

Indo-Persian Literature

A Tapestry of Indo-Iranian Hues – Representing a Composite Cultural Identity

Prof. Azarmi Dukht Safavi

*Hony Advisor & former Director,
Institute of Persian Research
& former Chairman, Dept. of Persian A.M.U.*

In today's rapidly changing scenario of global cultural perceptions, one may wish and seek to preserve and safeguard the indigenous identity of one's tradition and civilisational values. India and Iran, both ancient civilizations, share a fairly large number of historical, racial, cultural and linguistic denominations. It seems only natural that they should be partners in carving a niche in the world for this particular cultural fragmentation.

But in order to do so, first they have to explore and bring to light its various aspects and define their relevance today. To achieve this goal, a study of Persian sources, particularly those of Indo-Persian language and literature, becomes inevitable. The massive information available in the written word – earlier in the ancient registers of languages and later on in Persian literature throws light on the antiquity, variety and similarity in these cultural ties. All too often, the study of literature is carried out without paying careful attention to its other equally important aspects besides sheer aesthetics. It is true that literature is basically concerned with that, however, literary works may also reflect the life and mind, hopes and aspirations, fears and problems, cultural and social ethos of its time. The “study of mentalities”, as the French historians have called it, has opened new vistas in literary researches. We also must look at Persian literature, in the light of the above, to know and ascertain the shared identity between the Indian and Iranian cultures. I wish to quote here from Kyomars Amiri:

«هند یک مرکز مهم زبان و ادب و شعر فارسی بوده است. آشنایی با افق اندیشه و
رشحه های خامه فارسی نویسان هند ما را متوجه می سازد که فرهنگ و تاریخ و
سبک و زبان این کشور متمدن نماینده هم آهنگی فرهنگی و فکری بین هند و ایران
می باشد که آفریده روابط کهن و تنگاتنگ بین هند و ایران است.»¹

Hind yak markaz-e-mohim-e-zabān-u-adab-u-sh‘er-e-Fārsi bude ast. Āshnāi bā ufuq-e-andeesheh wa rashha ha-e-khāmāh-e-fārsi nawīsān-e-Hind mā rā muttawajjeh mi sāzād ke f arhang-e-tārīkh-u-sabk-u-zabān-e īn kishwar-e mutamaddin nam ayanda-e-ham āhangī-e farhangi wa fikri bayn-e-Hind-U-Iran mi bāshad ke āfaridah-e rawābit kuhan wa tangā tang-e-bayn-e-Hind wa Iran ast.

India has been an important center of Persian language, literature and poetry. Acquaintance with the intellectual horizons and the offerings of the pen of Persian writers of India make us realise the fact that the culture, history, style and language of this civilised country, represent the cultural and ideological similarity between India and Iran that has been created because of their ancient and close relations.

A quick look at these ties in ancient times show that contrary to the popular belief, India and Iran had cultural relations much before the advent of Islam in the Indian sub continent. This is borne out by a comparative glance at the Vedas and Avesta. If read together, one can not but realize how close are the language and content of the Vedic Samhitas with the Avestan Gathas. How this twinship of languages spreading over such vast stretch of land as India and Iran combined, may hint at some sort of common dwelling without which it is rather impossible to explain the commonness of the idiom in these two countries at that early stage of world history.

“Avesta, the oldest known language of Iran (8th century B.C.) specially the Gathas and the Vedic Sanskrit, particularly that of the Samhitas, bear close resemblance. This is shown in their vocabulary:

Avestan	Sanskrit	English
Zasta	Hasta	Hand
Ratum	Ritu	Season
Gam	Gam	to go
Hura	Sura	Wine
Aspa	Asva	Horse
Vis	Visa	Poison
Tat	Tat	That
Putra	Putra	Son
Mano	Manos	Mind ²

So far as thought and the underlying religious ideology are concerned they too had a necessary relationship in the two cultural formations. Says Prof. Singh:

“Similarities may be found between the Avestan Ahuramazda and the Asura Mahan in the Rigveda, Agni and Indra and Mitra. The Vedic pair of Indra and Varuna, however falls apart of each other in the Iranian context. Subsequently becoming hostile to each other, resulting into the Avestan dualism of good and evil, represented by Ahuramazda and Agra Manyu.”³

This antipathy was resolved and eliminated and the original state of things restored in the works of Dara Shikoh, particularly his *Sirr-e-Akbar* and *Samudra Sangam مجمع البحرين*, both important work on Hindu religious thought and philosophy.

A resemblance between the titles of the Kayanian kings in ancient Iran like ‘Kaykhusrau’ is found with the titles of ancient names of Kavi in Rigveda. The conception of thirty three gods, the performance of yajna or yasna, the recitation of mantras or ‘manthras’, the offering of ‘ahuti’ or ‘azuti’, a belief in the cosmic order and a common lore are some of the distinctive features of the religions of the Vedas and the Avesta. Mention may also be made of the sacred thread that the followers of both the Vedic and the Avestan religions are invested with in their seventh or eighth year.⁴

The extensive empire of Chankya and Chandra Gupt had many common features with the Persian empire of the Hukhamanshi monarchs. The wooden castles at Patliputra bore close resemblance to the Achaemenid’s palaces as mentioned by scholars of both India and Iran.

We know that the Iranian format of folktales, Dastan, Qissa and anecdotal literature were greatly influenced by the Panch Tantra which was taken to Iran during the Sasanian times. Also, the tradition of animal fables, a particularly Indian and Sanskrit tradition, was promoted by Persian writers through translations such as Nakhshabi’s *Tooti Nama*.

The seed that was sown so early in history flourished to become a full blown blossom in the medieval period. A constant interaction between Indian and Iranian scholars, poets, Ulemas, mystics and men of knowledge gave birth to a syncretic society embodying an Indo-Iranian identity. Great Persian scholar Prof. Amir Hasan Abidi said:

“For Indians, Persian does not signify just a language, but a whole culture which blossomed on the banks of our sacred rivers like Ganga and Jamuna, Narmada and Godavari, Jhelum and Gomti.”⁵

He has thus associated the spread of Persian and the syncretic culture it promoted to different parts of India – North, South, East and West.

Coming together of human groups with specific cultural traits with groups of equally rich cultures, has seldom failed to add new dimensions to them both, but what happened in India as a result of the coming together of the Indians and Iranians is something remarkable and unique. It gave rise in India to a mighty flow of shared literary and cultural values and creation of a composite society. The two traditions gained new creative vigour and vitality in this process and left a deep impact on Indian life. New forms and techniques in art, literature, music, architecture were born and the creative spirit of India bloomed. Persian language became a medium of literary expression and simultaneously, these Indo Persian literary sources became a window towards this shared identity.

What I wish to point out here is that this synthesis was not merely due to the political, social and economic reasons. Of course they played their own very crucial part in creating the background and providing a meeting point. But, it may be said, that later on, the chief architect and main motivation of this cultural synthesis became the similarity of temperaments and mentalities between these two great nations = the Indians and the Iranians. This similarity may be epitomized in three chief traits: (1) Inclination towards spiritualism and mysticism; (2) humanism and (3) a love for beauty. These may even be interpreted in the famous philosophical Kantian triangle of ‘Truth’, ‘Love’ and ‘Beauty’. These fundamental similarities of temperaments mark the traditional identity of both the Indian and the Iranian people and society and Persian literature has been a witness and a record keeper of this identity. This is the common and the shared heritage which we must seek to protect and safeguard, even promote against the *تہاجم فرهنگی* or cultural invasion.

Let us have a brief look at each one of them as they are represented in Persian language and literature produced on the Indian sub-continent:

1. Spiritualism / Mysticism :

Dr. Tara Chand has said:

“Indian Culture comprehends ideas of different orders. It embraces in its orbit beliefs, customs, rites, institutions, arts, religions and philosophies- eternally seeking to find a unity for the heterogeneous elements which make up its totality. The complexity of Indian life is ancient because from the dawn of history India has been the meeting place of different civilizations, some of them have brought with them these valuable deposits which enriched the ancient soil, out of which grew even more luxuriant cultures.”⁶

It may be fairly said that the commingling of Iranian mysticism or عرفان with Indian spiritualism and mystic thought and Bhagti ideology proved to be one such valuable addition that enhanced the sphere and depth of Indian culture, thought and society.

From times immemorial to the present day man has always sought to rise above the mundane and attain the Absolute or Universal Truth. Besides formal religion, this quest has been carried forward by many informal, philosophical, devotional and other methods or ideas, sometimes conforming with religion at others beyond that. The aim is to forsake the law of causation of the materialistic existence and transport ideally with the Divine or the Ultimate Reality, achieved by discerning Knowledge or معرفت or gnosis.

