic language.³⁹ Elaborating it further, he observes that after the devastating invasions of Mongols when the tradition of Arabic studies lost its popularity and vigour, Persian remained the sole literary medium of the Eastern parts of the Muslim world⁴⁰ and since then Courts of Delhi and the provisional centres of India also became seats of flourishing literary life. There appeared many great poets and noted writers of Persian language whose works contributed to the bulk of Indo-Iranian culture and attested to the glory of a brilliant period of Indian history.

Among the large number of Persian poets and litterateurs produced by medieval India, says Shibli, were the greatest ones namely Khusro, Faizy, and Bedar whose mantle was recognised even by the Iranians.⁴¹ Several monumental works of the time were either written in Persian or were translated from other languages into Persian. The Holy Qura'n, its exegesis (*Tafseer*), and the famous compilations of the Traditions were translated into Persian language by learned scholars of Persian of the Indian origin. A very famous exegesis (*Tafseer*) of the Holy Qura'n in Persian language, *Bahre Mawaj*, stands to the credit of Qazi Shahabuddin Daulatabadi (d. 849 AH), who was also the teacher of Sher Shah Suri. Similarly, Imam Razi's *Tafseer-e-Kabeer* was translated by Saifuddin Ardbaili into Persian on the instruction of Zaibun Nisa Begum and it was known as *Zaibut Tafseer*. The first translation of the Holy Qura'n in Persian language in India was done by Shah Waliullah (1703-62), which was known as *Fath ar-Rahman*. Farooqi relates that as the number of Arabic knowing people in India was quite limited and contrary to that every literate person would necessarily know the Persian language, Shah Waliullah considered it appropriate to translate the Holy Qura'n in Persian language so that the people could follow its spirit.⁴² Shah Abdul Aziz also wrote an exegesis, *Fathul Aziz*, in Persian.⁴³ However, it is reported that prior to all these works the first Persian translation of the Holy Qura'n

in the Sub-continent was done by the famous scholar Makhdoom Nuh Halai (d.998 AH).⁴⁴ Similarly, several important books of Tradition like *Sahih Muslim*, *Bukhari*, *Maota*, *Sharah Maota* etc., were also translated into Persian language. Geelani relates that during the medieval period in India, the impact of Persian language and Persian books on the common man's life, was so deep and intimate that even the street players and dramatists of that time used to depict the excerpts from *Kulliyat-e-Sa'di* and *Diwan-e-Hafiz* in their plays and socio-dramas.⁴⁵

Persian language in India also interacted closely with Sanskrit, the ancient Indian language, which was in vogue in India prior to the arrival of Turko-Iranians. Tara Chand points out that in literature Sanskrit no more provided the medium for the most vital needs of the people. So, human thought created new instruments of self-expression.⁴⁶ Most of the Turko-Iranian rulers did not ignore this native language. Rather, they took interest in the classical works of Sanskrit and got them translated into Persian for their wider appreciation by the Persian-speaking people. This was yet another attempts to develop an understanding, mutual trust and harmonious relationship between the Hindus and Muslims of the Sub-continent. Ray relates that many Muslim kings also showed interest in the Brahminical education and encouraged scholars for translation of Sanskrit works

into Persian.⁴⁷ This interest in Sanskrit works reached to its peak during the days of Mughal Emperors, Akbar and Shahjahan. Akbar got many Sanskrit works translated into Persian which included *Mahabharat*, translated by Abdul Qadir, Faizi, Mulla Sheri, etc.⁴⁸ Badauni also translated *Ramayana* into Persian in 999 A.H.⁴⁹ Faizi had also started the poetic translation of *Lilawati* into Persian but could not complete it.⁵⁰ During the reign of Shahjahan, his son Dara Shikoh who himself was a great scholar, translated the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagwat Geeta* and *Yoga Vasishta Ramayana* with the help of Pandits called from Banaras (Varanasi). Dara also assembled many Hindus for translating Vedas into Persian.⁵¹ Geelani also relates that a famous scholar, Abdul Aziz Dehlavi, had translated *Barahi Sankhtala Patal Bahut Banmara Mahar*, a Sanskrit work, into Persian and he used to calculate and predict solar and lunar eclipses with the help of this book.⁵² As stated earlier, besides learning Sanskrit Muslims also took interest in Brahminical education of the time. Sadiq relates in *Alamgirnama* that Muslim students attended schools run by Hindu teachers as well for instruction in non-religious studies like Astronomy, Astrology, Mathematics and Medicine, etc.⁵³

