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From Chief Editor's Desk

In the present times man has realized that in order to lead a peaceful life along with others, the basic and most important need is proper recognition and understanding of one another's cultures and civilizational identity. In the postmodern world, this cannot be achieved without the assistance of dialogue and discourse. It therefore becomes essential for a cohesive existence and homogenous world order to venture upon and be involved with uninterrupted dialogue and continued interaction with each and every civilizational and cultural entity. Intellectuals, scholars and elites may take the initiative in this regard and present their views to the interested section of society after detailed mutual discussions and appraisal of irrefutable facts.

India and Iran are the two great historical civilizations and during centuries of interaction they have deeply influenced each other's life and mode of thinking.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi in his valuable Message on the eve of a two day interreligious dialogue on "Spirituality in Hinduism and Islam" organized on 25th and 26th October 2017 at India International Centre wrote "India and Iran share time tested bonds. For centuries our nations have been special friends. It is thus, appropriate that such an interreligious dialogue is being organized by the institutions from both countries. I am confident that the event will offer an ideal platform for fruitful discourses and discussions".

The English quarterly journal, Cultural Dialogue, is an attempt to highlight the cultural relations between India and Iran and to explore how these two neighboring countries contributed to each other's fields of knowledge and skill, partaking in and accomplishing countless aesthetic and intellectual feats together. It is a literary-cultural journal launched by the Iran Culture House, New Delhi to focus on the Cultural, Civilizational and historical issues of India and Iran. This is an humble effort to help make it easier for scholars and researchers with allied interests to know at a glance to what great extent the cultures of India and Iran have enriched each other and what an amazing amalgamation of their various aspects can be witnessed even in modern times.

The objectives of this Journal are:-

1. Efforts to create and develop an atmosphere for the intellectuals and scholars to think about the interaction between India and Iran.
2. Expanding the scope of research and study of Iranian Culture and Civilization.

3. Introduction of Cultural and artistic developments of Contemporary Iran and India.

4. Improving the level of knowledge and understanding of the common Cultural Heritage of Indo-Iranian Civilization.

The twelve articles in this volume will provide deep insights into the various dimensions of Indo-Iran Relations. It is an humble attempt to draw attention to the factors that have brought two countries so close to one another and what they have given to each other specially in todays time when man is wasting precious moments of life in concentrating on disparities rather than on similarities.

It is presented to our valued readership with the hope to receive their opinions and suggestions for improvement.

I am sure that they would lead the Caravan of human knowledge to still further heights and their respective countries and rest of the world will benefit from this knowledge.

Chief Editor of this journal invites all researcher and interested people to contribute their valuable articles.

Necessary measures have been taken to turn this Journal into a reliable academic research Journals with the joint collaboration of Indian and Iranian scholars.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who have extended a helping hand to us in making this venture a resounding success particularly Mr. S. Shahid Mahdi Chancellor, Jamia Hamdard, Mr. R.M.Chopra, Former President Iran Society, Prof. Azarmi Dukht Safavi, Dr. Sandeep Marwah, Prof. Ravinder Gargesh and Dr. Akbar Shah. who carefully took it to improve this journal.

Dr. Mohammad Ali Rabbani

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*Embassy
of the Islamic Republic of Iran
New Delhi*

Message

In the Name of the God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

The role of dialogue and discourse has never been so significant as it is today. The present world, while passing through the modern times and breathing in the atmosphere of post modernism, has entered in a specific field of cultural diversity, wherein culture is accorded a distinct recognition on the basis of its active and civilized presence. However, no nation or civilization is able to prove its presence in the cultural field of post modern world without assistance of dialogue and discourse.

International peace and friendship has occupied the minds of scholars, leaders and all peace loving people of the world from time immemorial, and it has been found that cultural relations and dialogue plays a very important role in this respect.

Experiencing multiple wars and conflicts at world, regional and local levels which have led to continued catastrophes and taken a huge toll on the lives and minds of humanity, humankind has realized that there is nothing better than peace and that progress and development will only ensue against a backdrop of understanding. Needless to say, taking into consideration all forms of existing diversities and cultural differences, the prerequisite to peace and understanding would be respecting and proper recognition and appreciation of the other cultures and values. To achieve this goal the elite should engage in dialogue and discussion by stressing on shared values and principles with an aim to strengthen and reinforce our bonds of unity and friendship. More importantly, people to people relations must be boosted with an aim to know each other first hand on the basis of dialogue and interaction. Robust people to people linkages will even cause the leaders of countries to adjust their policies on the basis of peace, harmony and understanding. The concept of cultural dialogue will surely bring a brighter and more promising future for mankind and the conflicts, problems and disunity can be solved by the process of dialogue.

For cultural understanding based on dialogue and interaction, first hand familiarization with other cultures must be followed. In this way, the views of eminent cultural figures ought to be communicated and shared with each other. Besides, knowing splendid cultural productions in multiple various domains and areas including art, music,

architecture and literature will cause interest amongst various interlocutors, especially when one notices striking similarities or shared values in this process.

It is heartening that the scholars and intellectuals of Iran and India have ever acted as torch bearers of culture and civilization in the history of world and the two countries have always collaborated with each other in upholding the torch of knowledge and art. The names of Ferdowsi, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi, Khayyam, Sa'adi and Hafiz from Iran and Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Rabindra Nath Tagore are just a few names from an unfinishable roster of larger than life characters which may show how tremendously the Iranian and Indians have contributed to humanity.

India and Iran are two countries with rich culture and art loving and cultured peoples. Throughout history, the two societies have had multiple engagements and interactions and thus they have influenced and enriched one another to such an extent that it is impossible to study the history of either without reference to the other. This fact has already been authenticated by top ranking historians of the world. These relations, especially in the field of culture is so deep, rich, effective, fruitful and productive that their outcomes and achievements have gone far beyond the borders of these two countries and have directly influenced humanity and world culture.

It is a must for these profound cultural relations panned against mankind's history to be emphasized and especially to be familiarized to the younger generations of the two countries.

Fortunately, there is a strong political will to cement our deep-rooted bonds; the leaders of the two countries are strongly determined to broaden all-out bilateral relations and multiple regular visits by high ranking delegations in various fields and conclusion of abundant documents of mutual cooperation is a testimony to this fact.

The effort by Culture House of this Embassy for releasing the first edition of an English Quarterly Journal named "CULTURAL DIALOGUE" containing scholarly articles by eminent professors and academicians is a commendable act and it is hoped that it will help to the greater cause of promoting and strengthening the multifaceted relations between India and Iran.

I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have dedicated their services for the promotion of Indo-Iranian Relations.

Ali Chegeni

Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in India



Jamia Hamdard
Deemed to be University
Accredited in 'A' Grade by NAAC
Declared to be designated as Institute of Eminence (IoE) by MHRD, GOI

Date: 5.08.2020

Message

I am happy to know that Iran Culture House, New Delhi is planning to bring out a journal: Cultural Dialogue. The story of Indo-Persian cultural interaction goes back to centuries. The outcome of this interaction has made a valuable contribution to global heritage.

I am sure the forum provided by the proposed series of publications will enrich the Dialogue of Civilizations for the promotion of which Iran played an active role at the United Nations.

With best wishes for this welcome initiative.

Syed Shahid Mahdi

Chancellor, Jamia Hamdard

Ex

Vice Chancellor

Jamia Millia Islamia (Central University)

Vice President

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)



N N Vohra
President

INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

India and Iran, two ancient civilisations, have enjoyed historical relations for centuries.

Till the partition of India, in 1947, the two countries had a shared border and very close people-to-people cultural links.

Despite the loss of a common border, India and Iran have maintained continuing relations and sustained exchanges in the fields of language, religion, literature, culture, arts, cuisine and several other arenas. It needs being recalled that Sufism emerged from the spiritual interactions between Persia and India.

Present day relations between India and Iran commenced in 1950 when the two countries signed a Treaty of Friendship and Perpetual Peace. Later, the Indo-Iranian Cultural Agreement was signed in 1956 to enlarge and strengthen our cultural, literary and academic relations. This bond was further re-energised when the Director General of ICCR and ICCRO President of the Islamic Republic of Iran recently met in Tehran. The Indian Cultural Centre in Tehran, established in 2013, since renamed as the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre, has been playing a notable role in strengthening the cultural links between our two countries. Likewise, the Iranian Embassy in India has been organising cultural and literary programmes, seminars and festivals on a sustained basis. In the context of the present day challenges our bilateral endeavours are also engaged in cooperative ventures in the fields of energy, trade, connectivity and promotion of people-to-people contacts.

For the past several decades the India International Centre has been providing a valued platform for promoting varied cultural and collaborative activities, including exchanges between India and Iranian scholars. Some time back, we organised an International Conference on "Cultural Similarities between Iran and the Indian Subcontinent: Indigenous Cultural Fragmentation in an Era of Globalisation" to promote Inter-Cultural Understanding and bringing together eminent scholars from the region to initiate a collective effort to enhance exchanges and protect traditional heritage.

Recently we had talks on 'The Iranian Revolution' by Ramin Jehanbegloo and on 'Indo-Iranian Partnership' by H.E. Mr. Ali Chegeni. We also had a discussion on 'US-Iran Tension and India's Stake Therein.'

I wish "Cultural Dialogue" continuing high success in its endeavour to promote understanding between our two nations.

18 August, 2020

N.N. Vohra

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Message

The Indo- Iran Cultural Forum has been associated in the promotion of Art, culture, films, tourism of both the countries for over a decade. The forum being chaired by Dr. Sandeep Marwah, President of ICMEI has been organizing events supported by the Embassy of Iran and the Iran Culture House, New Delhi.

International Chamber of Media & Entertainment Industry (ICMEI) has been established for the promotion and growth of media and entertainment industry across the world; lend support to the industry professionals in all possible manners; to give media and entertainment industry the place of pride it deserves; and to try and unite the people of world through art and culture.

Iran has rich culture and history which is deeply knotted with its long and rich civilization. Art, literature, architecture, music and many more ancient aspects have deep roots which are still visible today and the country has the most influential cultures in the world. Iran is considered as one of the cradles of civilization and due to its dominant geo-political position and culture in the world, Culture strengthens the relations between two nations and the wide-ranging cultural elasticity is the key defining characteristics of the Iranian and Indian identity and a clue to its historical endurance.

Recently during the lockdown period a webinar titled “Role of Culture in strengthening communities against corona” was organized jointly. Dr. Habibreza Arzani a Phd on the subject, Professor Mahmood Karimi of University of Iran, Dr. Shirin Ahmadnia, Associate Professor from Iran participated in the webinar along with Dr. Marwah.

Frequent workshops by eminent personalities from Iran are organised. Recently Iranian Film Director Mr. Ebrahim Hatamikia screened his film “Bewaqt Shaam”.

The painting exhibition of Mr. Mehboobeh Nikooghodam was organised at Marwah Studios, which was appreciated by the visitors from Delhi NCR.

Iran Cultural week was also organised at Marwah Studios, which saw screening of films, workshops, discussions & Seminar on Tourism as a part of this week.

Recently a joint film production was also announced which is delayed due to COVID- 19. Renowned Filmmaker Soheil Abdollahh joined hands with ICMEI to produce a Documentary to be shot in New Delhi.

Iranian film festivals have been organised a number of times under the guidance of Iran Culture House, New Delhi.

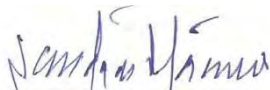
Exhibitions of Arts, crafts, sculptures, poetry and carpets are a must during the Global Literary, Fashion & Design Week. The exhibition of Iran were appreciated by all the visitors.

Dr. Sandeep Marwah has been honoured a number of times by Iranian Delegations on various occasion. “Sandeep Marwah’s contribution to Media & Entertainment Industry is enormous” were the words of Mr. Sayed M. R. Hosseini, Director of Iran broadcasting who also presented a certificate of honour. Dr. Marwah has also been honoured by the film fraternity of Iran. During his visit to Hungary Dr. Sandeep Marwah was a special guest at the Embassy of Iran Budapest by H.E. Gholamali Raja Bi Yazadi the Ambassador.

By way of the Indo Iran Cultural Forum, ICMEI under the aegis of Marwah Studios is working on its objective of Love, Peace & Unity through Art & Culture.

Iran Culture House, New Delhi and Marwah Studios has been working to improve relations between the two countries and also to promote the cultural relations and stimulate the growth of the industry for the achievement of international co-operation, peace and prosperity and will continue doing so in the time to come.

Best Wishes



Sandeep Marwah
President

Iran and India in an Era of Globalization

M. Hamid Ansari

(Former Vice President of India)

Globalization is viewed in two distinct ways: in a positive sense to describe a process of integration in the world economy, and in a normative sense to prescribe a strategy of development based on a rapid integration of the world economy. The phenomenon also has political, social and cultural dimensions. Studies have shown that it brings about "global imbalances that are morally unacceptable and practically unsustainable" and that "any relationship in the contemporary world order of uneven development cannot but be unequal." The desirability and actualization of universally shared values (including human rights and individual dignity) is to be viewed in this context.

Equally relevant are other dimensions of globalization. To the sociologist, it is associated with modernity, to international relations theorist with global governance, and to the scientist with a range of technologies and mediums that have qualitatively transformed human communication and connectivity. The latter also results in a complex series of interaction between peoples and cultures that rupture boundaries and lead to cultural 'hybridity', not purity .

This process goes hand in hand with the erosion of the traditional concepts of the nation-state, national economies and national cultures.

The latter imply control over the tools of production, capacity to provide opportunity for business and control business activity, power to levy taxes and fees on business activities, control over mode of communications ,cultural identity and potential to shape up mass culture, and capacity to frame rules and power to remain outside the framework of rules framed by other nation states .

Culture is generally understood to mean the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.

Cultures cannot be separated from the societies in which they emerge, develop and, at times, decline and are subsumed by other cultures or fade away altogether.

Given its diversity, cultural globalization should be viewed in the plural as cultural globalizations. To understand it better, we need to "focus on the intersection of the global and the local within different contexts."¹

Global cultural flows take many forms. They can be ethnoscaples (flow of people), technoscaples (technology and its products across national frontiers), finanscaples (flows of finances), medias caples (flow of information through media, television, films) and ideoscaples (flow of ideas and ideologies).²

Some evidence of the collective effectiveness of these is to be seen in the case of big IT companies like Facebook, Twitter, Amazon are now fast moving towards a stage where they have developed capacities to provide market on their platforms and also control tools of production. They now charge fee or levy in lieu of providing their virtual platforms for business to various business entities. They are shaping popular cultures and are not limited by geographical boundaries. They control communication and have the potential and technology to promote specific views, information and analysis. These companies have reach across borders. They have proliferated everywhere, yet are usually not governed by local laws .

The same could be said about music. It has been said that no art form encapsulates globalization more singularly than music. In an earlier age, it acted as a tool of colonial expansion and at the same time served as a form of resistance and cultural self-identification of affected societies.³ One observer has noted that the widely observed "westernization of oriental music" has gone hand in hand with "orientalization of western music ".

Nor are the imperatives different for films. A report last year by the head of IMAX Corporation on the globalization of entertainment concluded that since 70 percent of the global box office is generated outside the United States, the nature of storytelling must appeal to a worldwide audience; it apprehended that the "change caused by globalization affect the soft power traditionally wielded by Hollywood ".

The question to determine is the extent to which these five cultural flows, and principally the last two, have impacted the cultural identities of Iran and the countries of the Indian sub-continent, and on their interaction with each other .

¹ Hopper, Paul. *Understanding Cultural Globalization* (Cambridge 2007) p3.

² King, Anthony D. *Culture, Globalization and the World-Culture: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of identity* (University of Minnesota 2007) pp 10-11, citing Arjun Appadorai.

³ Irving, D.R.M. *The Globalization of Music: Origin, Development, & Consequences, c1500-1815* (Lecture Series, Christ's College, Cambridge)

It was Jawaharlal Nehru who depicted Iranians and Indians as brothers separated in childhood who rediscovered each other through the memory of a common musical tune. Credence to this is lent by philologists who have brought forth evidence of Avestan and Vedic Sanskrit being sister languages emanating from a proto Indo-Aryan ancestor of the Indo-European group.⁴

I am neither a philologist nor a historian of the ancient past of the territory stretching from the Iranian plateau to the northern, central and eastern plains of the Indian subcontinent where linguistic affiliations or similarities have been traced and are reflected in aspects of culture and literature. A good deal has been written about these by scholars.

Both Iran and India are inheritors of civilizations whose origins date back deep into the past. Being geographically adjacent, they witnessed a seamless stream of movement of people. These inevitably resulted in movement of beliefs, cultural practices and a multiplicity of shared patterns of living .

The record of the political interaction between these territorial entities, at different periods in history, makes for a fascinating reading in geopolitics and state craft. In the case of India, the process of movement of people and ideas was succinctly summed up by the poet Raghupati Rai Firaq :

Sar zamin-e- Hind par aqwam-e-alam ke Firaq

Karwaan aate gaye Hindostan banta gaya.

Almost a century ago, Dr. Tara Chand had observed that "Indian culture is synthetic in character. It comprehends ideas of different orders. It embraces in its orbit beliefs, customs, rites, institutions, arts ,religions and philosophies belonging to strata of society in different stages of development. It eternally seeks to find a unity for the heterogeneous elements which make up its totality. At worst its attempts end in mechanical juxtaposition, at best they succeed in evolving an organic system."⁵

A contemporary historian has analyzed the end product: "In almost all realms of cultural production - music, drama, painting, architecture, and so on - as well as religion, different influences made their mark imparting to them a composite character. As a result, historically India developed as a colourful cultural mosaic and not as manifestation of

⁴ Baldi, Philip. An Introduction to Indo-European Languages (Illinois 1983) p51

⁵ Tara Chand. The Influence of Islam on Indian Culture (Allahabad1922) p i.

cultural practices inspired by a single source" and that this process was not limited to the national level and is to be seen within each region as well. ⁶

This is to be witnessed in all aspects of our daily life. There may be reason to believe, therefore, that the current tide of globalization would not submerge the Indian cultural identity but would add an Indian dimension to a globalizing culture .

The Persian language itself has been a part of the vast Indian linguistic landscape for millennia. The earlier linguistic affinities persisted in later times and were furthered by the intensity of contacts. Words of Sanskrit origin have been located in Shahnamah. Maulana Azad identified Dhul Qarnain, mentioned in the Qur'an, with Cyrus the Great . Professor Juan Cole has opined that at the peak of the Moghul-Safavid period, there were perhaps seven times more readers of Persian in India than in Iran. The qand-e-parsi did indeed reach all parts of India and left its mark on many of our languages. The first newspaper in Persian language anywhere in the world was published in Calcutta in 1823 by Raja Ram Mohun Roy of Brahma Samaj.

In the case of Iran, the question of cultural identity was opined upon at different times in the past and in recent times was addressed by the philosopher Abdolkarim Soroush, who dwelt on the theme of multiple sources and wrote :

- "The three cultures that form our common heritage are of national, religious and Western origin"
- "As long as we do not view identity (including cultural identity) as dynamic and evolving matter, we shall not find answers to any of these questions relating to authenticity since "we do not deem our ethnic and Islamic culture as terminus but as point of departure".
- "What causes fear of other cultures is the lack of a strong cultural digestive system and also the misconception that each culture is an indivisible monolith, accepting one part of which equals accepting the whole."⁷

⁶ Panikar, K.N. Colonialism, Culture, and Resistance (New Delhi 2007) p 95.