For the Sufis, Yogis, Saints, mystics, Dervshes, and سالک, this quest may be mystical and based on a deliberate and conscious effort by traversing the mystical path or سلوک with the guidance of a پیر or Guru; but even for an ordinary man sometimes this material world may not be enough, may not provide him with the satisfaction and he may yearn, however unconsciously, to seek something beyond it. In the modern parlance, he may wish to have something like a personal God. The path of gnosis راه معرفت may also have many strata, like Jami said in the لوائح and a common man may also be a seeker – no matter at what a primary level, and he may also crave for spiritual satisfaction.

It is a well-known fact and I do not wish to elaborate upon it here that for centuries in both India and Iran, this yearning for the mystical and the spiritual has been a prominent part of culture and an important aspect of their literary and poetic output.

From عطار، رومی، حافظ، سنائی to منصور حلاج، معروف بلخی، رابعه بصری، بایزید بسطامی and Jami in Iran and from فرید گنج شکر، رحیم، دادو to گرو نانک، فرید گنج شکر and Beghum Bairagi, in India, the mystical and spiritual strain of thought has been promoted and handed down to the common people for hundreds of years.

It should be pointed out here that the Indian mystical thought was not new to the Iranians.

“As we know, India and the Persian Gulf has close commercial relations. With trade, undoubtedly ideas were also exchanged. It stands to reason that when Indian steel and sword, mentioned by even Ferdousi in his Shahnameh, and spice and gold reached Persia and Iraq, Indian philosophical ideas should have travelled there too and vice versa. As Jean Perier said ‘ The black eyed and olive coloured Hindus were brushing their shoulders against those of the Muslims in the cities of the Caliphate.’”⁷

Later on during the medieval period when Iranian Tasawwuf made India its home it was further exposed to and intermingled with Indian mysticism as also with the Bhakti movement. A copious literature of this intermingled mystic thought came into existence in Persian which, today signifies an Indo-Iranian identity. Majmaul Bahrain of Dara Shikoh is a remarkable study of the comparative Hindu and Muslim religious thought at a mystical level, finding many points of resemblance between the two. This great grandson of Akbar, that great believer in the unity of people, rejected all conflict and discord, because to him, the entire world is one magnificent reflection of that one Reality: He says:

"هر گاه همه اوست، تو کیستی، چاره ای غیر از این نیست که خود را نیز از او بدانی و در
بند من و تو نمایی...."[^]

خواهی که دلت ز وصل گردد گلشن خود را توبه جستجوئی دلبر افگن
*Hargāh hameh ūst tu kīstī. Chāra-e-ghair az īn nīst ke khud rā nīz az ū bedooni wa dar
band e man wa tū na mānī.*

Khwahi ke dilat ze wasl gardad gulashan; Khud ra tu ba just-u-jū-e-dilbar afgan.

When He is All, who art thou? There is no way but to consider thyself as one with Him and not be trapped in I and thou.

If thou wishest thy heart to become a flower - garden;

commit thyself to His quest.

.....

عاشق هم از اسلام خراب است و هم از کفر پروانه چراغ حرم و دیر نداند

‘Āshiq ham az Islām kharāb ast u ham az kufr; Parwaneh charāgh-e-haram-u-dayr na dānad.

A lover is Violated both by Islam and by idol worshipping; The moth knoweth not the difference between the lamp of K’aba and that of the temple.

.....

The Sufi teachings, exercised a special appeal for the general masses and the Sufi Khanqahs had a massive role in educating people in religious toleration, good behavior and co-existence by establishing an interconnected network throughout the country. They also became schools of poetry and mystical writings, attracting many poets and writers. Like many Iranian poets, these Indian poets like Khusrau, Hasan, Jamaluddin Hansvi etc. promoted harmony in the form of transcendental love عشق حقیقی.

Due to the impact of Hindu philosophy and its mystical ideas, Sufi poetry in India acquired a special nuance: Although emanating from established Islamic Sufi orders, it became more meditative in nature and more profound and suggestive. The yogi practice in the Hindu mystical stream along with its attitude of otherworldiness, denouncing of normal human ambition for a better life and materialistic comforts and to reduce one's requirements to a minimum found an important place in Persian poetry. Bedil's ghazals are its vivid example. Prof. Nabi Hadi has written:

”بیدل کے افکار میں ایسے عناصر شدت سے موجود ہیں جن کا سلسلہ قدیم ہندی فلسفے سے جاملتا ہے۔“⁹

Bedil ke afkār mein aisey 'anāsir shiddat se maujood hain jin ka silsila qadīm Hindu falsafe se ja miltā hai.

Many elements in Bedil's thought take inspiration from the Hindu philosophy.

To look inside one self to do محاسبہ, to alleviate one's mystical status, are essential teachings of all great Sufi poets like Sanai, Attar, Rumi etc. But Bedil's ghazal, besides these Sufistic practices, suggests other ways also to find oneself and the ultimate spiritual liberation and full comprehension and realization of 'oneness' as well as identification with the Supreme Being: to close eyes "چشم بستن"; to seek solitude "خلوت" to maintain silence "گزیدن" خاموش نشستن and to control Breaths "نفس در کشیدن".

His ghazals frequently refer to them:

چشم بر بند تلاش دگرت لازم نیست لغزش یک مژہ از دیرو حرم میگذرد

Chashm bar band talāsh digarat lazim nīst;

Laghzish yek mizah az dair u haram mi guzarad.

Close the eyes, you need not search any further;

One blinking of the eye lash takes you beyond the temple and the Ka'ba.

به دل روکن گلستان تو اینست بخود می پیچ جولان تو این است

Ba dil rū kun gulistan-e-tu īnast; Be khud mi pich jaulān-e-tu in ast.

Pay attention to the heart, thither is your garden; Whirl around your self, that is the arena to gallop on your horse.

This solitude seeking poet finds the true meaning of انس و سکوت و خاموشی in

معنی آسودگی نفس بحر خاموشی است

M'ani-e-āsudagi-e-nafs bahr-e-khāmushīst.

Meaning of Quietitude of the Self is inherent the Ocean of Solitude.

He says:

"غنچه ها در فصل خاموشی بهار خیالند و در هنگام لب کشودن پریشانی تمثال. موج تا خروش دارد از بحر جداست چون زبان بکام وردید عین دریا ست."

Ghnuchah hā dar fasl-e-khāmoshī bahār-e-khayaland wa dar hangām-e-lab kushudan paraishani-e-tamsal. Mauj ta kharosh dārad az bahr judast, Chun zaban dar ba kam wardid 'ayn-e-daryast.

In moments of solitude, blossoms become the spring of fantasy and breaking of silence disturbs the imagination. Waves are separate from the ocean till they are ebullient, Once quiet, they become Ocean itself.

Bedil has created hundreds of metaphors with خاموشی :

ملک خاموشی، ناله ی خاموش، شور خموشی، طلسم خاموشی، لعل خاموشی، موسیقار خاموش، دام خموشی، شمع خاموشی، ساز خاموشی، شعله خاموشی، محراب خاموشی، غم خانه خاموشی، نیستان خاموشی = ز محفل رفتگان در خاک هم دارند سامانها – مشو غافل ز موسیقار خاموشی نینهانها.

The impact of this interaction of thoughts and feelings found its way and permeated the poetry of almost every poet whether Sufi or non-Sufi. They basked in the effulgence of that one Reality, indifferent to ritualistic differences:

از یک چراغ کعبه و بت خانه روشن است در حیرتم که تفرقه کفر و دین کجاست

Az yek charāgh k'āba-u-But khāneh roushan ast; Dar hairatam ke tafriqa-e-kufr-u-dīn kujāst.

It is but with one lamp that both the K'aba and the place of the idol worshippers are illumined. I wonder where from does the conflict between Din and infidelity arise?

An entire spectrum of a common mystical and spiritual thought is available in the verses and writings of Persian poets and writers in India, both Muslim and Hindu: Swami Bhupat Rai, Beghum Bairagi said:

در فضای عشق جانان بوالهوس را کار نیست هر سری شایسته سنگ و سزای دار نیست

Dar fazā-e-'ishq-e-jānān bulhawās ra kār nīst; Har sarī shāyesteh sang wa sazāi dār nīst.

The love of the beloved is not for the lustful; not every head is worthy of stone, neither is it deserving of the noose.

He composed a mystical masnawi in the tradition of Maulana Rum:

دل طپیدن ها حکایت می کند چشم خونباران روایت می کند

Dil tapeedan hā shekāyat mi kunad; Chashm e khoon bārān rewayāt mī kunad.

The blood-shedding eyes tell the story and complain of the throbbing heart.