Persian influence on Hindi and other Indian regional languages was also quite deep. In Hindi it could be seen in its vocabulary, grammar, metaphor, prosody and style. And,

what is true of Hindi, is true of Marathi and Bengali and more so of Punjabi and Sindhi, the languages spoken in the areas which were conquered by the Persian speaking rulers from Ghaznavids to Mughals.⁵⁴ Mir Ghulam Ali Azad in his work *Ma-asir-ul-Kiram* mentions the names of eight poets of Bilgram who wrote in Hindi, quoting extensively from their works about the influence of Persian and Hindi. Ghulam Ali argues that whoever has studied both Persian and Hindi and has fully cultivated a taste to distinguish between what is white and what is black, will endorse the words of the *fakir* (writer).⁵⁵ The rhyming Arithmetical rules taught to Hindu children of Shubhankar were composed during the Muslim period, as is evident from the use of so many Persian words in it. These rules were taught in many *Pathshalas* of Bengal during the medieval period.⁵⁶ Saksena argues that vernacular Hindi also influenced Persian, giving birth to an Indo-Persian style as against the pure Persian style of literature. This Indo-Persian style of literature had ideas and thoughts taken from the powerful Indian environment in which Persian was flourishing.⁵⁷

The influence of Persian particularly in the Northern India also emerged in the form of creation of a new language of the masses, which was named as Urdu. Ram Babu Saxena argues that Persian contributed in three ways to the development of Urdu language and literature: (i) It corporates

largest number of Persian words, (ii) its script is Persian, and (iii) the rhythm of its poetry also comes from Persian.⁵⁸ Over the period of time Urdu had become a symbol of Hindu-Muslim composite culture and unity in the country. In fact, large number of Hindus and Muslims used Urdu as their medium of education and communication when Persian ceased to be a medium of instruction after the British domination of India.

To conclude, this may be argued that the close interaction and relationship between India and Iran during the medieval period got thoroughly reflected in all dimensions of the education system as it flourished in India during that period leading to multifaceted developments in the form, content, mode, medium and material of Indian education. It introduced several such ideas in the Indian educational set up which were modern and democratic in outlook. In a way this relationship in educational field introduced many such advanced concepts and philosophies in the educational practice, which were not prevalent even in Europe until then.

The close interaction also led to enrichment of the Indo-Iranian cultures and development of a valuable heritage of the two nations. Centuries ago the Ghaznavids and Mughals initiated work on the important educational goal of the modern day society i.e., "Education for All", by opening the doors of *maktabs* and *madrasas* for all Indians, Hindus (of

all castes) and Muslim without any discrimination. They modernised formal education by incorporating all liberal and scientific subjects and vocational training in its curriculum. They launched the grants-in-aid system for educational institutions, which many modern Indian educationists think, was first introduced by Charles Wood of the East India Company through his Educational Despatch of 1854. They created a lasting harmonious bond between Hindus and Muslims of India by recognising and supporting traditional Hindu educational institutions, encouraging Muslim children's education in Indian Sciences and by appreciating and respecting the rich Sanskrit literature through its large scale translation into Persian language. By treating those Hindus and Muslims who were educated in *madrasas* through Persian medium equally and without any discrimination. For all government jobs they not only demonstrated their belief in a secular policy in all spheres of activities in the Indian society but also upheld the honour of education and that of Indians.

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 24. Krishnanal Ray, Education in Medieval India, B.R. Publishers, Delhi, 1984, p. 289

25. Ibid.
26. A. L. Srivastava, *Medieval Indian Culture*, Agra, 1964, p. 102
27. Krishnanal Ray, *Education in Medieval India*, B.R. Publishers, Delhi, 1984, p. 47, quoted from Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, Vol. II, tr. by William Irvine (1907-08), p. 424
28. Qamruddin, *Hindustan Ki Deeni Darsgahen* (Urdu), Hamdard, New Delhi, 1996, p. 105
29. Zainus Sajedin Qasmi, *Dars-e-Nizami - Historical Perspective and Modern Demands in Tarjuman-e-Darul Uloom, Jadeed*, Deoband, Nov., 1994, p. 9. Mir Fathullah Shirazi is considered as the progenitor of Mulla Nizamuddin. Therefore, Niazmuddin laid more emphasis on books on Logic and Philosophy in his syllabus. The scholars too supported his reforms. The impact of curricular reform of Mir Fathullah Shirazi (d. 1588) reached to Mulla Nizamuddin (d. 1748) through Mufti Abdus Salam Lahori, Mufti Abdus Salam Dehlvi, Maulana Danial Jaorasi, his father Mulla Qutbuddin Sehaldi (d. 1691) and his own brothers Qutbuddin Shamsabadi and Hafiz Amanullah Banarsi.
30. Abdul Hai al-Hasani, *Al-Thaqafat Islamia fil Hind*,