⁷ Soroush, Abdolkarim 'The Three Cultures' in Reason, Freedom and Democracy in Islam (New York 2000) pp 156-170.

In a historical sense and particularly in the medieval period of history, the "hegemony of the Persian language" played a central role in the spread of Iranian influence in central Asia and the Indian subcontinent.⁸ Professor Hamid Dabashi has observed that "Persian literary humanism ... emerged as the self-revelatory aesthetic subtext of an entire civilization with an assured historicity that was embedded in its parabolic language."⁹ He has traced the process of this imprint in Central Asia and South Asia .

Literature, film and art everywhere reflect the socio-cultural trends of their times. In the case of Iran societal upheavals did attempt, with limited success, a cultural catharsis. A few years back two Indian scholars assessed these and observed that "the post-revolution Iranian writer poet and artist have been able to communicate the nuances of the socio-political conditions through forms and expressions from which the merely 'personal', the purely subjective has been transformed into the humanistic" adding that "perhaps at no other time in Iranian history has this alliance between the literary/artistic expression been so closely associated with social, political and cultural changes in the country as in the last twenty-five years. After an initial period of comparative passivity, Iranians have been stirred into a tremendous artistic and literary activity. Their expression, technique and tone changing with every phase of political and cultural variation, their work represents all hues of the Spectrum. "¹⁰

It would be fair to conclude that both Iran and India have responded, in their own way, to the challenges of modernity. What shape would their linguistic and cultural connections take in our globalizing world? At a first glance, the Indian approach has been one of seamless accommodation while the Iranian is premised on categorized acceptance. Both face today the onslaught of information and ideas in all their diversity and technological prowess .

In the world of tomorrow, they would need to use the tools of modernity - economic, technological and political- creatively. They have a largely converging interest in an area of stability and prosperity.

⁸ Ahmad Ashraf. 'Perspectives on Iranian Identity' - Encyclopaedia Iranica- March 30, 2012.

⁹ Dabashi, Hamid. The world of Persian Literary Humanism (Harvard 2012) p 16.

¹⁰ Safavi, Azarmi Dukht & Azhar Dehlavi, A.W. Revolution and Creativity (New Delhi 2006) pp 3-4.

Culture - Foundation for forming lasting Indo-Iranian Relations based on mutual trust and peace

Dr. Mohd. Ali Rabbani

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Abstract

Human being, over the centuries, have learned from the historical experiences that cultural and civilizational growth and development are in conflict with cultural stagnation and senility. The civilizations and cultures are the product of the common efforts of human beings. And no culture and civilization has been established without the use of the experiences and knowledge of other societies beyond the boundaries. Indo-Iran relations are a successful example of human relations based on the mutual trust and aspiration for cooperation and relations between the two nations. These close and deep ties are structured on the basis of a common culture and mutual understanding rather than on the basis of material and commercial needs or political interests. Therefore, one of the most important consequences of these interactions and communications has been the formation of basic trust as well as positive and reciprocal mental imagery among the people of these two nations, which throughout history and centuries have provided suitable bases and capacities for preserving the ancient and the common heritage. The multiple and diverse capabilities existing in the two cultures of Iran and India, throughout the history of relations between the two countries, could play a constructive role in the fields of human civilization and the emergence of a huge and common cultural heritage. Even today keeping in view the strategic partnerships and the necessities and benefits related to the utilization of common cultural and historical heritage and to expand the relations between Iran and India, revisiting the historical experiences of the ties of these two countries is important in order to strengthen the durable and constructive Indo-Iran relations.

Keywords: Culture, History, Relations, Iran, India,

Introduction:

The cultural relations of nations are formed on the basis of positive mental and psychological sense and reassuring each other and overcoming threats and negative mental imagery. The system of human interaction can be a system of "trust" when its

relations are based on a sense of security of peaceful coexistence and the desire for stability and continuity through the normalization of social, economic and especially cultural relations.¹

The spirit that governs relations between nations is either political, economic or sometimes conflict and war prevail over the relations of the countries and also the basis for relations between some other nations is culture. The relations between Iran and India have since time immemorial had a special feature and that is the dominance of the cultural and literary aspect in the relations between these two ancient and great Asian civilizations. For poets, writers, mystics and people of culture and art have had a significant role in establishing the consistent relations between the two countries, in the same fashion as during the past centuries, the political and economic relations of these two country had been influenced by the contribution of poets, writers and mystics in the path of better cooperation and bilateral relations.²

Another important aspect is that although relations between the two nations are based on the need for trade and fulfilment of material needs, it is necessary to understand three basic points.

First, the formation of these relationships is also based on positive mentalities and images and in an atmosphere of tolerance and friendship, free from war and conflict. Providing appropriate, sustainable channels and expanding political and economic relations requires the formation of appropriate cultural understanding, rationality, friendship and cooperation instead of hatred and divergence, and the creation of capacities free from clash and conflict. It increases the impact of culture on the mind and conscience of nations along with strengthening the resisting capabilities from obstacles and challenges, as well as external divisive elements. It boosts the cooperative atmosphere to discover the common values and interests, and results in having greater understandings along with the emphasis on common benefits. Certainly, presenting a positive image to create consensus on cultural elements are among the main achievements of this trust-based and culture-based interaction.

Secondly, using the capacity of trade exchanges to trans-bound the cultural values, and to create areas of mutual understanding and commonalities of cultures have been a major achievement and long-term and common benefit have mainly been important in these exchanges.

¹ . Milton Cumming), 2006),Cultural Diplomacy ,Washington DC center for arts and culture.

² . See, S. A.H. Abidi (2019), Indo –Persian Literature, Departmant of Persian university of Delhi.Muzaffar Ali Alam, (2011),Indo-Persian Travls in the Age of Discoveries ,Cambridge University Press.

Thirdly; what is left today, after centuries of interaction and trade between societies, are common cultural values and symbols of civilization, which are manifested in the form of common traditions, symbols, art, literature, etc., and make culture a lasting feature of these interactions and domains. It has become the main and effective principle. This experience reminds us that culture as an internal category is closely related to the value system in human being; it constitute the innermost and most basic element of culture and all the behaviors and states of the individual and society are rooted in them. It is in the values found in culture that a person regains his value and position and pays due attention to his choices when faced with different situations. In fact, culture is the intellectual and spiritual continuation of human survival and some of its dimensions are manifested in a material and tangible way. Human life in the present age, more than any other period, is related to the phenomenon of culture.³

Interactive capabilities of Iranian culture in interaction with other nations

Iran and India have always been considered as the main pillars and mediators of cultural elements throughout the world. The most famous and efficient cultural elements of the world easily entered the cultural territory of Iran and India and conversely the material and spiritual foundations of Iranians and Indians also have been sent to other cultures with the same proportion and speed.

This cultural interaction, especially between Iranians and peoples of other lands, for centuries, has spread from Mesopotamia to Asia Minor, Greece, North Africa, and parts of Europe, and especially to the Indian subcontinent. This interactive capability in Iranian culture has been such that even the military conquest of Iran by the Greeks, Arabs, Turks and Mongols not only led to the cultural domination of the invaders, but the Iranians were able to overcome them with the power of their cultural interaction and converted them into propagandists and promoters of Iranian and Islamic civilization. The invading Arabs, who entered Iran in the cultural field with the intention of spreading the new religion of Islam and from there to all over the world, were influenced by Iranian culture and civilization and most of the responsibility for creating culture and producing and spreading cultural and civilizational elements fell on Iranians. When Iranians saw the resistance against the Turkish invaders, the Seljuks and the Mongols as useless, so based on the logic of "*ba dustan morawwat ba dushmanan modaara*" which means kindness with friends and tolerance with enemies", in the face of their pressure, they took the path of lenience with these nations. Through cultural power and the logic of tolerance and dialogue even with the enemies, they tried to protect their civilization and culture from

³.Khaneeki, Hadi, 2005, Guftguye Mafhumiye Zabani Ta Ma'ni Jahani, Journal of Sociology, Allameh Tabatabaie University, Tehran

the destructive flood of the Turkish and Mongol peoples by civilizing and Iranianizing some Turkish and Mongol leaders.⁴

Another prominent feature of Iranian culture has been constructive dialogue and give and take with other cultures. From the beginning of its formation, Iranian culture did not build a wall between its cultural sphere and the cultural sphere of other ethnic groups, but one of its missions and functions was to break down dividing walls of human cultures. It was always to mix and match different cultures, especially through interaction and dialogue. It has learnt from the cultures that were at a higher level and has given cultural education to the cultures that were on the contrary at a lower level. Dialogues & Learnings have constantly been part of the cultural history of Iran and have acted to enrich their own culture. According to Iranians, the establishment of a peaceful, secure and positive life requires a global attitude and, of course, a generalist approach. They also believed that humanity can achieve a peaceful life when it has a sense of shared destiny and universal responsibility for that destiny. As the great Iranian poet Saadi says:

چو عضوی به درد آورد روزگار

دگر عضوها را نماند قرار

When fate allots a member pangs and pains

No ease for other members then remains

The Persian poetry and mysticism, which expresses the most delicate, human and worldly dimension of the cultural realm of Iran, has drawn the most universal approaches based on mystical and philosophical values such as the unity of existence and the manifestation of love and enlightenment of the divine man. Through these mystical angles, Iranian culture gained the opportunity to interact and negotiate with other nations from Transoxiana to Asia Minor, the Indian subcontinent, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe. A poet went from Balkh to Konya and conquered the hearts of the people of Konya with Persian. Rumi, Hafez, Saadi, Khayyam, Ferdowsi are among the other cosmopolitan poets of Iran whose mental, taste and intellectual exudations originated from a cosmopolitan mind and considered the language of empathy and common understanding as the basis of human connection. Rumi describes this language of empathy as follows:

ای بسا هندو و ترک همزبان ای بسا دو ترک چون بیگانگان

پس زبان همدلی خود دیگر است همدلی از همزبانی بهتر است

⁴.Solasi, Mohsin, 1999, Jahan-e-Iani w Iran-e- Jahani, Centre for Publication, Tehan Pp. 200 - 245

There are many Hindus and Turks with the same tongue,
and oh, many a pair of Turks, strangers to each other.
Hence the tongue of intimacy is something else,
It is better to be of one heart than of one tongue.

Perhaps, Persian poetry and mysticism can be considered as the most obvious manifestation of Iranian interaction and language of dialogue with the nations of the Indian subcontinent. Persian language, which carried human feelings and emotions and Islamic and mystical teachings in word and meaning, in the form and content, was the nature of many nations and was according to their taste. Poets with Persian poetry style were scattered in a wide area of the world. From Transoxiana to Asia Minor and India, Southeast Asia ... they composed poetry in Persian. Even the most remote parts of the world, such as China, were not outside the sphere of influence of Persian poetry and it was common in the court of kings. The cosmopolitanism and lack of attachment to their homeland and presenting poems that are compatible and pleasing to the cross-border audience have made Persian classical poetry universal. That is why, no poet from other country has been welcomed as much as Iranian poets and very few nations can be found whose works of great poets have been translated into various languages, including European, as much as Iranian poets.⁵

The reason for the attention of mystics and Sufis to the spread of Persian language in other nations is due to the capacity of Persian language to effectively transmit spiritual values and create a common understanding and culture. Persian is a language which could pass many achievements and creations from one generation to other generation and societies. Although Persian poetry has been influenced by the poetics forms of Arab, but in terms of content, concepts, similes and ideas, it does not unlike Arabic poetry have a local and ethnic character and is not specific to a particular ethnicity, region and race and most of its descriptions, similes and messages have a transnational and global character. Iranians who have had a continuous linguistic continuity throughout its history for several millennia, their cultural language has been an open and receptive to the linguistic experiences of other cultures. And it reflects all the exchanges and relations and extensive cultural relations of the tribes related to Iranian culture and the bitter and sweet events of Iran's cultural life. It has kept its doors open to all languages and cultures of the world, but has maintained its identity, nature and independence.⁶

Another factor in the mobility of Iranians in the wider world was Iranian Sufism and mysticism, which not only believed in the unity of existence in the world, but were

⁵ . Nasr, Hussain, 2003, *Sunnate Aqlani Islami Irani*, Tehran, Qaseedah Sara

⁶ . Azar, Ameer Esmacil, 2016, *Adabiyat Iran Der Adabiyat Jahan*, Tehran, Sohkan Publication, 5th Edition. Zameera Ghaffarwa, 2018, *Persian literature in Khashmir during 16th & 17th Century*, Persian Research Centre, AMU

constantly accompanied by long journeys to visit the *Aqtaab* and *Mashayekh* scattered throughout the Islamic world. Iranian Sufis and mystics were cosmopolitan and did not consider themselves related to any place and basically considered it a journey to travel on one of the mystical paths. This feature made the school of thought of Iranian mystics a drift and there was less of a place in the east and west of the Islamic world that was empty of *Khanqaahs* of Iranian mystics. The founder of the Sufi order of Khorasan, Ibrahim Adham 165 AH 100 was born in Balkh but died in Syria. He was born in the east but died in the west. Ibn Khafif was born in the third century AH in Shiraz and moved to Baghdad. He traveled to Egypt and Central Asia and died in 371 in Baghdad. Hussein Ibn Mansour Hallaj was born in 244 AH in Beyza, a city in Iran, studied in Baghdad and made many trips to Central Asia and India. The great Iranian poets migrated to Kashmir like Khawaja Moinuddin Cheshti, the founder of the Cheshtia order, from Sistan, and Sadid al-Din Awfi, one of the famous mystics and scholars of the sixth and seventh centuries AH, was born in Bukhara, Transoxiana and traversed many lands of India, Transoxiana, Samarkand and Herat. Fakhruddin Iraqi, a famous poet and mystic of the eighth century AH, was born in Hamadan in 610 AH and went to Multan at the age of eighteen. He traveled to Egypt and Syria and was buried in Damascus next to Ibn Arabi's grave. Many other Iranian scholars did not stay in their homeland and left for another country after intellectual maturity. Tabari, Farabi, Ibn Sina, Imam Fakhr Razi and tens of other are exemplary evidences of Iran's cosmopolitan figures who did not confine themselves to the borders of Iran and by migrating and communicating with other nations played an important role in the development and expansion of human civilization.⁷

Iranian culture through interactions with the culture of other nations, which by creatively adapting the cultural and civilizational elements and themes of others has flourished itself. It took the lead and cultural guidance and influence over the centuries in the culture, remaining away from war and bloodshed, in a peaceful environment and friendly atmosphere in the material and spiritual fields and has served the human civilization. Among other things, interactive and constructive interactions emerged between the spiritual dimensions of Iranian and Indian cultures whose flow continued uninterruptedly for many centuries.

Islamic philosophy, which has emerged from the combination of all schools of thought and philosophy of the civilizations of the Islamic world and owes most of it to Iranian thinkers, which has been another opportunity for interaction and dialogue between Iranians and all other nations. Iranians' spirit of tolerance and reconciliation towards nations and cultures were based on their wisdom, logic and philosophical thought. Persian poetry, which is one of the most prominent and effective elements of Iranian

⁷. Solasi, Mohsin, 2000, *Jahan-e-Iani w Iran-e- Jahani*, Centre for Publication, Tehan

culture, has had a strong connection with philosophy, wisdom and intellectual sciences and, unlike Greek culture, is not a separate field and there is not much gap and difference between the poet and the philosopher. Except in the fourth and fifth centuries AH, when philosophy, science, poetry and literature were relatively separate, in most of the period of Iranian cultural evolution, many Iranian poets were philosopher, and many philosophers and scholars and especially mystics were poets.⁸

Thus, this cultural exchange that was there throughout the world, the Iranians were the chief intermediaries and transmitters as well as the recipients of this cultural spread in the world. Despite the bitter historical events and destructions such as the Mongol invasion and the devastation and burning of culture they brought; Iranian mystics and poets by contacting and migrating to other lands, including India, and exercising their cultural and civilizational power re-emerged, and they turned these virulent periods, resulting from the bloody assault of the Mongol invaders with the help of other nations especially India, into the golden age of poetry, mysticism, Islamic and Iranians philosophy.⁹

Distinct Features of Indo-Iran cultural relations

Trust Based Interaction and Relation

Due to the trans-ethnic, trans-geographical and human-centered as well as love-oriented approaches in mysticism and literature, especially in Persian literature, the cultural relations between Iran and India have been initiated by creating a positive and reassuring sense of close proximity with each other and overcoming negative image and threats. Therefore, the basis of human relations between the two countries throughout history has been a system of "trust based" the relationships that are based on a sense of security of coexistence and the desire for stability and continuity through the normalization of social, economic and especially cultural interactions. In the meantime, the contribution of poetry in building trust and understanding has been important. The field of literature and culture is the field of imagination, beauty and a quest for the absolute truth. Poetry and art are considered as a permanent and complementary part of cultural relations between two nations, and the possibility of interaction based on the language of dialogue, communication and mutual interests is better provided and through this a good understanding and exchange of ideas and settlement of differences over the political and economic spheres were formed.

Multi-directional and dialogue-based relations

Another instructive point in these relationships is that Indo-Iran ties in the past have been based on a two-way, multi-directional and dialogue based. Iranian and Indian poets and

⁸. Nasr, Hussain, 2003, *Sunnate Aqlani Islami Irani*, Tehran, Qaseedah Sara

⁹. Zarrin koub, Abdul Hosain, 2006, *Aashnaie Ba Tareekh-e- Iran*, Tehran, Sokhan Publication

mystics have learned over the centuries from their historical experiences that the cultural and civilizational growth of Iran and India contradicts the stagnation about civilization within borders. Cultures are the product of the joint efforts of human beings, and no culture or civilization can grow and prosper without benefiting from the experiences and transnational knowledge of other societies, and without having connections with others. Therefore, part of the growth and development of Persian language and culture and the formation of Indian poetic styles and the production of valuable sources of poetry and literature has been the product of this two-way interactions.¹⁰

Another important feature that should be considered in this historical interaction and experience is the element of dialogue. Iranian and Indian poets, mystics, artists, religious scholars and writers paid special attention to dialogue as a special human advantage. They considered interaction the main conduit for transmitting a lot of knowledge and partaking others in progress and development, and this sharing devoid of any geographical, ethnic and religious considerations has been taken into account, and extremism and extremist reactions have played less role. These facts can be clearly found in poems and travelogues which are valuable treasures and useful information from the past to the present generation. Through dialogue, they provided a space for communication and mutual understanding to present a positive image or enhance the level of cooperation. Imagination and presentation of a positive image and efforts to create consensus on cultural components are other achievements of this trust-based and culture-based interaction.