Farid Ganj-e-Shakar was one of the precursors of this mystic tradition. His duBaiti or Dohas are a charming mixture of Punjabi and Persian with the same mystic nuance:

وقت سحر وقت مناجات ہے خیز در این وقت کہ برکات ہے

پند شکر گنج بہ دل جان شنو ضائع مکن عمر کہ بیہات ہے

Waqt e sahar waqt e munājāt hai; Khez dar ān waqt ke barkāt hai.

Pand e shaker Ganj ba dil jan shano; Zā'y ma kun 'umr ke haihāt hai.

Morning is the time for prayer; wake up in this auspicious moment. Listen to the council of Ganj-e-shakar with heart and soul; Do not wither away your life, that is lamentable.

Renowned Iranian scholar Dr. Mahdi Mahouzi wrote:

عقاید و احساساتیکہ شعرای فارسی گوی ہند در شعر خود اظہار می دارند مستقیماً یا بطور غیر مستقیم تحت تاثیر عقاید و احساسات صوفیا و عرفا و شعرای ایران می باشد۔ البتہ توام با آن، شاعران ہندی با فکر بودائی و فلسفہ باگنی ہندوان نغمہ های شیرین نی شری کرشنا ہم کاملاً آشنا بودند۔ باہم آمیختگی و مخلوط شدن عرفان ایرانی با فکر صوفیا و درویشان ہندی شعر و فکر شان کہ منع «وحدت روحی» و رای ہرگونہ تبعیض و تفرقہ ساختہ است را آنان برد۔ مولانا بودند کہ فرمود:

تو برای وصل کردن آمدی نی برای فصل کردن آمدی^{۱۰}

'Aqāid wa ehsāsāt-ke shu'ara-e-fārsi goo-e-Hind dar sh'er-e-khud izhār mi dārand, mustaqīmān ya bataur-e-ghair mustaqīm tahat-e-tāseer-e-'aqaid u ehsāsāt-e-sūfia wa 'urafa wa shu'ara-e-Iran mi bāshad. Albatteh, tauam ba ān, sha'erān-e-Hindi ba fikr-e-Budai wa falsafa-e-Bhakti-e-Hindustān wa naghma-e-shirīn-e-nai-e-Shri K rishna h am kāmīlan āshna būdand. Bāham amikhtagi wa makhloot shudan-e-'Irfan-e- Irani ba fikr-e- Sufia wa Darvishan-e Hindi wa fikr shān rā manba'-e-wahdat-e-rīhi warāi har guneh tab'iz u tafreqa sākhthe ast, maulana budanad ke farmud:

Tu braai wasl kardan āmadi; Nei bara-e-fasl kardan āmadi

Beliefs and feelings that the Persian Poets of India express in their poetry are directly or indirectly, influenced by the thoughts and feelings of the Sufis and Gnostics and poets of Iran. Along with this, they were also perfectly familiar with the Buddhist ideology, the Bhakti philosophy of the Hindus and the sweet melodies of Shri Krishna's flute. Mixing of Iranian mysticism with the ideology of the Indian Sufis and Dervishes, have made their thought and poetry a source of spiritual unity beyond all conflict and discord, as Maulana said:

You have come to unite; you have not come to disjoint.

Bu Ali Shah Qalandar's verse remind one of Maulana:

منم محو جمال او نمی دانم کجا رفتم شدم غرق وصال او نمی دانم کجا رفتم

.....

هم فردم هم نردجم، هم بحر و هم موجم هم خسرو و هم فوجم هم باده و هم جامم

Manam mahv-e-jamāl-e-ū namī danam kujā raftam

Shudam gharq-e-wisal-e-ū namī danam kuja raftam

Ham fardam u Ham zaujam, ham bahram u ham maujam;

Ham khusraw u ham faujam, ham bādah u ham jāmam

I am lost in His Beauty, Am not aware did I go. I am drowned in His Nearness, Am not aware where did I go.

I am one, I am two some; I am a wave, I am an ocean;

I am the king; I am the army; I am the wine, I am the wine cup.

Traces of وحدة الوجود of the Iranian mystic thought are visible in the poetry of famous Maharashtrian poet Tuka Ram: Says he:

First among the great names is Allah,

Never forget to repeat it

He is one, thou are one, thou art one.

A great Bhakt, Sufi, Saint and poet who represent the Indian tradition of Bhakti and of Iranian Tasawwuf was Kabir. An intrepid pathfinder, a pioneer of the unity of all religions. Tara Chand writes:

“The expression of Kabir's teaching was shaped by that of Iranian Sufis, like Attar, Rumi and Sadi.”¹¹

He used both Sanskrit and Persian terms and also ریخته and Hindi Bhasha. Ahmad Shah the translator of Kabir's کبیچک found over two hundred Persian words in his work. Like Rumi he has come to the conclusion that love is the essence of all:

پوتھی پڑھ پڑھ جگت مواپنڈت بھیا نہ کوئی ڈھائی اچھر پریم کے پڑھے سو پنڈت ہو

Pothi parh parh jag mua, Pundit bhaya na koi

Dhai akchar prem ke parhe so Pundit hue

People gave up their lives to read books; but no one became a Pundit. Only he is a Pundit who reads two and a half letters of love.

And Rumi:

از محبت تلخ ها شیرین شود از محبت مس ها زرین شود

Az mohabbat talkh hā shīrīn shawad, Az mohabbat mass ha zarrīn shawad.
With Love Bitterness becomes sweet with love and copper becomes gold.

.....

شادباش ای عشق خوش سودای ما ای طیب جمله علت های ما

Shād bāsh aye 'ishq-e-khush sauda-e-mā, Aye tabib-e-jumla 'illat ha-e-ma.
Long live the wonderful Love; The cure for all our maladies.

A necessary message of this mystical sentiment became to reject prejudice and discord and to leave behind bigotry and dogma.

شانہ و مسواک و تسبیح ریا جبہ و دستار و قلب بی صفا
دام اندازی بروی مرد و زن خویش را گوی منم شیخ زمن

Shānah u miswāk u tasbih-e-riyā

Jubbah u dastār u qalb-e-bi safā

Dām andāzi bara-e-mard u zan

Khwish rā gui manam shaikh-e-zaman

Hair comb, teeth cleansing twig and the rosary, long robe and turban and an impure heart.

These are nothing but traps for the people and you call yourself the Shaikh of your time.

We have a vast treasure of learning, lore, poetry and prose in Indo-Persian literature representing this thought. Khusrau's poetry is a most remarkable presentation of this toleration and respect for other religions:

کافر عشقم مسلمانی مرا درکار نیست هر رگ من تارگشته حاجت زنار نیست

Kāfir-e-‘Ishqam musalmāni marā dar kār nīst;

Har rag-e-man tār gashteh hājat-e-zunnār nīst.

I am the idol worshipper of love, being a Muslim is of no use to me;

Each one of my vein is a string of love what need do I have of the sacred thread.

Khawaja Nizamuddin believed that:

هر قوم راست دینی راهی و قبله گاهی

Har qaum rāst din-e-rāhe wa qibla gāhē.

Every nation has a faith, a path and a worshipping place.

Bakhtiar Kaki said:

کردم از عشق سوالی که بگو حق بکجاست فت هر جا طلبی هست چه مسجد چه کنشت

kardam az ‘ishq sawale ke begoo haq be kujāst,

Guft har jā talbi hast cheh masjid cheh kanisht.

I asked love: tell me where can I find Truth? It said: wherever the quest may be, a mosque or a temple.

Sufistic treatises, malfoozat, Tazkiras even historical accounts like Chach Nama, Tarikh-i-Firozshahi of Shams Siraj Afeef, Jawamiul Hikayat of Afi etc. contain accounts of a tolerant attitude towards all communities.

Hasan Sijzi p reached respect and toleration towards all religions and narrates many anecdotes. In one anecdote he says that a kind hearted and generous non-believer is better than a cruel believer. In Fawaidul Fawad, he admires the unflinching faith of the Brahmins by narrating that if he was forced to lose everything he had, he would still feel happy if his Zunnar (religious thread) is left to him.

During the Mughal period, the idea of a cohesive, well-knit society was further strengthened by the energetic efforts of the Mughal kings, specially Akbar's "صلح کل", that aimed to blend the Hindu Muslim cultural traditions. Abul, Fazl, Faizi, Khan Khanan and others were involved in promoting harmonious policies. Sanskrit books and scriptures were translated into Persian, Khan Khanan, himself a poet of Brij Bhasha, patronized poets of that language, including Tulsi Das the revered versifier of the Ramayana. Poets like Urfi went on to say:

چنان با مردمان عرفی بسر کن کز پس از مردن مسلمانان به زمزم شوید و هندو بسوزانند

Chunān bā mardumān 'Urfī basar kun kaz pas az murdan;

Musalmanat ba zamzam shūyad u Hindu be suzānad .