- quoted in S. M. W. R. Nadvi, and S. Ghulam Mohiuddin, 1985, p. 10
31. Qamruddin, *Hindustan Ki Deeni Darsgahen* (Urdu), Hamdard, New Delhi, 1996, pp. 105-10
 32. S. M. W. R. Nadvi and Syed Ghulam Mohiuddin, *Survey of Muslim Education - India*, The Islamic Academy, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 5-8
 33. *Ibid*, p. 25
 34. Z. H. Farooqi, *Musalmanon Ka Taleemi Nizam* (Urdu), Maktaba-e-Jamia, Delhi, 1992, p. 84
 35. M. N. Law, *Promotion of Learning in India*, London, 1961, pp. 75-76
 36. S. M. A. Geelani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ki Taleem-e-Tarbiat* (Urdu), Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1984, p. 316
 37. Krishnanal. Ray, *Education in Medieval India*, B.R. Publishers, Delhi, 1984, p. 32
 38. *Ibid*, Quoted from *Ain-i-Akbari*, Tr. by Gladwin, p. 146
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41. Shibli Nomani, *Sher-ul-Ajam* (Urdu) Vol. III, Maarif Press, Azamgarh, 1920, p. 31
42. Z. H. Farooqi, *Musalmanon Ka Taleemi Nizam* (Urdu), Maktaba-e-Jamia, Delhi, 1992, p. 24, 1920
43. S. M. A. Geelani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ki Taleem -o-Tarbiat* (Urdu), Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1984, Vol. p. 42
44. Z. H. Farooqi, *Musalmanon Ka Taleemi Nizam* (Urdu), Maktaba-e-Jamia, Delhi, 1992, p. 24
45. S. M. A. Geelani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ki Taleem -o-Tarbiat* (Urdu), Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1984, Vol. I, p.135
46. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, The Indian Press Allahabad, 1963, pp. 132-40
47. Krishnanal. Ray, *Education in Medieval India*, B.R. Publishers, Delhi, 1984, p.12
48. S. M. A. Geelani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ki Taleem -o-Tarbiat* (Urdu), Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1984, Vol. I, p. 81
49. Shibli Nomani, *Sher-ul-Ajam* (Urdu), Vol. III, Marif Press, Azamgarh, 1920 p. 69. K. Ray (p. 22) and S. M. A. Geelani have written with reference to "Elliot

and Dowsons” (pp. 159-74) that Mahabharat was translated by Abdul Qadir Badauni. Shibli has argued that two chapters of it were translated by Faizi and the entire translation was jointly done by Badauni, Faizi, Mulla Sheri and others.

50. Shibli Nomani, *Sher-ul-Ajam (Urdu)* Vol. III, Maarif Press, Azamgarh, 1920, p. 70
51. H. M. Elliot, and J. Dowson, *History of India as told by its Own Historians*, Vol. VII, London, 1867-73, pp. 159, 179, quoted in K. Ray, p. 23
52. S. M. Geelani, *Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ki Taleem -o-Tarbiat (Urdu)*, Vol. II, 2nd Edition, Delhi, 1984, p. 153
53. Krishnanal. Ray, *Education in Medieval India*, B.R. Publishers, Delhi, 1984, pp.42-43, quoted from Sadiq’s *Alamgimama*, p. 189
54. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, The Indian Press Allahabad, 1963, 139-40, Tara Chand has taken it from Mir Ghulam Ali Azad’s *Ma-asir-ul-Kiram* (p. 232), For a more detailed study of this influence read Mohammad Hasan Azad’s *Ab-i-Hayat* (pp. 27-68), Influences of Persian on Marathi, and Dinesh Chandra Sen’s *Anthology of Bengali Language and Literature*.

55. Ibid, pp. 33-34
56. J. T. Wheeler, History of India - Hindu and Mohammedan Period, Vol. IV, London, 1876-81, p. 483, quoted in Ray.
57. B. P. Saksena, History of Shah Jahan of Delhi, Allahabad, 1958, p. 147
58. Ram Babu Saxena, History of Urdu Literature, Delhi, 1929, pp. 3-4.