Participation, acceptance and understanding of others

Other lessons and teachings related to this historical experience are accepting and understanding others, accepting diversity and differences, recognizing and understanding the truth, in an attempt to gain a deep and broad awareness of other cultures and different traditions. One should have a broad and unbiased view of the culture and traditions of others and seek the truth through differences that make common language and the opportunity for growth, excellence, interaction and empathy possible. We sought the truth that makes possible a common language and the opportunity for growth, excellence, interaction and empathy. Our ancestors have shown us that one can be Iranian, but he may live in India and compose poetry for the people of India; while an Indian poet may compose his poetry in Persian and address the Iranian audience with love. The formation of literary styles and the production of thousands of literary works that exist today in libraries of both Iran and India are the product of an ambition to understand and accept each other.

¹⁰ . Will Durant, 1991, Mashriq Zamin Gahwaraye Tamaddon, Tehran, Islamic Revolution Publication

The Nationalistic interactions of Indo-Iran relations

The main actors in the history of Indo-Iran interactions were mainly the people. The interactive capacities and the acting power of non-governmental organizations were more than governmental institutions. Therefore, these relations are more stable and durable and the share of language and literature in cultural and social relations has been very decisive. Thus, in order to develop communication networks between the two nations, they opted for a common language that provided them with interaction and communication capabilities. Using the capacity of Persian language, in addition to forming a common language of communication, could also help Indians in promoting Persian language and reproducing valuable literary and cultural resources.

Remarkable role of travel in the Exchanges

The journey is all about departing from oneself to other. It is a kind of otherology or cultural self-recognition in the mirror of others. It is a kind of comparative intercultural study and is a sign of the peak of cultural and civil development of nations. Travel and migration have outstanding capability of the exchange of cultures and the transfer of experiences and imagery. Therefore, one of the main spaces in the cultural and literary interactions of Iranians and Indians have been the migration and travel of Iranian poets and mystics to India and in some cases the vice versa. Although some Iranians traveled to India in the past in the form of migration and escape from the difficult conditions of Mongol times, but mainly the travels and migrations of poets and mystics in peaceful atmosphere of India with the desire to live in the diversified cultural and religious surrounding of this country of coexistence as well as due to the kind hospitality of the Indian people to Iranian thinkers and poets have occurred.

Historical past experiences and lessons that can be learnt today

These experiences teach us that even today we must use the positive and high potential of the element of culture as a fulcrum and a strong factor for the development of durable relations between Iran and India. Because even today, culture has a dimension of a lasting value and all phenomena even affect political behaviors in some way. Today, the factor of language, poetry and literature, mysticism and philosophy, which are considered the pillars of culture and play an influential role in the formation of common consciousness and way of life, it can be effective to play role in creating a sense of lasting trust and friendly communication, as in the past, within the common and original moral and cultural values and ideals of the two nations. In the current complex international situation where extremist approaches have led to the formation of regional and international conflicts, certainly taking advantage of this historical experience and expanding the approach of dialogue and interaction, especially between the cultural elites

of the two countries can contribute to establish lasting and effective communication between two nations.

Need of talks between intellectuals of Iran and India

In the age of knowledge, in which knowledge and wisdom are the main manifestations, cultural relations are considered as a kind of alliance based on knowledge and are the most important capital and the most effective bridge between nations. Another key point is that the cultural relations of societies have long been reciprocal and multifaceted and dialogue-based. Another important area to consider in this historical experience is the element of dialogue. Communication as a special human advantage along with intellect is a distinct aspect of man with animal because man is called a talking animal, that is, a dialogue that also has the privilege of intellect and wisdom. Speaking and listening has been the main channel for transmitting a lot of knowledge and partaking others in the development and progress of knowledge and civilization in this direction. Of course, this statement does not mean dissolving and being absorbed in another culture, but accepting the rainbow of cultures and entering into dialogue with other nations and using it to create and expand human civilization. In this dialogue, reading and publishing the cultural and civil advantages and transferring them to the body of the target society took place. This trade has been regardless of geographical, ethnic or religious factors and has been considered less prejudiced and extremist and monopolistic.

Besides this, Conversation is a kind of cultural otherology or self-recognition. It is a kind of intercultural comparative study and the attention to another.¹¹ Hence, the growth of dialogue usually occurs in the period of cultural and civilizational peak of nations. It is a kind of departure from oneself and looking at others, and this is the basis of the development in any country, because stopping itself is an obstacle to progress and development. Encounter with other is a kind of self-knowledge and encounter with cultural self and cognitive knowledge and comparative study with another. It is a search for lost selfness and liberation from stereotypes. It is all about accepting and understanding others, accepting diversity and differences, recognizing and understanding the truth, and striving for a deep and wide awareness of other cultures and different traditions. And of course, In the case of the culture and traditions of others, one should have a broad and unbiased view and seek the truth through differences that make common language and the opportunity for growth, excellence, interaction and empathy possible.¹²

¹¹ . Isacs William, 2009, Dialogue and the Art of thinking to gether, London ,Routledge

¹² . Maqsoodi, Maneejeh, 2011, Tarh-e- Rawish Shenasi guftgu der Pajooish hay farhangi, Tehran, Social studies of Iran

Today, the "dialogue" has become an indicator of world peace, and pacifism and pacifism is the most appropriate platform for the flourishing of cooperation and the growth of cultures.¹³ Because both the cooperation and synergy of cultures is a process during which each of the cultures becomes more rich and mature after the stage of contact with another culture. The discourse of the "cultural dialogue of the elites of Iran and India" can contribute to the realization of the idea of "peace and justice", which is an essential need of our challenging world, by providing a model of positive and constructive interaction based on mutual respect. The main benefit and function of cultural dialogue is that cultures on the world level interact constructively in such a way that promotes non-violence and tolerance of each other as a constructive and dynamic global achievement by spreading a culture of tolerance. And this provides a great foundation for achieving lasting peace in today's world. Therefore, envisaging appropriate mechanisms for the procedure and continuation of cultural dialogue between the intellectuals of the two countries can be considered as an attempt to highlight the constructive and effective role of culture and cultural elite. Fortunately, in the cultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, intellectual interaction and cultural dialogue between the elites of Iran and India has been a priority, and so far several rounds of religious and cultural talks have been held with the presence of professors and elites and officials of scientific and cultural institutions of Iran and India. The agreement to form the Secretariat of Cultural Dialogues between Iran and India can be an effective and useful step in expanding understanding and interaction in order to establish some joint scientific and academic cooperation and other joint cultural cooperation, including the publication of quarterly journals, periodic meetings, and exchange of delegations. Moreover, it can strengthen the role of the elites and thinkers of the two countries in strengthening the deeper ties in these fragile and anxious international environments, to activate a set of academic and cultural capacities in the direction of cultural interactions and cooperation.

¹³ . Salehi, Ameer, Sayed Reza, 2016, Cultural Diplomacy, Tehran Poinix Publication, wa kavi Masalyey Guftgu, Naqd-e-Ketab, 2014, Cultural Research Academy.

Conclusion

Culture has always been considered as a requirement for a stable and constructive bilateral interaction between the nations and in the historical experience of the relations between the two great nations of Iran and India, in which poets, writers and artists of the two countries have had an important role. Iranian and Indian thinkers, devoid of individualistic and nationalistic affiliations and identities, tried to create a favorable and stable atmosphere in the formation of common values and as a result, peace and friendship between the two nations.

Cultural dialogue is one of the fields of human relations that have the capacity to become a discourse and paradigm in the relations between the two great countries of Iran and India due to historical, cultural, geopolitical and geostrategic commonalities, common issues and challenges, and some other similarities. These continuous and culture-oriented dialogues between elites can be formed by using valuable treasures from elements such as myths, ancient texts, rituals, customs and cultural traditions. Discourse analysis and the meaning of cultural dialogue in the development of cultural diplomacy between the two countries Iran and India can be analyzed in the context of strengthening the role of reason and rationality in the relations between the two countries and emphasizing the common moral duties in promoting peace and the formation of a world free of violence and injustice prevailing in the international system.

Due to the role and function of cultural and religious dialogue between the elites of Iran and India in providing mental security and friendly and peaceful action in the relations between the two nations, it is important to pursue appropriate mechanisms to establish communication networks between the elites of the two countries, to support the production of literature and theoretical sources of dialogue, and to adopt strategies and set thematic priorities for cultural and religious dialogues and recognize opportunities for joint cooperations.

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The contribution of Persian language and its Intellectuals to the World Civilization

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The Iranian plateau either has long been a bridge and a reliable thoroughfare for the movements between the East and the West of the world or it was considered as an area of invasion by the residents of both sides and its special geo-political conditions was the reason behind that Iranians could keep interacting with rest of the world and this mixing with travelers or invaders, caused the exchange of thoughts, ideas, arts and culture with them. These special and natural characteristics led Iran to become an extraordinary society. It produced art and literature and in this way they could send their language and culture to distant lands. It is also natural that the inhabitants of such a land with such suitable conditions will stand against the onslaught of the invaders of their homeland and sometimes in their lands of conflicts. They have also promoted their language and culture in the lands conquered by them.

There was another way also for these cultural inter-exchanges; it was done by the tribes who have attacked Iran or passed through this passage to invade other parts of the world. They usually accommodated themselves into Iranian culture like the Mongols and the Arabs, with the passing of time. They kept accepting the culture of this country and these were the best means of promotion of the ancient culture of Iran in their lands. It is very clear that in such a suitable situation it was easily possible to communicate with the east and west of their country and expand their language and culture till to long distances. If you see that western countries still consider Sunday as a day of sunshine, it is the result of the cult of love that they call each day of the week a star, including Sunday.¹

The uprising of Abu Muslim of *Khorasan* caused the establishment of the *Bani Abbas* government in the year 130 A.H. in Baghdad and they were close to the cultural centers of Iran. Therefore, *Bani Abbas* came to power and paid special attention to the Iranians, and they chose their allies from them and this composition led to this that they preferred

¹. Posht ha, V,1, P 407 onwards

dresses and colors according to Iranian culture and practices. *Mansour*, 2nd *Abbasi Khalifa* in the year 153 wore Iranian clothes and made the people to wear the same.²

We read in the history of *Bal'ami*³ that *Abu Muslim Sahi buddawa* killed and defeated *Bani Ummayya* and gave the caliphate to *Bani Abbas*. They liked the color green and most of the community wore it. They said that this green color is from heaven. *Abu Muslim* wanted to revive the customs of *Bani Umayyia* and shows the desire that if Sultan/king wears black dress it would be more awe full.

Iranian influence and supremacy over caliphates were so much that ministers and government officials were mostly being chosen from Iranian families such as Barmakid, singer, Tahir, etc., and the ministries were given to Iranians, and one of the reasons behind that was the power of writers and the art of Iranian. In Arabic writing, they were the forerunner of the Arabs, even during the *Bani Umiyyah* regime personalities such as *Abdul Hamid Kateb* and *Salim Hisham bin Abdul Malik* and his son *Jebillah* and *Abdullah bin Moqaffa* were all Iranians. Apart from the great impact of Iranian culture, language, religion, customs, governance, and management they have also compiled Arabic writing and art.⁴ The person who was attributed with the title of wazir for the first time in post Islamic history was Iranian and his Name was *Abu Solmeh K helal* who became famous as Wazir Ale Mohammmd. Other ministers of *Bani Abbas* Regime, such as *Abu Ayub Moriani*⁵ and *Yaqub bin Dawood*, *yahya* son of *Khalid Barmaki*, *Sabit bin Yahyaei Razi* and *Ahmad bin Yusuf*, were all Iranians, and no doubt the reason behind the comparatively smooth tenure of Abbasids' was the adequacy of Iranian ministers. Their position was considered as deputies of caliphates in all respective issues of the country.

The spread of Iranian culture by Iranian men during the Abbasid era was so great that many books were translated into Arabic and this has opened the gateway to Arabic for Persian words. Transfer of the Abbasid Caliphate Center to Baghdad⁶ in ancient time, which still has the same Iranian name, on the other end, and the handing over of government affairs to the Iranians, such as the Ministry, the Secretariat, and the General Staff, on the other hand, rapidly influenced Iranian culture and language, as well as vice versa. Persian words found way to fill in the gaps that existed in Arabic language about many other words related to civilization and another city were added. *Jahiz Basri* (D.255

² . Tareekh Tamaddon-e- Islami by Jeorge Zaidan

³ . Tareekh Balami by Abu Ali Mohammad Balami, edited by Malikushora Bahar, Published by Ministry of culture, 1972

⁴ . Kitabal waza Jaheshyari, published in Egypt, 1359

⁵ . Mourian in the vicinity of Ahwaz

⁶ .Baghdad, Bagh = God + dad = Given/created (God Given or created)

H.)⁷ writes: have you not seen that when a person used to come from Iran and stayed in Medinah, people usually picked the words from his language and used them, and so on. They called *battikh* to *Kharbuzeh*, besides this Kufis were calling *Baal* to *Mishat* while people from Basrah city used to call the squires as *Morabba'a* but Kufis were used to call it *chahar soo* and it is Persian, moreover they say *wazar* or *Bazar* to *Sooq* and *kheyar* to *Qussa* which is again Persian.

In addition, many Persian words were assimilated into Arabic due to the mixing of Iranians and Arabs. There was another way also for transmission of Persian words into Arabic and that was through translations done by Iranians,⁸ mostly on topics such as agriculture, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, logic, and the history of mythology and governance. Among the books that were completely translated into Arabic at that time, and some of them had a great impact on the Arabic language and literature, are the veterinary medical books. Making a thousand of the story books such as *Bahram Chubin*, the book mentioned the story of the letter related to ethics of upbringing of a son. It is necessary to remind and point out that many Persian words found their way into Arabic through the Iranians themselves and one must acknowledge that major part of the fruitfulness of Arabic literature and the rapid growth of this language were due to valuable works and their ideas (Arabic literature) of some Iranians such as *Abdullah bin Moqaffa*, *Ibne Qateebah*, *Tabari*, *Takharistani*, *Abu Nawas Ahwazi* and *Abul Atahiyah*.

Yet, Persian entries in Arabic could not be mentioned in this brief article. It can be referred to resources available in this regard, but it is important and significant that Iranian writers went beyond the Arabs themselves in compiling Arabic books. In all kinds of Arabic literature, history, geography, grammar, critiques, etc., they have created works that are still considered to be the leading scientific and literary books in Arabic literature, and there is no doubt that many words, combinations and terminologies of Persian have entered into Arabic from this way and it has found its way into the Arabic language and contributed significantly to enrich the wealth of this language. We can remember a few names in this regards: *Abdul Hamid bin Yahya* (killed in 132 H), *Abdullah bin Muqaffa*, (killed in 142 H), *Jebilleh bin Salem*, *Ali bin Obaideh Raihani*, who has more than 40 books in his credit,⁹ *Sahl bin Harun*, *Dasht-e Mishani*, *Ali ibn Dawud*, *Mohammad bin Las katib*, *Abu Ishaq Ibrahim Ibn Abbas bin Muhammad Sul i Khorasani*, (D. 243 H)

⁷. Albayan wattabien, Jahiz

⁸. Alfehrist w Morawwej uzzahab Masoodi

⁹. Alfehrist, ibne Nadeem

Muhammad ibn Abd ul-Malik, Ziat bin Aban, Abu Hanifa Ahmad bin Dawood Dainavari Ibne Qatiye Dainavari etc.

It is considered that the first encyclopedia on traditional medicine was compiled by Iranian Muslim titled as *Firdaus-ul-hikmah* by *Abul Hasan Ali ibne Rabban Tabari* (killed in 224 H) and it is considered as one of the 4 pillars published in Berlin in 1928 A.D. One other book on traditional medicine is *Alhavi*¹⁰ compiled by *Mohammad bin Zakaria Razi*, (D.313 H), a great Iranian philosopher and physician. It was compiled in thirty volumes and contained very useful information about his medical findings and beliefs, and he found them satisfactory with his experience and used them in his treatments. He also wrote other books in medicine, including *Mansouri, Kitabu ShShukook, Man La yehzarhu-Ttabib and Al-Jadari*.¹¹ *Ali Ibn Abbas Majusi Ahwazi*, (D.384 H), wrote *Kamil – ul- Sana'a*. *Abu Sahl Masihi Jorjani* (D. 304 H) compiled *Almeto fi-ssana tiTibbiyah* and *Avicenna* compiled the famous book known “*Qanoon*”. *Shapur Ibn Sahl Gandi Shapuri* (D. 255 H), wrote *Al-Aqrabazeen* and *Ibne Telmiz* (D. 560 H) has also compiled with the same title. Another book on traditional medicine is *Shamil* having 8 volumes by *Ibne Nafees Qarashi* (D. 687 H). On the science of pharmacology, Iranians have contributed a lot in Arabic languages such as *Aul Hakim Muhammad ibn Abd ul-Malik Salehi* wrote valuable book “*Ainussana'a* in 425 AH and *Abu R ehan Biruni* (D. 440) compiled *Aljamhir fi m a'rfatijawahir* in the field of physiology and *Obaidullah ibne Gabriel* (D. 450 H) compiled *Tabayeil Haivan* in Zoology.

Overall, one can say that the role of Persian intellectuals in completing world traditional medicine has been so constructive that many of the authoritative books they wrote were sometimes translated into Latin several times and had great acceptance in Europe and rest of the world. *Al-Qatfi* writes in the book “*Akhbar al -Hakma*”:¹² *Gandi Shapur's* physicians regulated and codified the laws of healing in according to the different atmosphere of various cities, so they became famous in the medical sciences, and some of their method of treatment even better than *Unanis* or *Hindustanis* because they had qualities of every medicinal method. They added something to what had already been extracted and created rules and regulations, so much so that in the twentieth year, the physicians of *Jundishapur* gathered as per the invitation of king *Anu Shervan* (550 AD) and there were questions and answers between them. The role of the Persian language in Islamic medicine was so great that even the word ‘hospital’ still called as *Maristan* or

¹⁰ . Half of the Arabic translation and 25 volumes of its Latin translation is not available

¹¹ . it is about the prevention of pox

¹² . *Akhbarul Hokama alqatfi*, published in Egypt, 1957, p 39 onwards

Bimaristan, or in a plural form, Bimaristanat or Maristanat for hospital in Islamic countries.

The first mathematicians and astronomers in the Abbasid Caliphate were from Iran, and were among the mathematicians and astronomers who had a great influence in the fields of Islam and had made innovations, and the metaphors of some of them were translated into European languages, *Mashallah bin Ashari*, *Abu Moasher Balkhi*, *Abu Rihan Biruni*, and *Abdullah Muhammad ibn Musa Kharazmi*, *Khayyam Neyshabouri*, *Ghias al-Din Jamshid*, *Khawaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi*, *Muhammad ibn Isa al-Mahani*, *Abu Abbas Fadl ibn Hatim Tabrizi*, *Muhammad ibn Kathir al-Furqani*, *Umar ibn Farhan Tabari*, *Ahmad ibn Abdullah al-Haseb al-Maruzi* can be mentioned in this regard. We are not here to name all the Iranian scientists who have had a constructive role in the civilization and culture of Islam. We would like to point out that the presentation of their scientific hypotheses in Arabic, which was considered the scientific language of that time, as well as the translations of their works into this language, caused a large number of Iranians in addition to topics derived from taste, talent and art. One of the terms and interpretations of various scientific disciplines can be found in Arabic and transmitted to European languages through it, such as the term ‘algorithm’, which means the series of numbers, as well as Alkhorismus, derived from Alkharizmi in European languages.