O Urfī live such with people that after you die;

Musalman may wash thee with Zamzam and Hindu may wish to lit thy pyre.

Urfī did not like to confine divine instruction either to this or to that religious belief. He says that a moth in search of a lamp does not care whether it is found in Kaaba or temple:

عارف هم از اسلام خراب است و هم از کفر پروانه چراغ حرم و دیر نداند

Mullah Shaikh Sadullah versified Ramayana in Persian during Jahangir's reign. He extolls Sita and her piety beautifully:

تنش را پیرهن عریان ندیده چو جان اندر تن و تن جان ندیده

Tanash ra pairhan 'Uryān na dideh;

Chu jān andar tan u tan jān na dideh.

Her nakedness was not witnessed by her garments; She was Like the soul which is not revealed to the body.

Surpassing commonal prejudices, Persian poets composed impressive verses about various Hindu festivals, admiring and enjoying them:

Tughra Mashhadi:

شد وقت هولی باختن با رنگ و بو پرداختن صحرا چو گلبن ساختن باغ ارم خوار آمده

Shud waqt e holi bākhatan, bā rang u bū pardākhtan;

Khud ra chu gulbun sākhtan, bāgh e iram khwār āmadeh.

Time has come to celebrate Holi and play with colours and with perfume;

To make yourself (colourful) as a fresh blossom so that even the paradise garden is belittled.

.....

رسید چون زره لطف در جهان هولی نموده هر طرف طرفه گلستان هولی

Rasīd chūn ze rah-e-lutf dar jahān Holi;

Numudeh har taraf-e-turfa Gulsitan Holi.

When Holi graced the world with its pleasurable celebrations;

It made the entire world look like a wonderful garden.

دسهره:

باز دسهره رسید با همه فرخندگی گشت دوبالا نشاط عیش یکی شد هزار

Bāz Dussehra rusād bā hameh farkhundagi;

Gasht dubālā nāshāt , āysh yaki shud hazār.

Once again the festival of Dussehra arrived with all its propitiousness;

The joy became double fold and the pleasures multiplied thousand times

Qasim Kahi has famous ابیات "در صفت جوگی بچه". Similarly, Hindu poets wrote verses about Muslim festivals like Idd and Muharram: R aja R am M auzoon, s aid a bout Muharram:

محروم رفته از در تو تشنه لب حسین ای آب خاک شو که ترا آبرو نماند

Mahrūm rafteh az dar e tu tashna lab Hussain; Ay āb khāk shau ke tura ābru na mund.

Hussain (A.S) had to leave your portals with dry lips and disappointed; O water, turn into dust as you have lost all your dignity.

A Hindu poet composed a Qaseeda entitled:

"بعنوان "قصیده شعله بار در منقبت حیدر کرار صاحب ذوالفقار"

شاه عرب علی ولی نایب رسول کو را عطا نموده خدا ذوالفقار تیغ

خورشید تیغ خویش کند در بغل نهان گیرد بکف چو خسرو دلدل سوار تیغ

Shāhe Arab, Ali-e-wali, nāib-e-Rasūl;

Kū rā ata numudeh khuda zulfiqār tēgh;

Khurshīd tēgh-e-khīsh kunad dar baghal nihān;

Gīrad be kaf chu khusraw-e-Duldul Sawar tēg.

Ali, the monarch of the Arabs, the Wali, the successor of if the Prophet; Whom Allah gifted the swond of Zulfiqar;

If that Duldul- riding king picks up the swond in hand.the sun hides its sword under the arm.

Not only the shared mystic sentiments, also the Persian mystic terminology, similies and metaphors found their way in the poetry of local Indian languages. Syas Bulleh Shah – the famous Sufi from Pujab; extolling pantheism or وحدة الوجود in Punjabi:

کہوں آپ گرو کہیں چیلی ہے کہوں مجنوں ہے کہوں لیلی ہے
کہوں بنیا شاکر دوارہ ہے کہوں بیر لگی جٹ دھارا ہے
کہوں محبظ کا در تارا ہے

Kahoon ap guru kahoon chaili hai;
Kahoon majnoon hai kahoon layli hai;
Kahoon bania thakur dwara hai;
Kahoon bairagi jat dhara hai.
Kahoon mahjat ka dar tara hai.

He is a teacher, he is a disciple, He is Majnoon, He is Laila, He is the worshipping place,
he is the worshipped; He is the long- haired yogi, He is the symbol of the mosque.

.....

نا میں ہندو نامیں مسلم نامیں ملا قاضی ہو
ناول دوزک منگے میرا ناشوق بہشتن راجی ہو
"ہو" دا جامہ پہن دے آیا اسم کماون جاتی ہو

Nā main Hindu, na maīn Muslim, na main Mulla Qazi hou;
Nā dil duzak mange mera na shauq beheshtan razi hou.
Hu' da jama pahan ve aya ism kamauan zati hou.

I am neither a Muslim nor a Hindu, nor am I mulla nor a qāzi; my heart neither desires
the hell nor the Heaven. I am dressed in the garb of 'hu', seeking the eternal Being.

A charming combination of the Sufi imagery and the pathos of Indian folk geets mark such compositions. Tales of Love like the Iranian Shirin Farhad have been lovingly composed in Punjabi by poets like Hafiz Barkhudar, Kishan Singh Arif and others. On the other hand, Indian folklore like Sassi Pannoon, Waris Ali Shah's Heer Ranjha has distinct imprint of Persian mystical masnavis.

Bengali, Marathi, Gujrati, Hindi, Deccani and of course Urdu were imbued with this shared mystic thought: Dr. Abdus Sattar Dalvi has written:

(Tr.): "Due to the Khanqahs of the Sufis in Pune, a feeling of love and brotherhood was inculcated in the heart of people of different religions and communities. Sufistic terms were borrowed from Persian and Sanskrit words were used in the Sufi masnavis of Deccani Urdu."¹²

Nazir Akbarabadi, a bilingual poet of Persian and Urdu, has composed many verses in praise of Hindu festivals, and religious personalities like Shri Krishna, a figure of mystic dimensions:

ناچیں ہیں اس بہار سے بن ٹہن کے نند لال سر پر مکٹ برابے ہے پوشاک تن میں لال

Nāche hain iss bahar se ban than ke Nand lal;

Sar par mukut baraje hai, pushak tan main lal.

Krishna, all decked up in fineries, wearing a red dress and a crown on his head, is dancing with great vigour and beauty.

Ghalib enthusiastically calls the Holy city of Benaras the Kaaba of Hindustan.

عبادت خانہ ناقوسیانتست ہما نا کعبہ ہندوستان است

'Ebādat khānah-e-nāqusiān ast;

Hāmana K'aba-e-Hindūstani ast.

It is the worshipping place of the bell-ringers; Indeed, it is the K'aba of Hindustan.

.....

2. Humanism: Sadi's famous ایات will put this in the right perspective:

بنی آدم اعضای یکدیگراند کہ در آفرینش ز یک گوهراند

چو عضوی بدرد آوردگار دگر عضو ہا را نماوند قرار

تو کز محنت دیگران بی نمی نشاید کہ نامت نہند آدمی

Bani Adam 'Aza-e-yek digar and;

Ke dar āfarinish ze yek gauhar and;

Chu 'Uzvhe be dard awarad ruzegar;

Digar 'uzvha ra na manād qarār;

Tu kaz mehnat-e-dīgaran bi ghami;

Nashayad ke namat nehānd admi.

Human beings are members of a whole,

In creation of one essence and soul.

If one member is afflicted with pain,

Other members uneasy will remain.

If you've no sympathy for human pain,

The name of human you cannot retain

(<https://en.m.wikipedia.org>)

Another common trait between the Indian and Iranian mentality that reflected in both the cultures is an involvement with humanistic concerns. The term 'Humanism' is definitely not being used here as applied to that particular philosophical movement of 14th century Europe. It is used here in a much broader and greater sense. It implies here that basic

concern with human welfare, that harmonious thought encompassing every aspect of man's life and society, love for humanity, quest for freedom, compassion, justice, رواداری, contentment, عفو و درگزر، شفقت و ترحم، هم نوعی, and a benign and positive attitude towards the destitutes. These humanistic ideals have been well-grounded in the traditional Indian and Iranian cultures and celebrated by their writers and poets:

مباش در پی آزار و هرچه خواهی کن که در شریعت ما غیر از این گناهی نیست

Mabāsh dar pai-e-āzar u har cheh khwāhī kun;

Ke dar shariyat-e-mā ghair az īn gunahe nīst.