The role of Iranians in the development and excellence of Islamic culture is not limited to the mentioned field. They have had a fundamental impact on all common sciences in the early Islamic centuries. It began with the translation of Iranian and Greek philosophical works into Arabic, as well as theological and philosophical discussions of the *Mu'tazilites*, *Qadiriyyah*, *Vajrayana*, and almost all Iranians. *Zakaria Razi* (D.313 H) did not accept the deductive method of Aristotle and *Mashaein*, and in some cases he was follower of the views of ancient Iranian scholars. *Abu Nasr al-Farabi* has his own perceptions and reservations on the theories of Aristotle. The works of other Iranian scholars such as *Abolhassan Shahid Ibn Sina Balkhi*, (D.325 H), and *Abu Bakr Zakaria al-Muntaghi* (D. 364 H), *Mohammad Ibn Abdul Karim Shahrestani* (D. 548 H), *Imam Fakhr Razi* (D. 606)H, *Khawajah Naseer ul-Ddin Tusi* (D. 672 H) *Qutub-ul-Din Shirazi* (D. 710 H) and many others became the foundation of Islamic philosophy and many of them after the translation of Muslim scientific books in the twelfth century AD begun in Southern Italy, were taught in European scientific centers and it was a strong base for the faculty and the foundations of European societies. *Ekhwanussafa* a few other Iranian scientists have published 53 treatises in Arabic and it had a profound effect on the dissemination of philosophical and moral ideas among Muslims.

In other fields also there was similar condition as above-mentioned. The compilation of the books on Arabic Grammar, Rhythms of Poetry and Arabic dictionaries was done by Iranians, for example; we refer to some of name such as *Abu Abd al-Rahman Khalil ibn Ahmad Farahidi*, (D. 170 / 175 H). Author of *Kitab-ul-Ain*,¹³ *Sibawayh* (D. 180 - 194) writes “*Al-kitab*” in Arabic Grammar, *Kisayee Nahwi*, (D. 179/ 189) compiled a briefed book as “*Mokhtasar fi nahw w Ma’ani Quran*”, *Abu Zakaria Yahya* (D. 207 H), wrote the book “*Al-Hudood*”, *Durustwaih farsi faswi nahvi* (D. 347 h.) Author of *Sharh fasih w abul faraj isfahani* (D. 356 h), *Sahibul Aghani*, *Abu Mansur Mohammad bin Ahmad Heravi* (D. 370 h) wrote *Tahzib* (a dictionary) and *Taqreeb* (a Quranic interpretation) and *Abu Ali Far si* (D. 377h) *Izah and al hujjat; Sa alabi* (d. 377 h) *Yatimatuddahr w feqhulloghah*; *Abdul qahir Jorjani*, (d. 471 h) has written *Asrarul Balagha* and he was one of pioneer of *ilm-e- Bayan*; *Jarollah Zemakhsari* (D. 538 h.) *Alkashshaf*; *Raghib Isfahani* (d. 565 h) *Mofarredat*; *Sakkaki* (626 h), *Miftahil Uloom*; *Jauhari Farabi* (D. D. 393H.) *Sahhah*, *Abu O baid Q asim bin Heravi* (D. 223 H) *Alamsal*; *Abu A li Abdurrahmann bin Isa Hammad Katib Hamedani* (D.320 H) *Alfazul Katibiya*, *Ali bin Abbas Majoosi* (D. 386 H) *Alphabetical Medical Encyclopedia*, *Sahib bn Ayyad* (D. 385 H) has compiled *Almoheet*.

No doubt that the details of those Iranian intellectuals who have contributed in different fields of science and wisdom and compiled books in Arabic at that time could actually be considered as founders of the Arab literature but their names could not be mentioned in this brief presentation.

Ibne Khalladun a prominent historian (806/808 h) writes about the attribution of sciences to Iranians: science was part of the practice of neighboring country and Arabs were not too much familiar with this and in those days urban people were called *Ajami* or *Iranians* or people similar to them in the context of civilization from big cities were following *Iranians* in different profession and fields. *Iranian* influencing the rulers of *Persia*, were having full command in these fields yet they were brought up in *Arab* soil and they learned *Arabic* with *Arab* natives than they developed the terms of grammatical rules and regulations so that coming generations could get benefit.

Ibne Khalladun writes: ¹⁴most of authorities on *Hadith* were used to memorize the *Hadith* for followers of *Islam* either *Iranian* or born and brought up there in *Iran*; that is why the arts in *Iraq* in the cities located in the vicinity of *Iran* were promoted as well as almost all

¹³ . collection of the speeches during the Iranian Research Conference, by Dr. Gorjee

¹⁴ . Introduction of *ibne Kholdun*, translated by *Pervin ganbadi*, *bongah* publication, 1956, p 21 onwards

Ulemas and Quranic Interpreters were Iranian and none other Iranian tried to promote the preservations of science.

There are too many Persian words inducted into Arabic even in Holy Quran we have Persian words considered by linguistics such as *Abareeq*, plural of *ibrieeq*, Arabic version of Persian word *Aabreez* means Pot; *istebraf*, *Tanoor*, *Sejjin*, *Soradaq*, *Sundoos*, *Moshk*, *Marjaan*, *Maqaleed*, and *Yaqt*. There are books written in this regard that how much Persian words are now parts of Arabic language as *Almoarab menal k alamil Ajami*¹⁵ is one of famous books by *Abu Mansur Mauhub bin Ahmad Ahwazi* in 594 h. He has claimed that there are more than 700 Persian words in Arabic which were inducted into Arabic during the era of ignorance. The following couplet where the word Ka'k has been used was mentioned as an example in that book:¹⁶

Ya habbazal Ka'k belahme Masrood

W khushknan , saweeq o maqnud

There are 4 Persian words in above mentioned couplet as ka'k is Kaak of Persian which means sweet bread. The interesting point is this that in English it is “cake” and nowadays in Iran it is being used with the same meaning and pronunciation. Even this word in Germany also has same meaning. *Masrud* also is *sareed* which means pieces of bread soaked in cold yogurt based beverage or stew which have also the same meaning. *Khishknan* is a Persian word and *maqnud* is taken from Persian language.

Other books which have dealt with the assimilation of Persian words into Arabic is “*Alfazul Farsiail Moarrabah*”, compiled by *Addai Sher* was the Chaldean Catholic archbishop of Siirt; the book was published from Beirut. Author has claimed that there a large number of Persian words being used in Arabic.¹⁷ *Ferozabadi* also wrote about many same words in his dictionary “*Qamus-ul-Muheet*”. *Shefa-ul-Ghalil* is also one of those books compiled during 11th century in this regard by *Shahbuddin Ahmad Khafafi kufi* and it has described those words specially which was assimilated from Persian into Arabic during Abbasid period. *Ahmad Timour Pasha* an Egyptian scholar also published a series of article in this regard titled as “*Alfaza-ul-Abbasia*” in 1932. A scholar and expert on Islamic history from Holland also have done some research on the assimilation of Persian words into Arabic¹⁸ and finally a comprehensive book on this issue titled as “*farhang-e-Wajeh-haye farsi der zaban Arabi*” compiled by

¹⁵ . almoarrab jawaliqui, published in Tehran, 1984

¹⁶ . same as above in the index of K'ak

¹⁷ . introduction of above mentioned book

¹⁸ . Dozy

Mohammad Ali Imam Shu shtari, published in 1347 by *Anjuman Asaar Melii*, Tehran indicated in its final index of the book that there are 771 words with full explanation about it.¹⁹ Shaheed Motahhari on the contribution of Iranian to Islam writes: as a whole Iran is on the top in the context of literature, theology, Hadith, Quranic Interpretation, philosophy and tasawwof. Schools of thoughts of Neshbour, Herat, Balkh, Marw, Bokhara, Samarqand, Rey, Isfahan and other big cities of Iran were main hub for academic research. Thousands of Muslim legends such as philosophers of Islam, jurists, historians were trained here and served the east and west of the world in the field of Islamic civilization.

Authors of dictionaries, great poets who have composed their poetry's in Arabic, were actually Quranic interpreters, politicians, great kings and Iranian Muslim travelers. There were the *barmakids*, *naubakhtian qashriyan*, *saidiyan*, *Samaani* Family, *khowaja nizamal Malik Tusi*, *Shiekh Toosi*, *Khowaja Naseeruddin Toosi* as well as *Tahirid*, *Saminid*, *Buyid*, *Ghaznavid*, *Guran*, *Sarbadars* dynasty and 10s of other families who have contributed in the promotions of Islam and its civilization not from the same soil (Iran). 2 of 4 Imams of Ahle Sunnah were also Iranian from *Khorasan*, 1st *Abu Hanifah* who is known as *Kabuli* according to some people and 2nd *Ahmad ibne Hambal* who was also born in *Khorasan* and brought up in *Baghdad*. The Author of 4 key books of Shia School of thoughts regarding Hadith were Iranians while all authors of *Sehah-e-Sitta* (6 key books of Ahle Sunnah) regarding Hadith were Iranian.²⁰

Let's skip the role and impact of Persian language and its native speakers on the cultures of Islamic countries because of this brief research and let us put some light on Turkey in this regard. The popularity of Iranian culture is deep rooted history of the region and it's belongs to 1000 years back. *Asia Minor* was part of the provinces ruled by *Achaemenid Empire*, which can be witnessed in its history of *Pars* era and in archeological surveys also have enough evidence about it. Besides this the *Mithraism* went to *Asia Minor* with *Achaemenid* and it was practiced there until *Christianity* was recognized as an official religion in that region.²¹ There were many old traditions being practiced in *Ottoman Empire*, as *Gulpanarli*²² a famous Turkish expert on *Maulana Rumi* consider that most of the costumes of *Maulviyah* sect are Iranian.²³ Apart from victories of *Achaemenid*, the neighborhood of *Iran* also helped that *Persian* became popular language in this part of the world. *Nasir Khusrow's* statement in his travelogue is also evidence on it: "there are 3

¹⁹ . khedamat motqabil Islam w Iran, 1974, Tehran, P 509

²⁰ . mentioned as above, P 669

²¹ .Scriptures near *Mir w Sang Gurmeh w Goorestan* in the vicinity of *Toos* city might certify it.

²² . *Golpnarli*

²³ . *Maulvi w Maulaviyah* translated by Dr. *Taufiq Sobani*

languages being used in Ahlat town, Arabic, Parsi and Armenian,²⁴ yet the true Iranian cultural traditions in Rome could be witnessed after the attack of Alp Arslan Seljuqi and Iranian Army in the year of 463 in the battle of Manzikert²⁵ with Romanos IV Diogenes and the Kaiser 2 of Rome was the winner;²⁶ and gradually with the stay of Seljuq dynasty the Persian language and Iranian culture became popular in that region. Roman Empires were under Iran's kingdom and this patch up continued till the Seljuque dynasty and after a short of time it became under the Iranian Ilkhanate after the attack on Moghals on Iran and Rome. Persian has become an official language in Asia Minor after Seljuqi regime and people were reading and writing this language especially during the Izzuddin Qelich Arslan 2nd (551-584), the 5th king of that dynasty has compiled valuable book in this regard. Ibne Bi bi writes about the 6th century : in all 5 languages which was being spoken in Rome, Ghayasuddin Keykhusrow 2 had full command on all of that, as once anybody talks one of those languages, he talks in a same language while other Seljuque dynasty kings were used to talk in Persian.²⁷

A literary forum was formed by Bahram Shah (D. 622 H) in Erzurum and his son Alaaddin Daoud Shah was also has great interest in poetry and literature as the entire surrounding of Seljuqi dynasty was dominated by Iranian culture. The king of Seljuqi dynasty was named by Sultan and prince were called as *Malik* or Shah, yet they all were under the Sultan and all the courts had a literary forum. Mr. Ahmad Atash in his article titled as "Persian literature during 6th – 8th centuries in Anatolia"²⁸ explained about 37 books which were compiled during that time. *Kamaluddin Hubaish taflisi*, (B 889 / 579 h) was one of great Persian writers and a poet also from Rome. He has composed at least 10 books in Persian. Prince *Naseruddin barkiyarq* son of Kilij Arslan 2 has composed *Masnavi Hoor w Parizad* and his brother *Mohyuddin*²⁹ has composed and published *Majmau-ul-Rubaiat* before 588 in Ankara city as well as his younger brother Sultan Ghayauddin Keykhusrow was a poet and Rahaatussudoor Ravandi published with his name from Asia Minor. Ravandi the Author of *Rahaatussudoor* was poet also while Qaneiee Toosi who has composed Seljuq nameh about history of Seljuqis and has close affinity to Maulana Rumi is another scholar of Seljuqis³⁰ from Rome.

²⁴ . NasirKhosrow travelogue, by Dr. Dabeer Saqi, Ajumane Asaar Melli, Tehran

²⁵ . Manazgerd as recored

²⁶ . Lameie Jorjani have Qaseedah regarding attack of Alp Arslan Seljuqi, edited by Saeed Nafeesi, 1941, its 1st couplet is : ملک را شاهنشہ و سلطان چنین باید چنین / گہ نہیب او بہ مصر و گہ سپاہ او بہ چین :

²⁷ . Alawamerul alaniyah, Ibne Bi bi, 1956, Ankara, P. 9 - 10

²⁸ . Mecmuasi 1-A.ATES HICRI, Asirlarda Anadoluda, Farsca ecerler, Turkiyat Cilt, 1945, Istanbul, P 94 - 135

²⁹ . Istanbul Library , no 338

³⁰ . it was 30 thousand couplet in 30 volumes

In the year of 640 during the battle of Kose Dagh³¹ when Moghols have defeated the Seljuqs and prepared the background for their extinction, after that, executive charges were given to Ilkhanate and the entire functioning were up to the Iranian Ministers. Besides this, due to destructions done by Moghols in Iran, Iranian were migrating time to time to this region, hence the Persian language became popular there very fast. The enthusiasm about Rumi and his fans and the impact of his thoughts cannot be mentioned here. In fact the emergence of Maulana Rumi was a major cause of the revival of Persian Language and Literature as well as Iranian Culture and it didn't let down the speedy popularity of Persian which was left unattended after the downfall of Seljuqs who were great supporter of the Persian language. Rumi's Poetry was warmly welcomed in each every sect of the society due to its humanism and khanqahas was become main centre for the recitation of his Masnavis and it has helped in promoting the Persian culture even when Turkish was declared as an official language there were special acceptance for Maulana Rumi not only between people but among the kings of Ottoman empire also.

It is not possible to mention all Persian works done in Asian Minor in this briefed article but we can put the names of a few Persian Scholars with their various themes which may show the roots of Persian literature in Ottoman Empire.

Khamsa Namah in rhyme of *Khosrow w Shirin* by *Yusefi Zanjani*, *Majmoo-e-Manshaat* by *Saduddin Masood*, *Masnavi Fatwa Namah* in rhyme of *Masnavi Maulvi* and *Kitab Ishraqiat* (Poetry and Prose) by *Naseruddin Seewasi*, *Mosameratul Akhbar* by *Aqsaraie*, 4 book about essay such as *Qawaedurrsael w faraedurrsael*, *Nuzhat-ul-kuttab w tohfatulalbab*, *Ghuniyatul Katib w Munituttalib* and *Rusoomurrael*, *Nujoomul Fazaal* by *Hasan bin Abdul Momin Khoie Ameer Qismooni*, *Alawamir-il-elaia* a very descriptive history of *seljuqi* by *ibne Bibi*, *fastatil Adalah fi qawaedissaltanah* by *Mohammad bin Mahmood Khatib*, *Akhtiyarat Mozaffari* about astronomy by *Qurubuddin Shirazi* known as *Allameh*, *Lateful hikmat* by *Serajun Urumvi*, *Nawaderuttabdur*, *letohfatilbahadur*, a book similar to encyclopedia about mathematics, astronomy, Gemology, health, poisons, anti poisons by *Mohammad bin Aminuddin duni saree*,³² *Falak Namah a masnavi on Tasaqquf*, *Silkujawahir* an Arabic – Persian dictionary in Poetry by *Hamid Anguri* and *aknzuttohof* about music by *Ameer bin Khizre M ali Q urbani*, *Rozatul- Uqool* by *Mohammad bin Ghazi Mativi*, the poetry of *Nezamuddin Ahmad Erzincani*. The efficient number of poets and writers of this region shows the history of Persian language and literature in Asia Minor.

³¹ . it belong to the vicinity of Arzanjan

³² . it is located in the southern west of Mardin near Iraq Border

The Persian language was popular even in subsequent periods of Ottoman Empire and in the area of its golden period of Bayazid II and his son Salim I the Persian language attraction continued and valuable works in different fields of science and literature in Persian were composed even after the decreased relationships between Iran and Osmanis due to battle of Chaldoran.³³ There were Persian scholars who served this language such as Kamal Pashazadeh, Sheikhulislam of Ottoman empire (D. 940 H) has wrote more than 300 books besides this the epistolary writings³⁴ by Ottoman kings are great evidence on official existence of Persian during 8th and 9th Hijri.

The Persian language and literature became so deep rooted in Turkey that all formats of poetry were been practiced there as well as the Metaphors and illusion was the same as Persian. More interestingly in between the lines of Turkish poetry, there were Persian couplet of poetry also. This could be seen as an essential essence of their poetry which was in the local language and somehow the composite poetries of Persian – Turkish are popular even nowadays. Also, there are many Persian phrases and terminologies being used in Turkish which could be considered as solid evidence of 9 centuries impact of Persian language and literature on the language and culture of that region. It is deep rooted in history, literature, culture and language of the people of Turkey and research about all these aspects is impossible without having an sufficient knowledge of Persian language.

The Persian language and literature was booming around the Central Asia due to Iranian rulers as well as friends like Samanid dynasty and Transoxiana, entire area in the vicinity of Oxus and Khawarazm was part of Persian dominance and interestingly when Kara-Khanid Khanate have conquered the Samanid, in spite of this that they were Turkish but they adopted Iranian style rapidly even though they proclaimed their ancestors as Iranian and they also paid attention to the promotion of Persian language and Literature. Nizami Arozi writes: King Khaqanian in the time of Sultan Khidr ibn Ibrahim had a wonderful personality and he was a wise and just king. Transoxiana and Turkestan were committed to him, and from Khorasan he was given complete friendship and trust. Master Rashidi, Amir Omag, Najibi Ferghani, Najjar Sagharchi, Ali Panizi, son of Darghush, son of Esfazlini, and Ali S ephri found valuable blessings in his service and performed wonderful ceremonies. And from that government he took pleasure and found a strong luxury because the Turkish slaves and good maids and horses of the way and the constructions of luxurious and eloquent gold and clothes were abundant and the great

³³ . it was occurred in 920

³⁴ Mansha'tussalatin, v, 2, Istanbul

king was honored. Although he was young, he was a scholar and he was praised while all the shrines of Khidr Khan were under his command.³⁵

There are other evidences that also show that the courts of kings and their successors such Khawarizmian dynasty and Gurkanid were the major centers for the Persian language and Literature. They also had keen interest in poetry and literature. Moreover, poets like Shahabuddin Ahmad bin Moayyid Nasafi Samarqandi, Zahiruddin Samarqandi, Saif Afrangi Zia, Khojandi, Raziduddin Neshaburi, Daqaeyqi Maruzi of those empires are great example of Persian development in the kingdom around Central Asia at that time. It is worthy to mention here that in spite of changes that took place after the Moghal's invasion in those regions; Persian language retained its charisma and was being used as international language in the biggest part of Asia as a literary and political language of Central Asia to Asia Minor from the brink of black sea to the Bay of Bengal till to many centuries.