Do not be in pursuit of torturing people, whatever else you might do;

There is no sin worse than this in our religion.

.....

خلل پذیر بود هر بنا که می بینی

بجز بنای محبت که خالی از خلل است

Khalal pizīr buwad har benā ke mi bīnī;

Bajuz bena-e-muhabbat ke khāli az khalal ast.

Every foundation that you see is perishable;

Except the foundation of love which is free of all harm.

آسایش دو گیتی تفسیر این دو حرف است

با دوستان تلافی با دشمنان مدارا

Asāish-e-du giti tafsir-e-īn du harf ast; Bā dūstan talatuf, ba dūshmanān mudāra.

Comfort of the two worlds may be described in these two words;

Kindness towards friends, civility with foes.

میآزار موری که دانه کش است

که جان دارد و جان شیرین خوش است

Mayāzār murē ke dāna kash ast; Ke jān dārad u jān-e-shirīn khash ast.

Dont hurt the ant, it works hard to earn its livelihood; It has a life, and life is sweet and pleasurable.

India has always been a land of peace, congeniality and brotherhood. Its great religious books like the Bhagvad Gita, Ramayana and Maha Bharat, its Saints, Savants, great holy men like the Budhdha, Guru Nanak, Rama Nand, Kabir and others have always preached the humanistic values and promoted love among the mankind, discarding differences, conflict, violence and hatred. These teachings inculcated in people a certain stoicism that even the inadequacies of their ordinary life did not drive them to despair as they believed in the ultimate redemption. Forbearance, indifference to worldly comforts and material gains, respect for goodness and sacrifice and toleration for fellow human beings were shared by and dear to both the Indian and Iranian people alike. Their coming together and long, close interaction on the Indian sub-continent gave birth to a great humanistic culture which has been reflected beautifully in Persian language, literature and poetry:

فی الواقع سیر در شعر فارسی هند. سیریست در جهان هم دلی و انسانیت و گذشت و
جوانمردی و بشر دوستی و صمیمیت. شعرا و صوفیای این سر زمین از شاعران
انساندوست ایران مثل فردوسی و سعدی و حافظ و رومی الهام پذیرفته اند. از مسعود سعد
سلمان شروع کنیم تا بیدل و غالب و اقبال^{۱۳}

Fill waq 'e, sayr dar sh'er-e-fārsi-e-hind sayre ast dar jahān-e- hamdili wa insāniyat wa guzasht wa jawanmaradi wa bashar dūsti wa

samīmīyat. Shā'eran wa sufia-e- īn sarzamin az shā'eran-e-insān dūst-e-Iran mi sle Firdausi wa Sadi wa Hafiz wa Rumi ilham pizirufteh and, az Masood Sad shur-u kunaim ta Bedil wa Ghalib wa Iqbal.

As a matter of fact, the study of the Persian poets of India is a study of a world of unity and humanity and tolerance and uprightness and humanism and integrity. Poets and sufis of this land have been inspired by Firdousi and Sadi and Hafiz and Rumi and others. We may begin with Masood Sad Salmān and may continue upto Bedil and Ghalib.

Its most important aspect is its message of love and compassion:

Baba Lal Yogi's advice to Dara Shikoh was:

میازار کس را و از کس مرنج همین است سرمایه پنج گنج

Mayazār kas ra wa az kas maranj;

Hamīn ast sarmāyah-e-punj ganj

Neither harm anyone, nor be harmed;

This is the only treasure worthy of all the worldly wealth.

Another poet preaches co-existence, peace, forgiveness and benevolence:

هر که مارا یار نبود ایزد او را یار باد هر که مارا رنج داده راحتش بسیار باد

Har ke mā rā ranj dādeh rāhatash bisyār bād

Har ke mā rā yar nabwad Ayzid ūra yār bād

Anyone who is not friendly to us may God be his friend; one who has given us pain may he live in abundant comfort.

Gulab Rai, a Hindu poet of Persian, speaks of justice and compassion:

جز نام نکو اگر همه چیز نابود شود همین یقین دار

جمشید و سکندر و فریدون در نیکی و خیر بود هشیار

جانان تو وفا مکن به مسکین کن مهر و وفا مشو ستمگار

Juz nām-e-nikoo agar hameh chīz;

Na būd shawad hamīn yaqīn dār.

Jamshid u Sikandar u Faridun;

Dar niki u khaiyr būd hushiyār.

janan tu jafā makun beh miskīn;

kun mehr u wafa, mashau sitamgār.

Verily, everything else perishes; except a good name; Jamshid and Alexander and Faridun, they were kind and sagacious. O My friend, do not oppress the destitute; remain kind and compassionate, and be not cruel.

Shams Siraj Afeef in his تاریخ فیروز شاهی admonishes the rulers to be loving and just to all people, to shower gems of their bounties upon the masses and bring the strangers within the fold of their love:

"بیگانگان در دایره یگانگی گوهر خویش نمایند و از کثرت شفقت. لذت عاطفت عقده

دوستی بر دوستی افزایند." ۱۴

Bīganagān dar dāyera-e-yaganāgi gauhar-e-khish mi numayaād wa az kasrat-e-shafqat wa lazzat-e-'ātefat, 'uqda-e-dūsti bar dusti afzāyand.

Aliens display their nature in the circle of unity and, with an excess of affection and pleasure of benevolence, they become cause to enhance friendship.

Hasan Nizami Nishapuri writer of the famous Tajul Maasir narrates how Sultan Aiback instructed his nobles to win the bruised hearts of the domestics, soldiers and tenants by making good promises and making things easy and convenient for them. He also ordered them to treat the nobles and plebeians on equal footing and listen attentively to the

prayers of the oppressed ones and abstain from precipitancy, anger, prejudice and passion.¹⁵

Sufi Saints believed not only in religious duties but also in the importance of serving the humanity. Shaikh Sharfuddin Yahya Maneri wrote to one of his disciples that prayers, fastings, and worship are good but they are not as good as making others happy. As Sadi has said:

عبادت بجز خدمت خلق نیست به تسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست

'Ebadat bajuz khidmat e khalq nīst; Be tasbīh u sajjadah u dalaq nīst.

Allah's worship is nothing but to serve the people. It is not in the rosary or the prayer mat or the long robe.

In yet another letter he says that there are many paths leading to the creator but the shortest is to console the afflicted and to give comfort to people's hearts. He also asked Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq to display the same kindness, generosity and justice to the non-Muslim and the oppressed as to the Muslims.

Shams Siraj Afeef says that a king must be as affectionate to his people as a mother to his child:

نگه کن که چون مادر مهر سنج بر آن طفل خود چندبرداشت رنج

Nigah kun ke chūn mādar-e-mehr sanj; bar ān tīfl-e-khud chand bardāsh t ranj.

Behold! what pains a loving mother bears for her baby.

Sufis Hagiological discourses like those of Moinuddin Chishti, Chiragh Dehli and others are replete with the lessons of humanitarianism, expressing love for the needy, afflicted and grief stricken irrespective of their caste, creed and culture.

Akbar's famous letter to Shah Abbas Safavi, beginning with the informal «برادرم شاه» must also be mentioned here. This young king had so much concern for the common man that he advised the great Persian emperor known for his hot temper to be kind to his people:

"باید طبقات خلایق را که ودایع خزائن ایزدی اند به نظر اشفاق منظور داشته در تالیف

قلوب کوشش فرمود و رحمت الهی را شامل جمیع ملل ونهل دانسته بسعی هرچه تمامتر

خودرا به گلشن همیشه بهار صلح کل در آورد."¹⁶

Bāyad tabaqāt-e-khalāiq ra wada 'y-e-khazāin-e-Ayzidi d anist wa beh naz ar-e-ashfāq manzoor dashteh dar tāleef qulūb kooshish farmūd wa rahmat-e- elāhi ra shamile-jam'ee-e-mīlal u nehal danesteh ba sa'ī-e-har che tamāmtar khud ra beh gulshan e hamisha bahar e sulh e kul dar awurd.

Strata of the people, which are gifts from the Divine Treasury, should be looked upon with kindness and efforts should be made to assuage their hearts. All nations and people should be considered to be beneficiaries of the Divine Mercy and one must try to enter the eternal garden of Sulh-e-Kul.

For hundreds of years Persian poetry and literature have served as the messengers of love and compassion in India – love for fellow human beings and compassion for the destitute. These poets admonished the king that cruelty and injustice bring down the kingdom very soon – as Urfi said “like the water that tumbles down from the hill, or as the great Shaikh of Shiraz remarked:

چرا مردم را می آزاری مگر سر حکومت کردن نداری؟^{۱۷}

Chera mardum ra mī āzāri, magar sar e hukumat kardan na dari ?