I would sum up by quoting Dr. William James Durant a great scholar and writer of History of civilization as he says: ³⁶the Shifa of Avicenna is more significant than his another book Qanoon and it has 18 volumes. It is a complete encyclopedia of philosophy compiled by a person and one can consider it as greatest compilation of the medieval centuries. Avicenna was indeed a greatest scholar of the medieval centuries. These books and books of Aristotle are the main source of research for scholars of Scholastic philosophy also Dr. Well Durant says that Shahnameh Ferdosi is one of greatest literary piece of the world, he also says that Sanger sergeant an American Artist says that all paintings of Italian Renaissance are nothing in front of art of the Iranian carpet. About Khayyam Nishaburi says: the reforming ideologies of Khayyam is better than current European calendar as this calendar mistakes once in 2320 years but Khayyam's Calendar mistakes once in 3770 years. Well Durant added: in the 4th century the index and catalogues of the book kept in a library of Rey city was in 10 volume books. In the year of 550 h in Merw city had 10 big libraries as one of that has 12 thousands books.

³⁵ . Chahar Maqaleh, Edited by Allameh Qazvini w Dr. Moeen, 1952, p 3 - 72

³⁶ . Dr. William James Durant, translated by Mehdi Furough.

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Dialogue Among Civilizations : India and Iran

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I used to dream of a Persian where bulbuls made a love to the roses, where in dreamland gardens poets sat around their wine cups and invoked visions of ineffable meaning. But now that I have come to your country my dream has been formed into a concrete image and finds its permanent place in the inner chamber of my experience I have visited Saadi's tomb; I have sat beside the resting place of Hafiz and intimately felt his touch in the glimmering green of your woodlands, in blossoming roses. The past age of Persian lent the old world perfume of its own sunny hours of spring to the morning of that day and the silent voice of your ancient poet filled the silence in the heart of the poet of Modern India.

Rabindranath Tagore, 9 May 1932

Contacts between different civilizations have often in the past proved to be landmarks in human progress. Greece learnt from Egypt, Rome from Greece, the Arabs from the Roman Empire, medieval Europe from the Arabs, and Renaissance Europe from the Byzantine. Persia, or Iran, after being no more than a mere name in the west, became in the eighteenth century progressively better known as contact became closer and more frequent. The conceptions of Persia formed by the European differed widely, some regarding her merely as a country to trade with, others as a land to evangelize, while others again looked upon her as an ally against the Turks. No wonder, two small volumes entitled *Persia* were added in the year 1835, to 'Uncle Oliver's Travels' in the Library for the Young Series published by Messer's Charles Knight of Ludgate Street.

Again, as in the Indian of Warren Hastings and his successors, European soldiers, diplomats, politician, archeologist and missionaries visited Persia and wrote documented accounts of flora and fauna, of religious practices, of the system of taxation and education, or the method of tying horses by the leg in the stables. As time went on, it came to be realized in Europe that Persia – a land in which civilization has flourished for

nearly 5,000 years of recorded history – meant something more than all this, that she had a real culture and literature of her own and that her people, having long since appreciated the virtues of being *jahan-dida* (one who has seen the world), had a fine taste for poetry and a keen zest for mysticism and for philosophical speculation. The Persian themselves, like the elites of Bengal and Maharashtra in nineteenth century India, retained great pride in their glorious past long after they were conquered, and guarded the traditions of the past, so that they would not and could not give up such traditions by deliberately wiping out their glorious memories. ‘There is as much sense in Hafiz as in Horace, and as much knowledge in the world.’ So Sherlock Holmes took leave of a Case of Identity and the sad romance of Mary Sutherland.

Maxime Rodinson identifies three tendencies at work in the nineteenth century: a utilitarian and imperialistic sense of western superiority: full of contempt for other civilizations; a romantic eroticism, with its delight in a magical east whose increasing poverty spiced its charm; and a specialized scholarship whose main concerns lay with past ages. These three tendencies were more complementary than opposed. The unconscious eighteenth – century view, guided by the Universalist ideology of the age, respected non-European peoples and cultures. This was replaced by the conscious, theoretical European self-centeredness of the nineteenth century (*The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam*, in Joseph Schacht and C.E. Bosworth (eds), *The Legacy of Islam*, Oxford, 1979, P 43)

India was colonized but Persian was not; yet the two countries were equally affected, especially because they were coming into conflict with the expanding and aggressive imperialism of Europe. In the subcontinent, the widely different concerns and pursuits of, say William Jones, founder of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, and Macaulay, author of the Minute of Education (1835) exemplified the changing language and vocabulary of colonialism and its construction of images and perception. Indeed European self centeredness and racial arrogance, detailed by scholars like Bernard S. Cohn and Thomas Metcalf, became marked features particularly after the 1857 revolt in India. Most British were convinced, as reflected in the writing of R. Kipling, that they possessed the virtues necessary to dominate the world, and history seemed to bear them out. Until the end of the Boer War their superior position was evident, and it is from this position of confident superiority that they looked at India.

What I am saying is that while textbooks dwell upon the sensuous imagery of the great Persian poets – Omar Khayyam and the mid-fourteenth century poet Hafiz – their authors take insufficient notice of the impact of colonialism or neo-colonialism on our respective societies. At a time when ideologies are gasping for breath in a unipolar world and

globalization appears to have overwhelmed most countries, this tendency is much more pronounced in India than in Iran. Nonetheless, whether is for the purpose of exploring our heritage or for the purpose of forging closer economic and cultural ties, we need to incorporate rather than discard the colonial factor in our discourses. The critique of Orientalism irritates some people, but it sensitizes us, both as an idea and as an explanation, to the unpleasant and unlovely aspects of cultural hegemony and political domination of the west. This is what Ranade, Dadabhai Naoroji and R.C. Dutt talked about in the last quarters of the nineteenth century. This is what ‘economic nationalism’ was all about. In Iran, too, freedom and independence from western economic dominance were at the heart of the Tobacco Protest 1891-92 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11. Much the same issues have provided energy to the unfinished Iranian Revolution.

Orientalism sensitizes us to western misrepresentation, stereotyping, and the colonial construction of a hostile politico ideological structure, a different civilization and an alien economic region. Apart from everything else, these representation have lent depth and legitimacy, even after decades of independence, to ‘primordial’ loyalties and identities in India and Iran. To resolve these problems, some of which are threatening to tear apart the fabric of our neighbors, notably Pakistan and Afghanistan, we need to question, weather it is the context of the nation or its fragments, the colonial assumption about our societies and develop our own theories (indigenous, if you like) of state and society. One can draw comfort from Tagore’s comment in 1932 that ‘my visit to Persia has given me faith in the power of the Eastern peoples to assert themselves and quickly find their way to a united manifestation of their undying heritage in spite of conflict and difficult and difficult economic circumstances.

I realize that, under the influence of Ali Shariati (the most popular exponent of Shia modernism) and his *Husayaniyyah-i-Irshad* in Tehran, the tone and tenor of the intellectual discourses has changed in Iran after the Pahlavi dynasty came crashing down. However, our own scholars in South Asia, mostly trained and tortured in British and American Universities, continue to follow, often uncritically, western models, methodologies and frameworks.

I personally believe that the basis of a meaningful Indo-Iran dialogue rests on some degree of shared values and traditions, if not ideological affinity, a sensitive understanding of colonialism and its legacy, and the adoption of refined methods to explore and interpret our past. Furthermore, our engagement must rest not so much on Samuel Huntington’s introduction of the concept of culture – albeit a dated and deeply

flawed one – to the study of foreign policy and international relations, but on a nuanced understanding of our respective societies.

When Sir Hamilton Gibb published *Modern Trends in Islam* in 1947, he set aside the religious aspects of the modern Turkish and Persian revolution. Fortunately, this theme has since been well explored. Yet one would like to reiterate, first and foremost, that religion and the state have been intertwined ever since the establishment of the Safavid Dynasty, reaching the apex of its power under Abbas I (1588-1629) and the assert that it is impossible to delegitimize, as the Shah of Iran had discovered much to his dismay, the role of Islam or the *ulama* in popular mobilization. We will do well to remember that on two more recent occasions, - the Tobacco Protest (1891-92) and the Constitutional Revolution (1905-11) Islam and the Muslim divines played an important oppositional role in the emergence of modern Iranian nationalism. Today, Islam continues to be, despite the rumbling in certain quarters, a sources of government legitimacy and national development in Iran. Government, both in Tehran and some other Muslim capitals, appeal to Islam to exchange their authority, buttress nationalism, legitimate policies and programs, and increase popular support.

In this context, one would like to underline the role of Shia Islam, with its powerful invocation of grief, sorrow, and martyrdom (some what akin to Sikhism after Guru Gobind Singh). Shia emotionalism, which manifests itself most vividly in the annual mourning ceremonies for Imam Husain, grandson, of the Prophet and the martyr of Karbala, took an special significance and provided the inspirational modern for the Iranian Revolution. Husain's martyrdom symbolized the role of Islam as a protest movement against the overwhelming forces of evil (incidentally, the Abbasid rulers came to power on the back of Shiite protest). Self sacrifice and even death in God's path were to be freely accepted, for to die in God's struggle was to become a martyr and win eternal rewards (see John L. Esposito, *The Islamic Threat; Myth or Reality*, P 110). Indeed, evocative Shia symbols, especially the Aza-khanas or imambaras and the sites where the Imams and their family members are buried, contribute to the making and crystallization of Iranian self-consciousness and lend a special and distinct character to Iranian nationalism.

At the same time it is worth mentioning in passing that the tradition of the martyred emphasized the importance of legitimate political power rather than theme of righteous suffering. Hence, the martyrdom of Stephen or the pathetic death of Teresa of Lisieux would strike Muslim consciousness, not as parables of adoration, but as almost disgraceful events (Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam*, p 64)

Historically, Shia Islam exercise a far reaching influence on Shia political culture than Sufi tendencies have in Sunni societies. Among other aspects, it has influenced the nature and character of Iranian nationalism. According to the late Oxford based scholar Hamid Enayat, there is nothing in the theoretical principles of Shiism to make it more amenable to ethnic or racial particularism than Sunnism. If Arab Nationalism is a quest for the unity of All Arabic speaking peoples who lost their identity and independence after the Mongol invasion in 1258, by contrast, what is called Iranian nationalism has been concerned less with the problems of nationhood than with that of freedom. This is simply because Iran had been an independent state since 1502 and the unity and identity of her people had been an accomplished fact (Modern Islamic Political Thought, PP 120-21). Besides, Iranian nationalists have often found themselves driven to understand the purely Iranian elements of their culture, mostly reminiscent of pre-Islamic times, or of the resistance to the Arab invasion during the first two centuries of Islam. In their eyes, the real renaissance of the national self consciousness starts with the great epic poet Firdausi (D. 1020), whose account of the Arab conquest remains to this day the most poignant epitaph on the destruction of the Sassanian state (ibid, p. 125).

Turning to the knitty-gritty of politics, it is worth pointing out that the symbolic component of politics in Iran, especially after the inglorious regime of the Shah, is especially significant because it could have been used as an instrument of persuasion as well as coercion. Yet bargaining models of politics, especially in recent years, suggest that persuasion rather than force, is increasingly considered to be the basis of politics in that country. This may appear to be oversimplification, perhaps it is. At any rate, what we need to be aware of is that politics in Iran, as indeed in other Muslim countries, is sufficiently complex. As a result, attempts to reduce it to a single formula leads to mystification; rather than being monolithic. Muslim politics, while aspiring to *umma*-wide universals, derives its force and significance from the specific contexts, times, and localities in which it takes place. 'Islam' cannot thus be a threat, any more than the 'West' can be for Muslims. Muslim politics have a transnational dimension, as is illustrated by the responses to Israel's unjust occupation of Palestine, but this does not imply that one Muslim cultural unit has coalesced or that a transnational Islamic space has acquired dominance. Even Muslims who denounce western values accept many western borrowings. (Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics. P. 163)

Whether it is Shia emotionalism or the nationalistic sentiments it generates, we have to come to terms with an Iranian personality and an Iranian ethos that is different from Arab or Turkish nationalism. Both historically and contemporaneously, Iran has plotted its own trajectory even when it was vulnerable to the assault of the great Islamic empires or the

western countries. This must serve as a *reference point for a cultural dialogue between India and Iran*.

Of course, long-standing contacts between India and Iran provide the obvious reference point. In his *Glimpses of World History*, Jawaharlal Nehru talked of Persia as 'the country whose soul is said to have come to India and found a worthy body in the Taj'. The zenith of Indo-Iranian cultural contact was reached in the Gupta period. From the third century AD the Sassanians extended their sway over much of northwestern India. Their motifs and techniques contributed much to the making of classic Indian art. Such influences were much more directly felt after soldiers, statesmen and merchants started arriving by sea in Gujarat and in the Deccan, a famous example being Mahmud Gawan (d. 1481), who served the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan, founded the famous *madarsa* in Bidar, modelled after Mirza Ulugh Beg's *madarsa* in Samarqand, and thus facilitated the dissemination of Indo- Persian learning. In other words, an influx of administrative and intellectual talent from Iran and Central Asia kept the medieval state in the mainstream of Islamic culture.

The Deccani rulers, mostly Shias, were emotionally attached to Safavid Persia (1502-1722). Babur, a Timurid, had formed an alliance with Shah Ismail in 1510-12, and his successor Humayun (1530-40) was given refuge and help by Shah Tahmasp I. Turkish was the language spoken in the private chambers of the Mughal imperial family, but it was not Turkish but Persian that was the literary language of India. For generations past, schoolboys in Indian *makatib* and *madaris* had to learn by heart the *Gulistan* and *Bustan* of Shaikh Sadi of Shiraz. It remained the official language in India until 1835. It was in Persian that Ghalib's progress was most marked, and by the age of eleven, he was already writing Persian poetry. He held the view that Persian was *par excellence* the language of literature, and that Urdu, by contrast, was an inferior medium for poetry and no medium at all for prose. He asserted his own excellence in Persian. The twentieth-century Urdu poet, Mohammad Iqbal - who had written 'I am of India, Persian is not my tongue' - composed in Persian, outstanding *masnavis* - *Asrar-i Khudi* (1915), *Rumuz-i Bekhudi* (1918) and *Payam -i Mashriq* (1923) - along with several collections of poems, including, *Zabur-i Ajam* (1927), *Javidnama* (1932).

Persian poetry had flourished at the Mughal court, though Ghalib did not think much of its quality. In this period, a particular school of Indo-Persian poetry, the *Sabk-i Hindi*, assumed its specific features, though its beginning can be traced to the Ghaznavid Punjab. It is said that more Persian literature was produced in India than in Central Asia and even in Iran during this period. It is this Persian culture, adapted to the Indian environment, which came to be known as Indo- Persian culture. Moreover, Persian

influences are evident in history writing, in the world of the Sufis and the spread of numerous Sufi orders, in architecture, and in the field of what used to be called the 'minor' arts - the weaving of carpets and textiles, the making of pottery and metal work, and the writing, binding, illuminating, and illustrating of books.

The Sultans of Delhi were largely influenced by the political and cultural ideals of Persia. They turned to the ancient kings like Jamshed, Khusrau and Bahram for guidance in political affairs rather than Muslim law. Autocracy, the keynote of Persia's political system, thus found its devotees in Delhi; the elective *imam* was forgotten and, in his place, the sultan ruled by a right that could not be questioned. Thus Balban's (1266-86) monarchical ideals were those of the ancient kings of Iran whose precepts and examples gave form and content to his autocracy; he could think of no illustrious names for his grandson but Kaikhusrau, Kaikaus, Kaiqubad and Kaiumars. For him, Persian was the only channel through which he could reach the intellectual world of Islam and thus buttress his claim to the championship of civilization against Mongol barbarism. For the eastern Muslims it was impossible to get away from Persian influence; in India it was to exercise a practical tyranny.

In some ways, the creative encounters between two civilizations are a fascinating story. Indeed, we can and should build on our knowledge to provide a solid foundation for greater Indo-Iran cultural exchanges. Yet we must be alerted to a painful reality and initiate immediate corrective measures. What I refer to is the dwindling number of scholars and generalists who are currently equipped to interpret the Indo-Persian culture and its rich and vibrant legacy. Sadly, our universities are depleted of medieval Indian historians for a variety of reasons. One of them is the absence of adequate facilities and the lack of motivation for learning Persian. In short, we have reached a stage in our intellectual journey when one may well be tempted to write the obituary of medieval Indian history in South Asia. But let us not do that as yet, and echo, in the words of Tagore, the sentiment :

The night has ended.
 Put out the light of the lamp
 Of thine own narrow dark corner
 Smudged with smoke,
 the great Morning which is for all
 appears in the East.
 Let its light reveal us to each other
 who walk on the same path
 Of pilgrimage.

My plea is to contextualize Iran's history and contemporary politics, turn to a serious examination of the Iranian revolution of the 1908-14 period, and, more generally, question the images, myths, and the existing categories invented by some scholars in the west. I wish to conclude this paper by urging my Iranian counterparts to understand our own society differently, and to come to terms with the strength and vitality of our democratic and secular experimentation. It is important, furthermore, to recognize the nature and character of Islam in India and delineate the loose and widely divergent tendencies amongst the Muslim communities (rather than community). Let me suggest a few tentative issues for discussion.

Many scholars working on South Asian Islam dwell on the so called Muslim mind, detail the 'Muslim outlook', and construe a unified 'Muslim identity' around the symbols of Islam; in other words, they underline the analytic primacy of culture and ideology and assign a privileged place to Islam. Assuming that Islam is not only distinctive but also inherently incompatible with western ideals of democracy and secularism, they regard the religion to be essentially different from all the others in that the concepts of beliefs. and political rule are fused through the unity of *din w a daw la*, the Prophet having both revealed a religion and founded a state. Predicated on this statement is an assumed resistance to secularism.

These theories need to be challenged. First, the mere fact of people being Islamic in some general sense should not be conflated with that of their adherence to beliefs and policies that are strictly described as 'Islamist' or 'fundamentalist'. Secondly, the commitment of some Muslim groups to specifically Islamic ideas and Islamic symbols does not indicate a unified structure of consciousness or community acting in unison. What should not be assumed is a monolithic conception of Islamic ideology and practice or teleology dictating the actions of the Muslims or a general acquiescence in the actions of few. We must bear in mind that the Muslim communities, like their counterparts in any other religious community, have multiple identities, with many acts to perform and many diverse roles to play. This explains why they, while remaining true to the faith, relate to the more immediate and pressing socio- economic needs in broadly secular terms and have greater affinity with members of their class or caste and not just with their co-religionists. The debate on the depth and nature of this interaction would go on, but one should not at any rate be guided by the contemporary experiences of Hindu-Muslim relations. Equally, one should guard against a discussion centred on the notion of an absolute Muslim / Islamic consciousness, and steer clear of the reification of Islam in the realm of political ideas. We should, instead, consider what political/social ideas particular

group of Muslims hold, and the relations between these and their social conditions and practice. The Syrian scholar, Aziz al-Azmeh, has pointed out:

The very premises of Islamic studies are radically and thoroughly unsound; their very foundation, the identification and the construal of relevant facts, is based upon a political and cultural imagination ... Any proper writing of Islamic history has to rest on the dissolution of Islam as an orientalist category ... It has to liberate itself from Islam, and scrutinize Islamic histories, societies, economics, temporalities, cultures and sciences with the aid of history, of economics, of sociology, critical theory and anthropology. Only then will Islam be disassociated, and reconstituted as historical categories amenable to historical study.

Finally, identities in South Asian history and politics have seldom been unified; in colonial India they were increasingly fragmented and fractured. Indeed, they were not singular but multiple, and thus difficult to capture on a single axis. Constructed across different, intersecting and antagonistic discourses, and practices, they are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of making and unmaking. (See Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Islam, Communities and the Nation: Muslim Identities in South Asia and Beyond*, New Delhi, 1987).

Who, then, are the Muslims? What, if any, specific identity is associated with them? Is it divinely ordained or related to features that have always been characteristic of *Islamic* governments and societies? How important is the community's own self-image which is subtly moulded by a combination of 'internal' factors and external interventions? Is it the outcome of colonial images, of treating Muslims as an undifferentiated religious category? To what extent has the post-colonial state, too, viewed Muslims as a religious collectivity, who are also resumed to represent a separate political entity?

Interestingly enough, when the first all India census was tabulated and analyzed in 1881, the enumerators found that Muslims numbered only 19.7 per cent of the population. They uncovered a geographically dispersed aggregate of Muslims forming neither a collectivity nor a distinct society for any purpose, political, economic and social. Out of a total population of about 50 million (or one - fifth of the computed total population of 'British India'), the Muslims in Bengal spoke Bengali and those in Punjab used largely Punjabi as their language. Those living in Tamil Nadu spoke Tamil; those settled on the Malabar coast, mostly Mapillas, spoke Malayalam. They found Muslims whose religious rituals had a very strong tinge of Hinduism and who retained caste and observed Hindu festivals and ceremonies. Islam in these regions became a religion of accommodation rather than a

religion of transformation, especially after the rise of Sufism which catered to the emotional and orgiastic needs of the masses. As the historian Peter Hardy pointed out:

The entry of Muslims in South Asia by so many and separated doorways, their spread over the subcontinent by so many different routes, over a period of centuries, and the diffusion of Islam in different forms from one area to the another, ensured that this religion would present itself to the peoples of South Asia in many different epiphanies seen from different angles. Neither to its own adherents nor to non-Muslims in South Asia has Islam seemed monochromatic, monolithic or indeed mono-anything. It has indeed been said that Islam in South Asia has been united only by a few common rituals and by the aspirations of its scholars. (Peter Hardy, 'Islam and Muslims in South Asia', in R. Israeli, ed., *The Crescent in the East: Islam in Asia Major*, London: Humanities Press, 1982, pp. 39-40).

Islam came to the subcontinent not in a single time span, but in succession divided unevenly in different periods; consequently, its diffusion took place in a variety of forms, from class to class and from one area to another. The difference in the phases in which people 'experienced' Islam brought with it variations in the nature of challenges facing its followers in different regions. As in Iran where Islam incorporated a variety of outlooks and orientations and has been capable of multiple levels of discourse and interpretation, in its local and regional specificity, the 'essential' core of Islam in India was not immune to changes by historical influences. Ordinary Muslims were not, as one is often led to believe, members of a monolithic community sitting sullenly apart, but were active participants in regional cultures whose perspectives they shared. They look upon their commitment to Islam not only as one among other values, but also as something which was itself differentiated internally into a number of detailed commitments.

Thus Islam in India past and present, unfolds a bewildering diversity of Muslim communities. No statistical data is required to establish their location in multiple streams of thought and interactions with them. Their histories, along with social habits, cultural traits and occupational patterns, vary from class to class, from place to place and from region to region. They speak numerous dialects and languages and observe wide - ranging regional customs and local rites despite the intervention of the Islamists. Caste exists as a basis of social relations, although it differs from the Hindu caste system in details. In several domains Muslims make up an integral part of the larger socio-cultural complex dominated by values and ideologies of the Hindu caste tradition.

The noteworthy point is how, in the aftermath of Independence and Partition, the secular and democratic regime rather than the Islamic dimension provided the overarching framework to religio- political leadership of the Muslims to forge new alliances and electoral coalitions. Those holding the reins of leadership located problems and found answers to contemporary dilemmas within the democratic and secular paradigms and sought adjustments not as members of a larger collectivity. They accepted state laws without insisting on the application of the Islamic law, except in the case of marriage, divorce and inheritance. Although this simple truth is not widely accepted, it is none the less necessary for social scientists to spell out the nature and implications of these internal differentiation and the negotiated commitments flowing from them (See *My Legacy of a Divided Nation*, London, 1997). Beneath the so-called unity of the 'Muslim community', we need to identify a variety of religious and political outlooks and competing agenda. This will enable us to unravel the 'mysteriously known essence' (Edward Said, *Orientalism*, p. 305) of Islam in India and Iran, and challenge the widely held perception of a monolithic 'Islamic threat' .

Indo-Persian Literature

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

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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 عطارد، 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 Ferdusi 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 ہوے

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 دلل 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 ناقوسیانسٹ 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 دلوق 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 bardāshht 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 بشری آزادی 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 gunmbad 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-Haqīqat 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 Mu rtaza 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 kārḥāyash 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 dīdane 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 زیبایی با عشق توام است و موجد حرکت و جنبش است. پس زیبایی لازمه عشق است و عشق الهام بخش است و قهرمان ساز چه بسیار شاعران و هنرمندان و فیلسوفان مخلوق عشق یعنی مخلوق زیبایی 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 با جملة وكل جمالك جميل اللهم انى اسئلك بجمالک 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 wrore 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)

Digar māulsari kaz turfa namē;

berang-e-turfa murwarid-e-khāme.

Be haiat chust-u-bargash khurd-u-bārīk;

be har jāyb u be har dil nik nazdik,

digar ān rai champa shāh-e-gulha;

ke buyash mushk bār āyad chu gulhā.

Chu m'sashuq-e-saman bar nāz parvard;

Waley rangash chu ru-e-ashiqan zard.

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

(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 مسلماتت 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;

We are the meaning of Ism e 'Azam.

Carries with it both the wave and the ocean.

Ādam is the purest of the mirrors;

Free of Heaven and Hell.

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 اشتها 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 chore 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?

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Indo-Iranian Cultural Relations Since 1947

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Introduction

From times immemorial the Orient has been the cradle of civilization. Amongst all other Oriental countries Iran and India stand first and foremost in their contributions to world culture. These two nations have been the torch-bearers of knowledge, the fore-runners of a fine civilization. The relations between India and Iran have been a continuous historical process from the dawn of history which has unfolded itself through an alternate phase of harmony and conflict and has percolated down to our times. It is no small matter that during all these centuries, the people of these two countries have shared racial affinities, the spiritual qualities, identical intellectual pursuits, traditional values, common literary heritage which constitute the inseparable bonds of fellowship, friendship and understanding between them.

Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of Iran and the people of India. The exchange of ideas, philosophies, customs, manners and wisdom between Iran and India was very common from ancient times which can be gleaned from various religious texts, such as ZendAvesta of the Zoroastrians and the Vedas of the Indians. However historicity of relations between Iran and India goes back to the period of the Achaeminian Empire established by Cyrus in the 5th century B.C. which also included a part of north-western part of India.

The advent of post-Islamic Iranian cultural influence in India has been the greatest and the most fruitful event in the long and eventful history of the land. From the time of the Mughals in India, it was a happy blend of Indo-Iranian elements in arts and sciences, architecture and town-planning, music and painting, language and literature, army and administration, crafts and customs, poetry and prose, that gave rise in Medieval India to one of the glorious civilization the world had ever seen.

Here I would like to have a brief survey of the Indo-Iranian relations since 1947 when India became independent and will mainly focus on the last quarter of the twentieth century. While the traditional relationship has continued to provide an incentive for the development of Indo-Iranian relations, it is also important to understand that our bilateral ties in the recent times have been largely determined by the new and complex system of

international relations which emerged during the so-called Cold-War period. It is, in fact, the new international and regional environment in the post-Cold-War period which is again prompting the leadership in our two countries that a fresh look on the existing pattern of bilateral relationship should be taken to give a new orientation to it.

Political Scenario since 1947

The partition of India in 1947 and formation of Pakistan resulted in the loss of India's age old territorial contiguity with Iran but also distanced the two countries politically. Iran was drawn to the west sponsored Baghdad Pact as Iran felt threatened by the Soviet Union on account of latter's support to Gilan in 1920 and occupation of Azerbaijan in 1946. The Azerbaijan crisis weighted heavily on the psyche of the Iranian people.

In the fifties of the twentieth century, India championed the cause of Non-Alignment Movement but Iran was drawn to the West. The Iran did try to allay the misapprehensions in the mind of the Indian leadership on account of Iran's alignment with the West, which the ruler explained was out of his fear of destabilization by the Soviet Union. He also tried to reassure Indian leadership during his visit to India that Iran's closeness to Pakistan was not at the cost of friendship with India. Yet despite all the diplomatic cordiality and courtesy the state of bilateral relations remained cool and cordial.

The sixties witnessed Iran's growing disenchantment with the United States of America which was unwilling to help Iran in case of threat to its security from sources other than the Soviets. Washington's favoured treatment of Turkey and Pakistan in the matter of supply of sophisticated military hardware rankered in the eyes of Iran and also caused disillusionment in Tehran. Iran responded to this attitude of Americans by evolving a new foreign policy posture and started moving in the direction of a new regional grouping – Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) – and opening up to the Soviet Union and its East European Allies.

It did produce a favourable impact in Indo-Iranian relations for the time being. India reciprocated through President Radhakrishnan's visit to Tehran in May 1963.

In the early Seventies the understanding between India and Iran was jolted on account of third Indo-Pakistan War in 1971. The post-1971 period saw a significant shift in the balance of power in the South Asian region which Tehran was compelled to take note of especially in view of Iran's aspiration to emerge as the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf area. It was, however, the economic factor which began to influence the Indo-Iranian relations in a big way. India was in need of foreign investment for her massive industrialization programme and looked to the oil-rich West Asian countries including

Iran to provide. India had a surplus of skilled manpower which she offered these countries including Iran in order to earn foreign exchange. This promoted a complementarity of interest as Iran had set for herself goal of industrialization. The sharp increase in oil prices in 1973 increased the importance of Iran for India as source of assured oil supplies on favourable terms. The decade of the seventies witnessed a remarkable growth of economic cooperation between India and Iran. By 1974 India's export doubled. This Economic cooperation further cemented the bilateral relations.

In 1979 the overthrow of the Shah and the emergence of the Islamic Republic of Iran under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini were viewed in India as a positive development.

Former Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's visit to Tehran in 1993 was a turning point in reviving relations. In 1995, President Rafsanjani of Iran came on a visit to India and expressed Iran's desire to involve India in finding a solution to the crisis in Afghanistan and leading support to the new geopolitical relation emanating in the region following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Considerable headway was made for political stability in the region and there was a thaw in the cultural and literary relations which gradually started progressing.

It was, however, the election of Mohammad Khatami as President of Iran in 1997 that a more favourable climate was created for the development of Iran's relation with India particularly in economic, social and cultural spheres.

At the Republic Day celebrations of India on 26th January, 2003 in Delhi, the Chief Guest was the President of Iran Mohammad Khatami. The President of Iran was accompanied by the Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi who echoed his sentiments in the following words; "Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Zoroastrians and the people of other religion are flowers of the same golden garden. All Indians should walk like brothers, brothers in arms, on the path of progress. All Indians and Iranians should walk like brothers on the path of progress." (The Hindu, dated 20.01.2003). Since then Cultural relations have progressed with amazing rapidity and, it must be said, have continued to progress at the same pace even under other Presidents.

Literary and Cultural Activities

Persian Literature has always enjoyed universal popularity and esteem. In India Persian has been official language of this sub-continent. Cultural ties between India and Iran have been very strong from the ancient times and remained active until the advent of the British rule in India in the eighteenth century.

After India's independence in 1947, an attempt was made by the leaders of India and Iran to restore and reinforce the traditional literary and cultural bonds. In 1954, a cultural delegation led by Dr. Ali Asghar Hekmat, a great lover of India and her culture, which also included Professor Pour-i-Dawood, a poet-litterateur, and others came from Iran and toured India in order to promote cultural ties between the two countries. Indian delegations headed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Dr. Zakir Husain reciprocated the visits. The visit of Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in 1959, President S. Radhakrishnan in 1963, President V.V. Giri in 1967, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in 1974 and President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed in 1976 to Iran placed Indo-Iranian Relations on firm footing. All the leaders recounted and greatly emphasized our age-old connections.

In his address at Tehran in 1963, the President of India Dr. S. Radhakrishnan echoed the Indians sentiments thus: "The connections are not even ancient, they are modern. If you look into our art, architecture, music, painting and calligraphy, you will see the profound influence that Iran has exercised on us. We have an Indo-Iranian language, Urdu which is spoken in many parts of our country. And we have many universities where Persian is taught as a classical language".

By these visits and expression of good will gestures, the traditional Indo-Iranian cultural ties of intellectual and spiritual intimacy were greatly strengthened by a continuous exchange of artists and men of learning. It was because of the sincere efforts of Dr. A.A. Hekmat that the Departments of Hindi and Sanskrit were established in the Tehran University. It was also at the initiative of Dr. Hekmat that a considerable number of Indian students and teachers went to Tehran and got their Doctorates in Persian language and literature from there.

Subsequently Ambassadors from Iran to Delhi took keen interest to ensure that Indian scholars of Persian were provided great facilities for making trips to Iran for attending Seminars and Conferences and mixing with common Iranians. It was felt that these close cultural, psychological and historical ties will pave the way for progress and prosperity for both India and Iran.

Modern Persian Literature of Iran

What existed in Persian literature until the beginning of the 20th century underwent a sea change. The poets descended from their idealistic ivory towers to the grass-root level and began to grapple with the problems of day-to-day life, divorcing stilted and turgid style of language and adopted simple, natural and fluent language with minimal of Arabic words.

In prose also the wearisome monotony in subject, treatment and language gave place to much-needed variety and vivacity: artificiality and exaggeration now yielded ground to naturalness and rationality. Poetry and prose were brought into contact with practical life, forsaking idealistic romance for realism. Thoughts were no longer dominated by the tyranny of high sounding words, but, they were rather made to correspond with thoughts and thoughts were finally freed from the bondage of frothy and ineffective expressions.

Modern Persian poetry became overwhelmingly absorbed in politics and patriotism; the longing for the beloved is replaced by love of the motherland. It has become out of the domains of the kings and the court-circles and has made the general public interested in literature. Iranian poets no longer turned to the kings, or their courtiers, or even to the ruling elite, but to the people at large for patronage. Iranian literature is now infused with great vigour and vivacity and has a great novelty which it did not witness in the preceding years. Iran's contact with the West, and Iranians' exposure to the Western literatures, in a way, has helped them to bring about a prodigious intellectual awakening in the country. It is well-known that poetry works greater miracles than prose in firing a nation with the passion for sacrifice, and this is precisely what the modern poets have done to preserve the independence and glory of Iran.

A brief account is given here how thoroughly modern Persian poetry has succeeded in stimulating the national enthusiasm for preservation of freedom. The grief of the Iranians at the destruction of their country, caused by the worthlessness of the Qajar rulers and the exploitation and undue interference of Britain and Russia in their affairs, in unmistakably reflected in their literature. The Iranian poets, and even prose writers were keen on ending their political and economical servitude to European nations and were equally keen to bring about social, political and religious reforms in the country.

Agha Pour-i-Dawood is one of the greatest modern patriot-poets of Iran and the brilliance of his verses is due mainly to his love for the motherland. He is highly critical of the Qajar kings, who were not of Iranian origin, and deplores their actions in no uncertain terms. He decries against the Russians who were held responsible for the ruin of Iran. He also observes that patriotism is the religion of modern Iranian youth, and says:

“Some worship the earth and some worship the Almighty, some adore the patent objects and some the latent essence; but, it you ask of the faith of Pour-i-Dawood, be it known that the modern Iranian youth idolizes the motherland.”

Pour-i-Dawood maintains that the brilliance of his verses is due chiefly to his love for the motherland. He says:

“Pour-i-Dawood has kindled in his heart the love for Iran;
that is why sparks of fire are emitted from his spirited poems.”

Poet Iraj Mirza, who was of princely descent, excels in realism. His poems have a peculiar sense of humour which are extremely popular with the people. Similarly, poet Arif devoted his genius largely to politics and patriotism. He suffered considerably for his outspokenness and very liberal views which were not liked by the then rulers.

Among all the modern poets of Iran, it is quite obvious that they care for purity of language and banish Arabic words as far as possible; which is in itself a clear indication of their patriotism. Agha Pour-i-Dawood, Hadi and Ayati have been very keen on purity of language and have tried to compose verses unadulterated with Arabic words. So much so, in 1936, Professor Sayeed Nafisee of the Tehran university published Persian-French and French-Persian lexicons of pure Persian words. Iraj Mirza is accredited with having used maximum French words in Persian. Nonetheless, many Western words of French and English origin, have also inundated Persian language as a matter of necessity. Dr. M. Ishaque, in *Modern Persian Poetry*, has given a long list of such words.

Other fundamental changes noticed relate to the ideas, subjects and style of modern literature which are quite consistent with the contemporary scenario and social reform being carried out in Iran where antiquated sluggish conservatism and outmoded ideas and imageries are being replaced by advanced and progressive ideas and views relevant to the present-day life.

When all is said, one cannot refrain mentioning, in spite of its modernity and greatness, modern Persian literature of Iran, as pointed out by Dr. M Ishaque in his monumental work, has not given us a Firdausi, or a Sa'di, or a Hafiz. Yet it cannot also be denied that the Persian literature of the present day is of reform, progress, culture and enlightenment and has proved its worth to occupy an honoured position in the literatures of the World.

Persian Language and Literature in 19th and 20th Centuries in India

In spite of political convulsions and economic retrogression under the British rule in India from 1757 to 1859 A.D. the period witnessed a remarkable outburst of intellectual activity in India and a radical transformation in her social and religious ideas. The impetus to these changes came from the introduction of English education, through the channel of which came the liberal ideas of the West which stirred the people and roused them from the slumber of ages. Reason and good judgement took the place of faith and blind belief; age-old superstition yielded to scientific development; immobility and inertia were replaced by progressive activity and thought; and new conceptions of

morality and religion remodeled the orthodox beliefs and habits. This change, initially, affected only a small group of enlightened persons but, slowly and gradually, the ideas spread among larger sections of the people and their influence penetrated even to the masses.