Why do you put people to torture? Don't you have the intention to become their ruler ?

Such a doctrine of love and co-existence formulated by poets like Bu Ali Shah, Amir Khusrau, Urfi, Naziri, Iraqi, Dara Shikoh, Ghani Kashmiri Bedil was further advanced by the twentieth century poet Iqbal who said that “nation” does not mean association to a particular race or geographical region, what it means is the unity of purpose:

ملت از یکرنگی دلهاستی روشن از یک جلوه این سیناستی

Millat az yek rangi e dilhāsti; Roshan az yek jalwah in Sīnāsti.

Nation is born of the unity of hearts;

Like the Sinai mountain, which is illumined by the effulgence of only one Beauty.

.....

Love for Humanity can not be separated from a quest for freedom or آزادی بشری and aversion to repression. This freedom of spirit has been exposed and expressed in myriad ways in the Indian and Iranian and then the Indo-Iranian culture. Even mysticism was an expression of the freedom of the human spirit. Persian literature found a way, however subtle or symbolic it may be to show their discontent with repression in the society. Symbolism and allegory became a significant trait of Persian poetry. We find an extraordinary proliferation of fables, anecdotes, folklore, epics as well as ghazals and masnawis filled with symbolism and allegory that celebrate the value of human freedom.

It is interesting to note that even the beautiful Sarv (cypress tree) has a permanent quality attached to it by the poets i.e. ‘Sarv-e-Azad’. From a metaphorical use of animals to the sufistic teachings, symbols and metaphors. Indo- Persian literature bears testimony to this very important aspect of this shared identity and what the English Playwright Harold Pinter has said on Samuel Becket is an excellent example of this tendency in Persian poetry:

‘What we hear is an indication of what we do not hear. It is a necessary avoidance, a sly anguish and a smoke screen we communicate too well in what is unsaid.’¹⁸

In Persian poetry the unsaid has been said with a number of chosen metaphors, images, symbols and moods e.g.

Ghalib is ready to demolish the world to break away from its constraints:

خوشم که گنبد چرخ کهن فرو ریزد اگرچه خود همه بر فرق من فرو ریزد

Khusham ke gunbad e charkh e kuhan farū rizad;

Agarche kud hamah bar farq e man farū rizad.

I will be happy if the dome of this old sky comes crashing down;

Even if it may fall upon my own head.

To Iqbal this world is not enough for man:

آنچه در آدم بگنجد عالم است آنچه در عالم نگنجد آدم است

Uncheh dar ‘ādam be gunjad ‘ālam ast; Uncheh dar ‘ālam na gunjad ādam ast.

What a man embodies is the whole universe; What the universe cannot contain is man

I desire thy beauty in its best manifestation;

And thy beauty is perfect in every form; I desire thy beauty in every form.

.....

3. Love of Beauty:

بر حدیث من و حسن تو نیفزاید کس

حد همین است سخندانی و زیبایی را

Bar hadis-e-man-u-husn-e-tu-neyafazāyad kas;

Hadd haminast sukhan rāni-u-zībāi rā.

No one can add to my elocution and your charm;

It is the last limit of poetic excellence and beauty.

The above couplet sums up, the long tradition of seeking and creating beauty in Persian literature - both in India and Iran:

" هنر و شاهکار تجلی کمال و جمال زیبایی است. کار هنر و ادب از ستایش فطری هنرمند
در برابر حقیقت منشا می گیرد و هنر هم خود ستایشگر است و هم ستایش دیگران را بر
می انگیزد...."^{۱۹}

Hunar wa shāhkār tajalli-e- Kamāl-u-jamāl-e- Zibāi ast. Kār-e-hunar wa adab az satāish-e- fitri-e-hunarmand dar barābar-e-Haḡiqat manshā mi girad wa hunar-e-digarān ra bar mī angizad.

Art and its master pieces represent the perfection and height of beauty. Works of art and literature are motivated by the artist's natural appreciation of the essential beauty. As such, art is an admirer of beauty as well as inspires others to admire it.

Great Iranian scholar Janab Muṛtaza Mutaharri writes that man is naturally attracted towards the beauty and this love is deeply embedded in his heart and distinguishes him from other creations. He says:

" انسان تنها موجودیست که زیبایی را دوست دارد و کارهایش را با زیبایی همراه می کند.
هیچ کس نیست که از این احساس تهی باشد. انسان حتی در پوشیدن لباس تلاش می کند
تا زیبا تر را برگزیند. او از دیدن زیبایی های طبیعت مانند آب زلال، دریا، افق، آسمان،
خط زیبا، لذت می برد."^{۲۰}

Insān tanhā maūjudēst ke zibāi ra dūst dārad wa kārhāyash rā bā Zibāi hamrāh mi kunad Hīch kass nīst ke az īn ehsās tehi bāshad. Insān hatta dar pūshidan-e-libās talāsh mi kunad ta zibā ra bar guzinad. Ū az dādane zībāi hā-e-tabī‘at mānand-e-āb-e-zulāl, daryā, ufuq, āsemān, khatt-e-zibā lazzat mi barad.

Man is the only creature that loves beauty and is inspired by it. No one is devoid of this feeling. Man even prefers to choose a dress that is prettier. He takes pleasure in observing the beauties of nature such as pure water, the ocean, the horizon, the sky, elegant calligraphy etc.

According to him «شاهکار» master pieces are the creation of Beauty and love and we should consider them as the perfection and کمال of زیبایی:

"جمال و زیبائی با عشق توام است و موجد حرکت و جنبش است. پس زیبائی لازمه عشق است و عشق الهام بخش است و قهرمان ساز چه بسیار شاعران و هنرمندان و فیلسوفان مخلوق عشق یعنی مخلوق زیبائی اند." ^{۲۱}

Jamāl wa zibai bā ishq tauam ast wa mujid-e-harkat-u-junmbish ast. Pas zibāi lāzema-e-ishq ast wa ishq ilham bakhsh ast wa qaharamān saz. Cheh bisyār az sha'rān u hunarmandān wa Failsufan makhluq-e-'ishq y'rani makhluq-e-zibai and

Beauty is combined with love and creates excitement and motivation. As such, beauty is essential to love and love creates heroes. Many of the poets, artist and thinkers are creations of love and beauty.

One may also refer to a number of prophetic tradition (Hadith) and Quranic Ayahs that stress the importance of Beauty associating it with God Himself: *إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَمِيلٌ وَ يُحِبُّ الْجَمَالَ* (Allah is Beautiful and He loves beauty.)

Some of these even imply that He reprimands those who deprive man of beauty and that He has created it for man:

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ^{۲۲}

Imams have remembered Him in their prayers as 'Jameel' and made the supplication to reach Allah in all His Beauty:

" اللهم انى اسئلك من جمالك باجمله وكل جمالك جميل اللهم انى اسئلك بجمالك كله" ^{۲۳}

I desire thy beauty in its best manifestation; And thy beauty is perfect in every form; I desire thy beauty in every form.

It may also be remembered that in India, the Hindu philosophy and holy scriptures contain important thought regarding the Eternal quality of beauty in its pure and pristine form and Sanskrit aesthetics and poetry, have celebrated it. *Natya Shastra*, the great Sanskrit classic, notable for its "Rasa" theory has influenced the idea of beauty in dance, music and literary traditions in India and has inspired secondary literature. The spiritual and mystical aspect of *Natya Shastra* have influenced later day scholars to formulate theories regarding its nature and concept in its different aspects.

While discussing the essence and the significance of beauty one cannot possibly ignore how philosophy and ethics define it in their own different ways. According to Plato, beauty is the equilibrium and harmony of parts with the whole: *هم آهنگی جز با کل*. He believes that three things may define civilized society: Beauty, Justice and Truth and these three things ultimately constitute and relate to Good *خير*. Interestingly, we find almost the

same thought in Jalaluddin Dawwani's Akhlaq-e-Jalali. He says that Beauty is عدالت or equilibrium or justice between different values or qualities.

Discussion about beauty necessarily demands a deeper and detailed look into different theories, definitions, view points, controversies etc. (and let me assure you there are many); but it will not be possible to do so in this brief presentation. Therefore only a short description of its three main assets and aspects, as affirmed and described by most philosophers, scholars, experts of belle letter, religious thinkers etc. – both in the East and the West – and their impact on and reflection in the Indo Persian literature is attempted here :

In Western ethics and philosophical parlance beauty may be related with three basic faculties of man: Affection; Conation or Cognition – simply put it means that beauty may be associated with man's sensuous pleasure; his actions and his mental faculty. In Eastern tradition, these are almost similarly interpreted and have been described as :

Sensual Beauty: زیبایی محسوس

Connitive Beauty: زیبایی معنوی

Cognitive Beauty: زیبایی معقول

Indo Persian literature embodies beauty زیبایی in all its three forms showing a natural tendency towards absorbing, appreciating and celebrating their highest ideals. From Khusrau's vivacious tributes to mother nature and the doe-eyed beloved to the Sufia's adoration of the impeccable man اشرف المخلوقات and Bedil's transcendental mystical thought, it is a grand sweep of imagination and verbal excellence taking into its embrace all that is lovely and good and magnificent. It is a feast for our senses and a feast for our soul.