All the intellectuals of the nineteenth century in Northern India were well versed in Persian and, even in Bengal the intelligentsia knew Persian well, such as, Maharishi Debendranath Tagore, the father of RabindraNath Tagore, and Sri Vishvanath Dutta, the father of Swami Vivekananda, were quite proficient in Persian and took great delight in reciting to their families the poems of Persian poets Sa'di and Hafiz.

Until the beginning of the twentieth century A.D., there have been legions of Persian poets and prose writers in India, who composed ghazals, quasidas and nazams in Persian poetry, and qissas, ha kayats and historiography in Persian literature, which was quite common in India then, and have written in that style.

As a sequel to the exchange of early visits by the leaders of Iran and India, Culture Houses were established in India in order to promote an understanding of Modern Iran and to create and sustain among Indians a continuing interests in Iran and her affairs by Cultural exchanges, sponsoring visits of scholars and academicians, exhibitions of Arts and Handicrafts, books, visits of artists and holding of film festivals.

Basically, the Iran Culture Houses are comprehensive institutions designed to promote an understanding of modern Iran and to create and sustain interest in cultural activities pertaining to Iran.

Translations of Books

In the twentieth century many books were translated from Persian to Indian languages in post-independence era and Indian treatises into Persian. In this respect, lead was taken by Dr. Ali Asghar Hekmat, diplomat a poet-litterateur, who was Iran's Ambassador to India for a number of years. He rendered exemplary service in bringing the two countries culturally closer to each other. He himself wrote a number of books and poems about India. He translated "*Shakuntalam*" of Kalidasa into Persian prose and verse. His "*Sar-Zamin-i-Hind*" and "*Naqsh-i-Parsi Bar Ahjar-i-Hind*" in Persian acquainted Iranians with the Indians and their love for the Persian language. The cultural agreement signed by him and MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, the then Minister of Education, Government of India, paved the way for permanent cultural relations between the two countries. Teachers and students were exchanged and it is a matter of gratification that many Indian teachers and

students have got their doctorates in Persian literature from Iran and many of them are now disseminating Persian language, literature and culture in India.

To cite an example, it was in 1958, through the good offices of Dr. Ali Asghar Hekmat, Iranian Ambassador to India, who had developed a great friendship and had come to like Mr. Hira Lal Chopra for his poetic talent in Persian and his Government to visit Iran and deliver lectures in the University of Tehran. He went to Tehran towards the end of 1958. He delivered lectures on Indo-Iranian relations and cultural ties. He had God-given gift of composing, spontaneously, poetry in Persian and he recited his poetic compositions in Persian to the delight of his listeners. With his traditional Indian attire of *Achkan* and *Churidar*, so completely did he capture the imagination of the people of Tehran that wherever he went he was greeted and accepted as the embodiment of India and he became a roving ambassador of India in Tehran. He learnt to speak fluently in modern Persian. He used to converse like an Iranian and, therefore, was much sought after by the Iranian intellectuals, university teachers and students.

While at the Tehran University, Mr. Chopra decided to do Doctorate in Literature and submitted a thesis on Shrimad Bhagvad Gita with an exhaustive commentary in Persian and, perhaps, in the shortest possible time, the Tehran University awarded him the Degree of Doctor of Literature.

Under the guidance of the late Dr. Tara Chand, an eminent educationist and Indian envoy to Iran, Dara Shikoh's Persian translation of *Fifty Upanishads* and a booklet written by him on the proximity of Islamic philosophy with Hindu philosophy were published. Dr. M.T. Moqtadari translated Tagore's "*Gitanjali*" into Persian. Dr. G.L. Tikko translated some of the poems of Tagore into Persian. The Indian Council of Cultural Relations brought out a Persian translation by Dara Shikoh of the *Bhagvad Gita*, which is edited by Maulana Ajmal Khan and Kamgar Parsi, and "*Vikramorvashya*" by Dr. Sayed Amir Hassan Abidi. Professor Mehreen Shushtari, the celebrated author of "*The Outline of Islamic Culture*", out "*Dastan-i-Krishna*", a prose translation of Shrimad Bhagvad Gita, which has again been reprinted with exhaustive notes under the title of "*Naghma-i-Eizadi*".

Iran Society, Kolkatta

Apart from official level contacts between India and Iran, some cultural and academic societies in India have been rendering services in promoting Persian language and literature and building bridges of fellowship, and understanding. The foremost among them has been the sixty year old Iran Society of Kolkatta founded by Dr. Mohammad

Ishaque, a renowned scholar of Persian. The Society was founded in 1944 with the object of promotion of the study of Persian language and literature, history and philosophy, art and sciences pertaining to Iran, and for the maintenance of a centre of intellectual collaboration and cultural understanding between India and Iran.

The Society is regularly holding lectures by eminent scholars on Persian language and literature and on different aspects of history of Iran. It has to its credit a number of high standard works published on Iranian studies. It has a library well-stocked with books on Persian language and history of Iran which is extensively used by research scholars.

The crowning glory of the Society is the publication of bilingual English–Persian quarterly literary journal, the *Indo-Iranica*, which adorns the shelves of almost all the libraries of the universities in India and is broadly engaged in promoting Iranian studies and culture. Special issues published on Al-Beiruni, Avicenna, Omar Khayyam, Maulana Rumi, Hafiz Shirazi, Mulla Sadra, Amir Khusrow, Allama Iqbal and other Persian litterateurs merit particular attention of the scholars and lovers of Persian language and literature.

The Society is like an oasis in Eastern India where seekers after Iranology can come and quench their thirst.

Many Ambassadors and other dignitaries from Iran have regularly visited the Iran Society and have admired the good work the Society is doing to promote literary and cultural activities and acting as a centre of intellectual collaboration and cultural understanding between India and Iran.

It was in Iran Society that on April 8, 1994, Dr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, then Advisor to His Excellency the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Chairman of the Islamic Library of Iran, paid a visit to the Iran Society. In an eloquent speech, Dr. Khatami expressed his profound satisfaction and praise of the services of Iran Society towards the furtherance of literary and cultural link between the two great countries – India and Iran – and assured of his cooperation to the Society in promoting Persian Language and Literature.

I had the occasion to visit Iran to attend the *Shishmin-Majma 'Bainul-Milli Ustadaan Zaban-O-Adabiyat Farsi* (Sixth International Congress of Teachers of Persian Language and Literature) which was held in Tehran in January 2009 in commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The discussions held there were thought-provoking. Altogether it was a wonderful and memorable experience.

It is through efforts such as these, I am confident, that Persian language and literature can be further promoted.

Conclusion

From 1997 Iran has once again opened its doors to Indian students for whom it has sponsored scholarships for M.A. and Ph. D. level studies as part of a joint Indo-Iran effort to popularize Persian language and literature.

Persian is not just a language of a nation or a region, but there is something more to it. From the medieval period, particularly in India, Persian is the symbol of common culture and scientific bonds between our two civilizations. Being the custodians of this language its spread and understanding would benefit both Iran and India as India has been one of the main centres and repositories in the past for learning and dissemination of Persian language and literature so much so that one of the styles of Persian poetry is called Indian Style.

The perspective of development in Indo-Iranian cultural relation has a tremendous potential in ushering in a new era of Persian language and literature and over-all cultural activities which will foster stronger bilateral ties between India and Iran in the future.

I conclude with the following words of Mallek-us-Shoara Bahar from his poem *Salam-i-Bahar ba Hind* :

Eternal has been our friendship,
A friend knows the voice of a friend;
India and Iran have been mutual friends,
Tho' not of the same complexion, of the same origin are they
The land of India shares the charms of Eden,
So the colour of wheat is manifest on every face.

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India - Iran Cultural Ties: A Re-Appraisal

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The Cultural and religious affinities and ties between India and Iran date from time immemorial. In fact they can be traced back to the Avesta and the Rig Veda which also had linguistic affinities. Both these cultures gave prominent place to the domesticated horse (*aśva / aspa*) and the chariot drawn by it. Archaeological information also supports this: we find it from Iran to Swat to Northeastern Baluchistan.

The common ancestry of both is also suggested by common geographical and product names. If we remember that in Avesta 's' is replaced with 'h', then we see that Sarayu (or Hari Rud) is '*Haroiva*'; and Sarasvati is '*Harakhvaita*'.

In both Rig Veda and Avesta there is reference to putting in the grain seed (*yavam krish* in Rig Veda and *yao karesh* in Avesta) and the resultant grain (*sasya* in Rig Veda and *hahya* in Avesta). For wheat we have *godhūma* in Sanskrit and *gantuma* in Avestan. In both however, there is no mention, or even a word, for towns. Bricks on the other hand were known: *ishtaka* in Sanskrit and *ishtiya* in Avestan.

There are also many affinities between the two as far as religion is concerned, specially between the pre-Vedic Indo Aryans and the pre-Avestan Iranians.

There were a nominal number of 33 gods, called *asura* who in Avesta are called *Ahura*. Deva of Rig Veda are called *daeva* in Avesta. They are the demons. However the principal *ahura / asura* deity is called Ahura Mazda in Avesta, where he becomes God; he is represented in the Rig Veda pantheon by the divine creator Varuna.

There is no indication of idol worship either in Rig Veda or Avesta. In both, the deities are anthropomorphic or zoomorphic.

The ties between India and Iran and the consequent influences of one over the other have been recorded since time immemorial. Dhavalikar has in fact argued that contacts between India and Iran had been since early historical period when some north-western regions of the

Indian sub-continent – Sindh and Gandhara – formed part of the Achaemenid Empire.¹ In fact these relations went further back to Dilman, Makan and Meluha, which have been identified respectively with Bahrain, Makran Coast and India (Harappan territory).² The Achaemenid Empire of Iran which was the first empire in the world containing multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-cultural elements, stretched from Greece to Hindukush. Gandhara was one of the satrapy of the empire and Indian soldiers served in the Persian army.³

An incomplete inscription in Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian, written on glazed bricks that belonged to a relief at Susa, belonging to the period of Darius the first, mentions:

I am Darius, the great king, king of kings, king of all nations, the son of Hystaspes, the Achaemenid.

King Darius says: Ahuramazda gave me this great kingdom, so full of men; he made me king in this earth.

By the grace of Ahuramazda these are the countries of which I became king: Persia, Elam, Babylonia, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Lydia, Greece, Media, Armenia, Cappadocia, Parthia, Drangiana, Aria, Chorasmia, Bactria, Sogdiana, Gandara, Sattagydia, Arachosia, Sindh, Thrace, Macedonia [remainder lost]

In yet another epigraph from Susa, Darius claims that the ivory for his palace was brought from Egypt, India and Arochasia. Another inscription of Darius, from Persepolis, mentions 3000 artisans from Sindh working on his monuments.

In the third century BC, the Mauryan emperor Ashoka (270 – 234 BC) appointed a Hellenized Iranian (Yona) official Tushāsp to the office of governor of Gujarat. The dynasties of Shakas and Kushanas (first to third centuries AD), which held sway over not only Northeastern India but also the interior, belonged to peoples speaking Iranian dialects. When the Arabs occupied Sindh and southern Punjab, 712-14 AD, they found Iranian names in use for geographical features, e.g. ‘Mihrān’ (Persian for Great River), Brahmānābād (for Branbhanwā) and Multan (for Mulasambhapura). In Indian inscriptions the Arabs of Sindh were for this reason called Tājīkas (Tājīk or Tāzīk, the common name in Western and Central Asia for Persian-speaking people). The Ghorians, whose conquests led to the

¹ M.K. Dhavalikar, ‘India-Iran Contacts in Pre-History’, in Irfan Habib (ed.), *A Shared Heritage The Growth of Civilizations in India and Iran*, Tulika, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 1-14

² Romila Thapar, ‘A Possible Identification of Meluha, Dilmun and Makan’, *JESHO*, vol. 18, pp. 1-42

³ Abhay Kumar Singh, ‘Persian: A Fountain of Inspiration for Ancient India Kings’, in AK Sinha & AK Singh (eds), *Dialogues Between Cultures: India and Iran*, Delhi, 2005, pp. 102-05

establishment of the Delhi Sultanate (1206) spoke an Iranian dialect of Western Afghanistan; and in the 13th century there was a sharp distinction between the Turkic and Tājīk (Iranian) sections of the nobility. As Ibn Batuta, the Moorish traveller (c. 1340) noted, there was continuous migration from Khurasan of persons seeking their fortunes in India.

Iranian-Achaemenid influences thus are visible in India from the Mauryan period onwards. There was no precedent in India before the Mauryan Age of the extensive use of stone and the lustrous polish, both of which bear hallmarks of Achaemenid monumental art. The bell-shaped capitals of the Asokan pillars, as well as the free-standing pillars themselves, with their smooth cylindrical, not fluted, shafts, and the bell feature, transferred from the base to capital were under Achaemenid influence as witnessed at Persepolis.

Two other important Achaemenid influences on Mauryan Architecture were:

(a) The conjunction of the sculpture with architecture (e.g. at Persepolis and Susa) which is so firmly found in Mauryan and Kushan period, say for example at the railings and Toranas of Sanchi and the Stupa of Bharhut. This was one of the hall-mark features of the Achaemenid architecture. And

(b) The hypostyle halls of the Mauryans, for example, the Pillared Hall at Kumrahar at Patliputra. Spooner found eight rows of 10 stone columns each, which included one complete shaft polished to base. The arrangement of its pillars is identical to those of Achaemenid halls. It is considered a derivation of the Apadana in Persepolis and Susa.⁴ The columns, moreover, showed a technique in their polished surface which is not only acknowledged to be not known in India, but identical to Persepolitan workmanship. The lithic art was itself a Persian inspiration.

The Iranian influence on Mauryan architecture was comprehensive: the use of stones for columns and pillars, the methods of sculpting the animals on the capitals, the choice of decorative motifs like acanthus, palmette, rosette, bead and reel motif and rope design; the lustrous polish application, and even the engravings of edicts on rock surfaces were all typical borrowings from the Achaemenid Iranian Art.

The finely finished surfaces of several stone sculptures of the Mauryan period have also been compared with Achaemenid sculptural traditions.⁵ According to Sir Mortimer

⁴ B. & FR Allchin (eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 1995*, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 203, 236-38

⁵ SL Huntington, *The Art of Ancient India. Buddhist, Hindu, Jain*, New York, 1985, pp. 43, 46

Wheeler, artisans working for the Achaemenid workshops may have emigrated to the Mauryan Empire after losing their jobs due to the collapse of the Achaemenids.⁶

With the rise of the Sakas, the Iranian influence continued to hold its sway over Gandhara during the first century BC, and in western India from 1st century AD. The tumulus burials at Barrow Cemetery at Qandahar, attributed to Sakas probably influenced later funerary customs in some Indian regions.⁷

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The next phase when the Iranian influences in India were at prominence was the Medieval period.

The architecture of Medieval India was a combination of two basic templates or moulds, the *Indian* and the *Saracenic*. The architecture which had been prevalent in India since the Mauryan period was quite robust but based on a technique known as *trabeate*. Large monumental temples had been produced from 5th and 6th centuries onwards, both in the North and peninsular India, which were marked by their high *shikharas* and stone craftsmanship. Indian architecture was distinguished by its substantial use of sculptural decorations and carvings: Sculpture and Architecture were indistinguishable and seamlessly blended into one.

Between 8th to 10th centuries a new type of architecture made its appearance in the northern regions, especially Sind and Punjab. Having its origins in the Crusades, this style, nomenclated as “Saracenic” or “Muslim” or “Islamic”, connoted architecture of the followers of Islam who conquered Persian, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Arabia and Spain.⁸ The Saracenic Architecture was chiefly architecture of temples and mosques. Based on arcuate technique, characteristic features included the pointed or horse-shoe arch, domes, minarets, coloured surface decorations with geometrical polychrome patterns and designs – usually red, blue, green, and gold, an emphasis on arabesque and total absence of sculptures. The term ‘Saracenic’ presently is not generally in use, it having been replaced by ‘Muslim’ or ‘Islamic’.

⁶ Sir RE Mortimer Wheeler, ‘The Transformation of Persepolis Architectural Motifs into Sculpture under the Indian Mauryan Dynasty’, *Acta Iranica*, Tehran & Liege, 1974, pp. 249-61; See also *idem*, ‘Iran and India in Pre-Islamic Time: A Lecture’, *Ancient India* 4, 1947-48, pp. 85-103

⁷ M. Taddei, ‘A Note on the Barrow Cemetery at Kandahar’, in M. Taddei (ed), *South Asian Archaeology 1977*, Naples, 1979, pp. 909-16

⁸ The term ‘Saracenic’ was sometimes used in the pejorative sense. Fergusson used the term as an all purpose name for the Muslim Architecture, whether in India or outside. (James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, London, John Murray, 1867, pp. 45-46). Havell on the other hand placed all ‘Saracenic Symbolism’ within India, Persia and Byzantium. (See E.B. Havell, *Indian Architecture: Its Psychology, Structure and History from the First Mohommadan Invasion to the Present Day*, London, 1913, p. 4)

The Medieval period in India saw the coming together of both these styles, the Indian and the Muslim (the Saracenic, also known as Islamic) giving birth to a new style generally known as Indo-Muslim (or Indo-Saracenic / Indo-Islamic) Architecture.

Historically speaking, there were two *genera* (or groups) of arcuate styles, the Roman and the Parthian, which heavily influenced the emergence of the Saracenic or Islamic Architecture. A sub-genera of the Parthian genus, the Iranian style became a matrix for the Turkish and Indian regional architectural styles, of which the Mughal or 'Pan-Indo-Islamic' variant was the most developed.⁹

The Indo-Muslim (the Indo-Saracenic) Architecture as it developed in Medieval India heavily borrowed stylistic, idiomatic, axiomatic and aesthetic traditions from Iranian, Trans-Oxanian and regional Indian styles. This borrowing was much heavier after the establishment of the Mughal dynasty.¹⁰ The Mughal architecture has in fact been defined as a synthesis of a number of foreign and indigenous styles: the Turkish, Ilkhanid, Timurid, Post Timurid, Safavid, as well as Tughluq, Syed, Lodi, apart from the styles of Jaunpur, Gujarat, Malwa, Bengal and Rajasthan.¹¹ Not one architectural feature was singularly 'Mughal'.

The constructional principle applied in India before the Turkish Conquest was Trabeate, in which all spaces were spanned by means of beams laid horizontally. Through this technique, the resultant structures would be flat-roofed and low. No tall building or open-hall structure could be constructed.¹² Further, they would be pillared structures. Built of heavy building material, generally stone, they would also not be in need of mortar or cementing material: the law of gravitational pull would help in holding them together. However, as the weight of the beams and lintels forming the ceiling rested directly on the walls, resulting in a vertical downward push, the structures were not very durable. To attain the spire of the temple, the same technique would be staggered and involve putting one stone on top of the other to form a heavy pyramidal roof, the *sikhara*. This was the 'corbelling'.