When Persian language and literature, cutting across the proverbial as well as the actual boundaries, came into contact with its equally culture – rich neighbor India, the literary output achieved fresh and broader dimensions. Surely in the beginning, it followed the pattern of thought and expression of its grand Iranian predecessors, but as centuries rolled by the socio-cultural conditions of the region gave birth to a distinct and independent style – the much criticized, still – admired S abk-i-Hindi whose pioneer was the great Khusrau himself and which flourished and acquired a new glory with the establishment of the Delhi Saltanate and Mughal empire. New empires with promise of expansion and development gave a hopeful fillip to art, poetry, literature etc. Specially under the patronage of the Mughal kings an artistic movement was initiated which was no less than the 14th century European Renaissance that inspired an involvement with beauty, love

and humanistic ideals. We see that the compositions of the Indo - Persian writers and poets like Khusrau, Masood Sad Salman, Hasan Dehlavi, Talib, Kaleem Kashani, Munir Lahori, Chandra Bhan Brahman, Bedi Azeemabadi and others represent a kaleidoscope of beauty's multi hues: They admired the voluptuous charms of the beloved wrote elaborately about the flowers, the nightingale, India's variant landscape, beauties of autumn and spring, the rainy season, the yellow mustard fields and so on. Kaleem Kashani wrote a long Qaseeda 'Dar Wasf-i-Kishwer-i-Hindustan'; Talib Amli, Jahangir's poet laureate wrote about the Beauty of "Barshegal". Masood Sad, Hasan Dehlavi, Bedil and a number of Sufi writers and poets motivated people to do good and to abstain from evil. They go deeper than the sensual in their search for something that impart beauty to man's inner self like: راستی و راستبازی، انسانی دوستی، عدل، شفقت، ترحم، صبر، and blesses him with اهتزاز روح, or the spiritual joy. Poetry of Khusrau, Bedil, Iraqi, Bu Ali Qalandar, Malfoozat of great Indian Sufis etc. are all steeped in that mystical splendor that is born out of their cognitive experience of the universal Truth and the Existential Harmony. Just a few examples should suffice here:

زیبائی محسوس : Sensual Beauty

دگر ماولسری	کز طرفه نامی	برنگ طرفه	مروارید خامی
به هیئت چست و برگش خرد و باریک		به هر جیب و به هر دل نیک نزدیک	
دگر آن رای چنپا شاه گل ها		که بولیش مشکبار آید چو گل ها	
چو معشوق سمن بر ناز پرورد		ولی رنگش چو روی عاشقان زرد	

(خسرو دهلوی)

<i>Digar māulsari kaz turfa namē;</i>	<i>berang-e-turfa murwarid-e-khāme.</i>
<i>Be haiat chust-u-bargash khurd-u-bārīk;</i>	<i>be har jāyb u be har dil nik nazdik,</i>
<i>digar ān rai champa shāh-e-gulha;</i>	<i>ke buyash mushk bār āyad chu gulhā.</i>
<i>Chu m'sashuq-e-saman bar nāz parvard;</i>	<i>Waley rangash chu ru-e-ashiqan zard.</i>

Then there is the flower named maulsari which not only has a wonderful name but resembles a raw pearl. It is very delicate in look and its leaves are thin and small; it is close to everyone's heart and is breast pocket. Another one is Rai Champa, the king flower, whose scent is like the musk and it is intoxicating like the wine. Although it has been cared for like the loved one, but its colour is pale like that of a lover.

آتشین رویت و خاکستر چو نیلو فرشده
 زنگ از آئینه خاکستر برد نبود عچ
 یا نقاب از آتش روی تو خاکستر شده
 گر ز خاکستر مه روی تو روشن تر شده
 قاسم کاهی اگر ز نار بندد عیب نیست
 زانکه از عشق بت سنیا سی کافر شده

(قاسم کاهی در صفت جوگی بچه)

Ātashīn rūyat wa khākistar cho niluofar shudeh;

Ya neqab az ātish-e-rū-e-tu khākistar shudele.

Zang az aineh khākistar barad nabwad 'ajab;

Gar ze khākistar mah-e-rūi tu roshan tar shudeh.

Qāsmi-e-kāhi agar zunnar bandad 'ayb nīst;

Zanke az 'ishq-e- but-e-sannyasi kāfar shudeh

Fiery cheeks, covered with the ash, look like the water lily;

Or, may be, the veil, burnt by the fire of your beauty, has become like ash.

Rust from the mirror, is removed by ash;

So it is not surprising that it has brightened your moon-face;

If Qasim Kahi ties the idol worshipper's religious thread he is not to be vilified;

He has fallen in love with an idol worshipping saintly beloved.

" در بهار برگ تنبول خاصه مگهئی، بس نازک و خوش رنگ و کم جرم و خوشبو و نیک

مزه است." (آئین اکبری، ابوالفضل)

Dar Bihar, barg tanbūl khāsa 'maghai' bas nāzuk wa khush rang wa kam jirm wa khushbū wa nik maza ast.

In Bihar the beetle leaf, specially 'maghai' is extremely delicate, having beautiful colour and is thin, and fragrant and delicious

به هر جانب نسیم گل بهر سو نعمه بلبل
 به هر جانب نسیم گل بهر سو نعمه بلبل
 شده مستان همه بی دل که اکون بوی یار آمد
 بیا ساقی یده باده که یار اندر کنار آمد
 بیا مطرب بزن دستی و غم را خاک بر سر نه
 بیا مطرب بزن دستی و غم را خاک بر سر نه

(احمد لنگر دریا)

Ba har Janib nasim-e-gul ba har su naghma-e-bulbul;

Shudeh mastan hameh bidil ke aknūn bu-e-yar amad.

Beya mutrib bezan daste wag ham ra khak bar sar kun;

Beya saqi bedeh badah ke yar andar kenar amad.

(Ahmad Langar Darya)

The perfume of flowers and melody of the nightingale. Are permeating the air;

The wine drinkers have lost their hearts to the scent of the beloved.

Come O musician, play some music throwing dust on every sorrow;

Come O cup bearer; give some wine now that the beloved is in our arms.

زیبائی معنوی: Connitive Beauty

آنکس کہ دل شکستہ دریابد مقصود دل خویش میسر یابد
وانکس کہ کند خسته دل درویشی ناگہ بینی کہ زخم برسر یابد

.....

باید کہ برای حق فروتن باشی خاک قدم کمینہ، برسر باشی

(جمال الدین ہانسوی)

.....

Ānkas ke dil-e-shikasteh-e-daryābad;

Maqsud-e-dil-e-khish mayyasar yabad.

Wankas ke kunad khastah dil-e-dervishey;

Nagah bini ke zakhm bar sar yabad

.....

Bayād ke barai haqq faru tan bāshi;

khak-e-qadam-e-kāmīna bar sar bāshi.

(Jamaluddin Hanswi)

One who mollifies a broken heart;

Attains his heart's desire.

One who wounds the heart of a destitute;

Is suddenly seen with a wound in the head.

You should tread with humility on the Right path, and put the dust of the feet of the lowly on your head.

زهد و تقوی چیست ای مرد فقیر لا طمع بودن ز سلطان و امیر
زهد و تقوی نیست این کز بهر خلق صوفی ای باشی و پوشی کهنه دلخ

(بو علی شاه قلندر)

Zuhd u taqwa chist aye mard-e-faqir;

Lā tama budan ze Sultān u Amir.

Zuhd u taqwa nist ān kaz bahr-e-khalq;

Sufi-e-bāshat wa pushi kuhnah dalq.

(*Bu; Alishah Qalandar*)

What is austerity and piety, tell me o dervish;

It is to be indifferent to the king and the wealthy and be free of greed.

It is not austerity and piety that you put on old robes and pose as a Sufi to show to the world.

چنان با مردمان عرفی بسر کن تا پس از مردن مسلمات به زمزم شوید و هندو بسوزاند

(عرفی شیرازی)

زیبائی معقول Cognitive Beauty :

بیدل آن شعله کز و بزم چراغان شده است یک حقیقت ز هزار آئینه تابان شده است

.....

Bedil ān sh'olah kazu bazm charaghān shudeh ast;

Yek haghghat be hazar aineh tābān shudeh ast.

(*Bedil Dehlavi*)

O Bedil, that fiery light which has illumined the Congregation;

Is but one Reality reflected in thousands of mirrors.

.....

که کشید دامن فطرتت که بسیر ما و من آمدی

تو بهار عالم دیگری ز کجا به این چمن آمدی

(بیدل دهلوی)

Keh kashid daman e fitratat ke be sayr e ma u man āmadi;

Tu bahar e 'alam e digari ze kujā be īn chaman āmadi

(*Bedil Dehlavi*)

Who pulled the skirt of your imagination that you have come to see the spectacle of “We” and “I”;
You are the blossom of a different Universe, wherefrom have you come to this earthly garden.

مائیم و خلاصه دو عالم	تفسیر حروف اسم اعظم
هر قطره که شد ز موج پیدا	هم موج فردکشید و هم یم
همواره بما کمال هنر	پیوسته بما جمال مدغم
از بهر ظهور صورت دوست	آئینه معنی است آدم
بیزار ز قید کفر و اسلام	آزاد ز جنت و جهنم

(جمالی کنبوه)

Maaim u khulasa e du 'alam;

Har qatrah ke shud ze mauj paيدا;

Az bahr e zuhūr e sūrāt e dūst;

Bezar ze qaid-e-kufr u Islam;

Tafsir e huruf e Ism e Azam.

Ham mauj faru kashīd u ham yam.

Ainah-e-ma 'ni ast adam.

Azad ze jannat u jahannam.

(Jamali Kanboh)

We are the substance of both the worlds;

Every drop born from the wave;

To reflect the visage of the Friend;

Contemptuous of the bonds of idol worshipping and Islam; Free of Heaven and Hell.

We are the meaning of Ism e 'Azam.

Carries with it both the wave and the ocean.

Ādam is the purest of the mirrors;

Besides literature, thousands of other expressions of their mutual passion to achieve perfection representing their shared journey in quest of beauty may be found in architecture, music, calligraphy, painting, art of miniature painting etc.

.....

I wish to end by saying that these shared values and similarities have so impressed the Iranian – visitors, scholars, poets, travellers and dwellers alike - that they have paid glowing tributes to this land, its culture and its people:

ز هند دیده بد دور عشرتستان	دل شگفته و طبع کشاده ارزان است
ز هی جهان مروت که گر غریب اینجا	هزار سال بماند عزیز مهمان است

Ze Hind didah e bad dūr 'ishratistānast; Dil e shugufta u tab-e-kushādeh arzānast.
Zehe jahān e muruwwatke gar gharibinja; Hazār sāl bemānad 'aziz mehman ast
(Kalim Kashani)

Hindustan, may it be protected from the evil eye, Is the land of pleasures;
Generous hearts and effervescent temperament are found in abundance here.

.....

As a matter of fact, Persian writings are great source of information about medieval India. Abdun Nabi Fakhruzzamani called its دارالامان and says:

این مثل میان عالمیان اشتهار دارد هرکس که یک نوبت سیر هندوستان نمود وقتیکه به
ایران رفت، در آرزوی این خاک مراد می میرد.^{۲۴}

*In masal miyān e ālamiyān ishehār dārad ke hark ass ke yek naubat sair e Hindustan
numūd, waqte ke ba Iran raft, dar ārzū-e-īn Khāk-e-murād mī mirad*

It is a commonly known fact among people that anyone who has once visited India, when he goes back to Iran, dies in the desire of this land of dreams.

Amin Ahmad Razi's words carry valuable information:

وقتیکه به هندوستان رسیدم ملکی دیدم بغایت آبادان و معمور. و از برای آسایش در
ناهیت بی نهایت مطبوع چندان خوبی که در آن دیار است در هیچ مملکتی نیست. مسافر
حاجت زاد سفر ندارد. در هر منزل هر چیز یافت میشود.^{۲۵}

*Waqti ke be Hindustan rasidam mulki di dam be ghayat m amur wa az bara e as aish bi
nihayat matbū, Chandan khūbi ke daran dayar ast dar hich mamlukat nist. Musafir hajat
e zad e safar nadarad. Dar har manzil har chizyafit mi showad*

When I reached India, I saw an extremely prosperously and populous country and a land that is greatly agreeable and replete with all comforts. The qualities it has are not to be found any where else. A traveller does not need to carry any provisions or victuals as everything is available at every halting station.

Abdun Nabi says:

یکی از خوبی های هندوستان آنکه هرکس در هر محل به هر طریق که زیست کند هیچ
کس را قدرت آن نیست که نهی آن امر نماید.^{۲۶}

*Yaki az khubi ha e Hindūstan ān ke har kas dar har mahal be har tariq ke zīst kunad hīch
kas ra qudrat ān nist ke nihi e ān amr numayad.*

One of India's remarkable features is that anyone, at any place may live his life in whatever way he wants. No one has the power to stop him

.....

The influence and impact of these two cultures on each other is immense and deep. Volumes may be written, and have been written, about its variety and antiquity. A common identity has been carved over the centuries at the core of which lies the similarity of their mentalities. A common bond had developed which was so strong that it made Khusrau, descendant of Turkish forefathers declare:

فلک گفت هرچ از زمین کشور آمد از آنجمله هندوستان بهتر آمد

Falak guft harch az zamīn kishwar āmad; Az ān jumleh Hindustān behtar āmad.

The sky said: Verily, among all the countries created on Earth, Hindustan is the best.

Can we, today, in our vociferous declarations of love for our country be more passionate or sincere than Khusrau?

References / Notes :

1. Amiri, K ayumars, Zaban-u-Adab-e-Farsi Dar Hind; P 30, Ministry of Islamic Culture & Guidance, Tehran.
2. Sing, S.P Professor, Indo Iran Relations, P.21, ed. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, Dept. Persian, A.M.U., Aligarh.
3. Sing, S.P. Prof, Indology and Persian Literature, P.26; ed. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, Aligarh.
4. Bhargava, P.L. Prof, Collection of Articles, P. 4, Dept. of Sanskrit, Rajasthan University. Jaipur.
5. Abidi, Amir Hasan. Prof, Contribution of Persian Language and Literature to the Composite Culture of India; P. 5-6, ed. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, Dept. of Persian, A.M.U. Aligarh.
6. Tara Chand, Dr.; Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, P. IX; Indian Press Allahabad.
7. Ibid, P. 72
8. Shukoh, Dara; Risalah-e-Haq Numa; P.11; ed. Adil Asser, Madan Book Depot Delhi.
9. Hadi, Nabi, Prof; Bedil, P.91, Mktaba Jamia, Delhi.
10. Mahouzi, Mah di, Dr. Zaban-u-Adabiat-e-Farsi Dar Zaman-e-Akbar Shah-e-Gurkani wa Salatin-e-Safaviyeh; P.19; ed Azarmi Dukh Safavi. Institute of Persian Research, A.M.U. Aligarh.
11. Tara Chand Dr; Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, P.151
12. Dalvi, Abdus Sattar, Prof.; Puneh ke musalam, p. 54, Azam Trust, Puneh.
13. Tusi, Bahram, Dr. Meeras-e-Maktoob-e-Hind-u-Iran, P.104. ed Azarmi Dukh Safavi. Institute of Persian Research, A.M.U. Aligarh.
14. Afeef, Shams Siraj; Tarikh-e-Firoz Shahi, Baptist Mission Press, Kolkata.
15. Nishapuri, Hasan Nizami, Tajul M' asir, ed. Amir Hasan Abidi, Iran Culture House, New Delhi.
16. Letter has been quoted by Nasrullah Falsafi in his Zindagani-e-Shah Abbas I; Vol-II, P.248, Tehran.
17. Sadi, Kulliat; ed. Furughi Mohd. Ali, P. 21, Tehran ... تومر خلق را پریشان برای چه میکنی. مگر سر ... پادشاهی کردن نداری؟
18. Ward, A.C. English Literature; P.728; Longman, London,
19. Mutahhari Murtaza, Ustad Shaheed; Collection of articles on Zeeba Shanasi; P.14, Hauza-e Hunari, Tehran.
20. Ibid. P. 16

21. Ibid. P. 16
22. اعراف/۳
23. Morning Prayer دعای صبحگاهی of Imam Reza (A.S.)
24. Abdul Nabi, Fakhrol Zamani, Tazkerah-e-Maikhaneh, ed. Ahmad Gulchin Mani,
25. Razi , Amin Ahmad; Tazkerah-e-Haft Iqlim; ed. Jawad Fazil, Tehra;
26. Abdul Nabi, Fakhrol Zamani, Tazkerah-e-Maikhaneh; ed. Ahmad Gulchin Mani