The monopoly of this traditional and well established system of construction was challenged between 10th to 13th Centuries by a new technique, the arcuate. With the

⁹ See Jose Pereira, *Islamic Sacred Architecture: A Stylistic History*, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 4-5

¹⁰ Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, 'Iranian Influence on Medieval Indian Architecture', in Irfan Habib (ed.), *A Shared Heritage The Growth of Civilizations in India and Iran*, Delhi, 2002, pp. 127-49

¹¹ See for example Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture: An Outline of its History and Development (1526-1858)*, Prestel-Verlag, Munich, 1991 (re-edited Primus, New Delhi, 2014); Catherine B. Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, OUP, 1995

¹² This technique of upright posts supporting the horizontal lintels or beams was basically derived from timber constructions. To make the construction more firm, brackets were employed. See Charles Fabri, *An Introduction to Indian Architecture*, Bombay, 1963, p.13

advent of ‘Medieval’ there was also the introduction of new types of building material and concept of architectural planning. Stone was gradually replaced with bricks and brick-tiles, and lime mortar and gypsum¹³ to bond these bricks, was used for the first time. The use of gypsum and lime along with *surkhi* (pulverized brick mixed with lime) appears to have become common after this period.

The need for these new building materials had arisen due to the introduction of the arcuate technique of construction. It was a system in which the enclosed space is roofed and vaulted with the help of an arch. The arch itself is a structure, especially one of masonry, forming the curved, pointed, or flat upper edge of an open space and supporting the weight above it, as in a bridge or doorway. This arch when in its true form (the ‘arcuate’ system) is constructed with the help of wedge-shaped stones known as voussoirs and a key stone. Two spans are constructed, each springing from the imposts on the wall, pier or pillar. At the point of their contact a triangular key stone is added to hold them together. In this technique the durability of the enclosed space was guaranteed till the ‘keystone’ was in place. Secondly, the voussoirs ensured that the weight of the stones radiated in different directions, leaving the ceiling almost weightless. Thus the structure roofed by such a ceiling could be larger and higher. Thirdly the angle or slant of the voussoir could help in getting the desired breadth of the building. In this system, small medium of construction provided flexibility of attaining the myriad shapes and sizes. Thus brick was more suited which in turn needs a good binding material like lime mortar and gypsum.

Since the construction of the *Qubbatul Islam* Mosque, all the structures had one thing in common: the intermixing of ‘Islamic’ / ‘Saracenic’ with the ‘Indian’. A large number of Iranian architectural features are perceptible in Indian architecture since the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate in the twelfth century. The first monumental Sultanate structure, the Qutb complex, comprising the *Quwwatul Islam* Mosque, the *Qutb Minar* and the *Alai Darwaza*, reflect Iranian concepts and origins. Modelled after the Ghurid period mosques, the *Quwwatul Islam* follows the Seljuqid Iranian plan of the four-aiwan courtyard mosque, with certain modifications.¹⁴ The four-*aiwan* courtyard mosque plan was one in which an integrated enclosed space was created by the symmetrical repetition of *aiwans* (portals) and arcades on the main and transverse axes, thus creating a structure with a centralized court-yard flanked by cloisters and portals on three sides and a prayer chamber and a portal on the side facing the *qibla*. At the *Quwwatul Islam* Mosque (c. ad

¹³ Gypsum is a common white or colourless mineral (hydrated calcium sulphate) used to make cements and plasters

¹⁴ Tokifusa Tsukinowa, ‘The Influence of Seljuq Architecture on the Earliest Mosques of the Delhi Sultanate Period’, *Acta Asiatica*, No.43, 1982, pp. 54-60.

1197), however, the Iranian *aiwan* is replaced by a central ogee-shaped arch flanked by two lower arches. At the *Arhai din ka Jhonpra* Mosque at Ajmer, constructed two years later (i. e. in ad 1199), we get three engrailed ogee-shaped arches instead of *aiwans*. Over a century later, in the more authentic Iranian fashion, an *aiwan* replaced the central arch. The first example of such a construction is the *Jahanpanah* Mosque at Delhi (c. ad 1343). In the Delhi Sultanate version, the atrophied *four-aiwan* mosque appears to have been preferred, since the tendency was to retain only one of the four *aiwans*, that of the western *liwan* (ante-chamber). This modified *four-aiwan* Iranian mosque plan appears to have been followed throughout the Sultanate period in India.

In elevation, the medieval Indian mosques were more templar in form, however, deriving from the well-established temple architectural traditions of the country where they were being constructed. The four-centred Iranian arch, nevertheless, found ready acceptance among the early medieval architects of India from the Khalji period onwards. Similarly, the arabesque patterns were also readily imbibed by Indian masons. The medieval Indian arabesque carvings, first exemplified on the *maqsura* (screen) of Qutbuddin Aibak at the *Quwwatul Islam*, are much more naturalistic than what is found in their Ghurid Iranian homeland, where they were flatter and abstract. The *Shah-i Mashhad Madrasa* in Gharjistan (Afghanistan) appears to have inspired the Indian masons who carved the *maqsura* of the *Quwwatul Islam* Mosque added by Sultan Iltutmish. The carvings and arabesque patterns on the Tomb of Sultan Iltutmish too appear to have been inspired by the *Shah-i Mashhad Madrasa*. The Tughluq period saw the profuse use of rubble stone as the basic medium of construction, and thus stone carvings and arabesque patterns were not generally resorted to. However, the Mughal period marked their reappearance. The Delhi Sultanate tomb plans too appear to have followed the Seljuqid and Iranian traditions. The domed square-chamber Tomb of Sultan Iltutmish, which was one of the first extant tomb structures to be constructed under the Delhi Sultans (ad 1236), appears to have followed the traditions which were finally established at the Tomb of Shad-i Mulk at Samarqand (ad 1371-83). The Iranian paradisaical imagery in funerary architecture, which became so forceful later, was also introduced from Iranian traditions into India during the reign of Iltutmish. Subsequently, the Tughluq tombs of Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Tughluq were also in the same tradition.

The Iranian impact on medieval Indian architecture was much more forceful after the establishment of the Mughal empire. A study of the Mughal architecture reveals that the Mughals, who considered themselves to be the heirs of the Timurid tradition, borrowed heavily from the Iranian style which had developed under the Ilkhanids, Timurids and Muzaffarids. When Babur marched into India, he brought along with him two Iranian

architects, Ustad Mir Mirak Ghiyas of Herat and Ustad Shah Muhammad of Khurasan.¹⁵ According to Lisa Golombek, the Shaibanids of Bukhara were a conduit for the transmission of Timurid architectural forms to the Mughals.¹⁶ It should be borne in mind that much of the synthesis of the Iranian style with the Indo-Muslim style of architecture in India took place only till the reign of Akbar. The reign of Shahjahan is marked by the heavy influence of indigenous styles on Mughal architecture.

Idiomatically and axiormorphically, one of the most important marks of Iranian influence on the Mughal architectural tradition was the *chaharbagh*, the four-quartered paradisaical garden with its intersecting water channels lined with walkways (*khiyabans*), platforms, water chutes, tanks and fountains, flower-beds, fruit-bearing trees and foliage, all surrounded by screen walls and gateways.¹⁷ These *chahar-bagh* gardens were to become the standard setting for Mughal tombs. In these gardens, the focus was the centre, marked by the construction of a large platform. Typical examples of funerary gardens from the Mughal period are Humayun's Tomb at Delhi, the Tombs of Akbar and 'Madam' at Sikandara (Agra), the Tomb of I'timadud Daulah at Agra, and the Tomb of Jahangir at Shahdara, Lahore. In the Taj, the focus was shifted from the centre to the periphery, namely, the riverfront, where the mausoleum was constructed. Further enhancement of the riverfront was provided by constructing octagonal bastions flanked by a mosque (west) and a *mehmankhana* (east) in the corners. The mausoleum and the main gateway are on the main axis, while the terminals of the transverse axes are marked by a pavilion on each side. The structures on the terminal points of the axes of the garden result in a cruciform shape which is similar to the plan of the cruciform (*chahartaq*) tombs and mosques of Iran, such as the Musalla of Gauhar Shad, Herat (1417-38) and the Jami' Masjid Turbat-i Shaikh Jam (1440-43). This shift of emphasis from the centre to the terminus is, however, first seen in the Tomb of I'timad-ud Daulah where, although the mausoleum was retained in the centre, a riverside decorated pavilion was added.¹⁸ A forecourt (*jilau khana*) with a series of cloistered cells was also added to the *chaharbaghs* in the Tomb of Jahangir and in the Taj Mahal.

The *chaharbagh* was first introduced in India by Babur who constructed a number of them at Agra and nearby places. One of the earliest gardens on the *chaharbagh* pattern to

¹⁵ *Baburnama*, (tr.) A.S. Beveridge, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 343, 642.

¹⁶ Lisa Golombek, 'From Tamerlane to the Taj Mahal', pp. 43-50.

¹⁷ For a study and survey of Mughal gardens, see S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, 'Exploring the Mughal Gardens at Fathpur Sikri', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Indian History Congress, Bangalore session, 1997.

¹⁸ For further such examples from the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan, one might refer to the *Buland Bagh*, *Bagh-i Nur Afshan* and *Bagh-i Jahanara*, all situated on the left bank of the Yamuna at Agra. For the *Bagh-i Jahanara* (*Zahra Bagh*) see Ebba Koch, 'The Zahara Bagh (Bagh-i Jahanara) at Agra', *Environmental Design*, n.d., pp. 30-37 (special issue on 'The City as a Garden').

be laid out by Babur was the *Bagh-i Fath* situated between the lake and the ridge at Fathpur Sikri. Rectangular in plan, it comprises intersecting water channels and *khiyabans*. In the centre is constructed an Iranian-inspired pavilion (*baradari*). Aligned on an east-west axis, it is surrounded on all sides by a cloistered *riwaq* (verandah) pierced by an entrance in the north. The water channels, which are provided with *mahi-pusht abshars* (fish-scaled chutes), are connected with a stepwell (*baoli*) in the west and a well (*chah*) in the east.¹⁹ A more elaborate *chaharbagh* of Babur, the *Bagh-i Nilufar* (Lotus Garden), survives at Dholpur (Rajasthan). Two other gardens of his which have been identified are the so-called *Ram-bagh* (*Aram Bagh* or *Bagh-i Gul Afshan*, later renovated by Nurjahan and thus renamed *Bagh-i Nur Afshan*), and the *Bagh-i Hasht Bihisht*, which are located on the left bank of the Yamuna at Agra.²⁰

The *chaharbagh* introduced by Babur not only became a major element of urban landscape under the Mughals, but also inspired the lay-out of the Mughal cities themselves. The centripetal symmetry of the *chaharbagh* was invoked in the planning of the Mughal city. The organizing instruments of the garden, such as the axes, joints defined by pavilions, platforms and walkways, were transformed and enlarged architecturally into roads, caravanserais, monumental structures and quarters.²¹ Examples of such town planning on the *chaharbagh* pattern are provided by the towns of Fathpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad (Delhi). The cross-shaped or quadripartite symmetry encountered at Shahjahanabad and, to an extent, at Fathpur Sikri, reminds us of Isfahan of the Safavid period with its *maidan* (promenade) and *chaharbaghs*. The use of the *chaharbagh* as an instrument of Urban landscaping and town planning involves the Iranian imagery of paradise which is central to the Parthian genus of architecture.

Idiomatically, apart from the *chaharbagh*, there appear to be a number of other Iranian features which are encountered in Mughal architecture. Some of them, like the double dome (which developed in Iran during the fourteenth century) and the squinches on which the domes are raised (Sassanid) had been introduced into India during the period of the Delhi Sultanate and are generally found in Tughluq monuments. The Iranian four-centred (as well as two-centred) pointed arch, as we have seen, was also known in India;

¹⁹ For the identification of this garden, its plan and its site, see S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, 'Exploring the Mughal Gardens at Fathpur Sikri'.

²⁰ See, for example, Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 32-33; Catherine Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India*, pp. 22-24. See also Catherine Asher, 'Babur and the Timurid Char Bagh: Use and Meaning', *Environmental Design*, no. 11, pp. 56-73.

²¹ Attilio Petruccioli, 'The Process Evolved by the Control Systems of Urban Design in the Mogul Epoch in India: The Case of Fathpur Sikri', in *Environmental Design*, (ed.) A. Petruccioli, Roma, Italy, 1984, pp. 18-27; S. Ali Nadeem Rezavi, 'Town Planning under the Mughals', paper presented at the seminar on Urbanization in Medieval India, sponsored by Regional Institute of Archaeological Studies and Training, Government of West Bengal and Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1997.

but subsequently it came to be identified as the typical Mughal arch during the reign of Akbar. It was ultimately replaced during Shahjahan's period by the cusped (multi-foliated) arch which was ultimately derived from the Gandharan lobed arch. The bulbous double dome, on the other hand, is first encountered in a hesitant form in Humayun's Tomb and is subsequently perfected during the reign of Shahjahan when we find it in the Tomb of Taj Mahal.

India, however, showed less inclination to imbibe the distinctly 'Muslim' idiomatic forms of adornment, calligraphy, arabesque and *muqarnas* (stalactites). The use of the typical mosaic tile was confined to a handful of monuments under the Mughals. For example, it appears on the Tomb of Afzal Khan (*Chini ka Rauza*) at Agra in its most profuse form. At other places the use of coloured glazed tiles— so popular in Iran—remained confined to the outer facing of the domes (for example, *Nili Gumbad* and *Sabz Burj* near Humayun's Tomb, Delhi, constructed some time during the early sixteenth century). Brick-tile decoration is also found in the Lahore Fort. Calligraphic bands, so preferred in Iranian architecture, make their appearance under the Mughals but are generally confined to the rectangular panels encircling the arched openings of the gateways. Under the Mughals, the calligraphic decoration is accomplished with black-stone lettering inscribed on white marble bands (for example, *Buland Darwaza*, Fathpur Sikri; the gateway to Akbar's Tomb, Sikandara, Agra; and the entrance gate of the Taj Mahal). The most representative example of calligraphic decoration under the Mughals comes from the facades of the Taj Mahal.

The *muqarnas* pattern with its distinct Iranian and Tirmurid antecedents also appears in Mughal architecture, though it seems that it was not the preferred style. The *muqarnas* lozenges which were developed in ninth-century Iran have their best Mughal example in the tombs at *Khusrau Bagh*, Allahabad, built during the reign of Jahangir. The Mughals, however, employed the indigenous idioms of sculptural form of chiaroscuro effect which were based on offsets and recesses, layers of horizontal mouldings, columns and brackets, curved motifs like the pot, lotus flower and myrobalan (*amalaka*). Yet the typical Jahangiri *Chini khana* motifs based on stunted arch filled with embossed flower designs and wine goblets and *surahis* evoke the Iranian symbolism of paradise (see, for example, the Tomb of Itimad-ud Daulah, Tomb of Firuz Khan, gatehouse of *Surajbhan ka Bagh*, etc., at Agra.)

Aesthetically, the tile and faience mosaic of the Iranian style was replaced in Mughal India by the red and white bichromy or marble monochromy which is so typical of Akbari structures and monuments {for example, Humayun's Tomb; *Badshahi Darwaza*,

Jami' Masjid, Fathpur Sikri; *Jahangiri Mahal*, Agra Fort). The *Buland Darwaza* at Fathpur Sikri, however, depicts a red-yellow bichromy.

Two further Iranian idiomatic innovations, the 'arch-and-panel' articulation²² and the stellate vaults (the *chahartaq*) based on cruciform domed chambers, found wide acceptance under the Mughals. Iranian architects of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had imposed order on architectonic and decorative forms by a consistent system of articulation which had a five-fold relationship between arch and panel, and arch and arch. In this system the theme was primarily curved and arcuate (arch), and only secondarily rectangular or trabeate-based (panel). By repeating the identical arcuate patterns, the 'arch-and-panel' idiom aesthetically and idiomatically unified the surfaces and voids of a structure, while controlling the decoration covering its walls. The five features of its relationship—alignment (when the arch symmetrically alternates with a panel or an arch vertically or horizontally), empanelling (arch contained within a panel), multiplication (progressive increase upwards of arches, etc.), enframing (arch framed by arch) and intersecting (arch crossing arch)—initially found their way into, Sultanate architecture (for example, the Alai Darwaza at the *Quwwatul Islam*), but gained much greater prominence under the Mughals. The most prominent presence of this system is found on the facade and the side bays of the *Buland Darwaza* at Fathpur Sikri, the exterior facade of *Jahangiri Mahal* at Agra Fort and the exterior surface of the Taj Mausoleum. However, in these Mughal structures, the typical Iranian arch-and-panel system was modified by the traditional articulation of wedge-shaped fluted or octagonal shafts technically known as 'quoins', which are shaped like columns. These quoin shafts divided the whole area horizontally and acted as pivots for knitting together the planes of the facade.

The arch-and-panel system without the modifying pivotal quoin system is represented in the *baradari* structure of Muqarrab Khan at Kairana (district Muzaffarnagar); the Tomb of Sultan Nisar Begum at *Khusrau Bagh*, Allahabad; the *Naulakha* Pavilion and *Shah Burj* at Lahore Fort; the upper portions of the interior walls of the *Diwan-J Khas*, Agra Fort; and the *Bhadon* Pavilion at the Delhi Fort. As far as the *chahartaq* is concerned, it was formed in Iran through intersecting arches. Generally, a square vaulted chamber spanned by four large intersecting arches, resting on massive wide piers, form a cruciform with an open square in the centre. This square is then turned into a polygon or circle with the help of smaller arches, supplemented by decorative ribs rising from the main arches. In this *chahartaq* plan, the Iranian architects improvised a new type of

²² For a discussion of 'Arch-and-Panel System', see Jose Pereira, *Islamic Sacred Architecture*, pp. 249-50, also pp. 92, 100.

vaulting system, now generally known as the Khurasanian vault. The Khurasanian (multi-partite) vault was invoked by the Timurid architects by reviving the Ilkhanid and Seljuq stelliform vault on the system of intersecting arches. This type of vault consists of four large intersecting ribs which create a central vaulted area, four lozenge-shaped squinches and four rectangular fields. In this plan, the centre of each side of the square contains an arched recess, the width of which is equivalent to the diameter of the dome, supported by the four arches which in turn spring from the forward edge of the recess arches, each adjacent pair intersecting to form the square. The secondary ribs springing from the haunches of the arches converts the square into an octagon by a series of lozenge-shaped squinches. At the second stage of the phase of transition, sixteen fan-shaped pendentives complete the transition to the circular dome. With this system the vaulting techniques reach perfection. The need of supporting walls is eliminated and the dome now sits directly on the four arches. The first building based on this pattern was the twelfth-century Jami' Masjid of Ishaqan. Under the Timurids, this type of vault was employed in the Bibi Khanum Mosque at Samarkand (1398-1405), the *Musalla of Gauhar Shad* at Herat (1417-38), the Mosque of Turbat-i Shaikh Jam (1440-43) and the *Madrasa at Khargird* (1442). In the Mughal empire, we find its occurrence in the imperial *hammam* (the so-called Hakim's Baths), the *private hammam* in the *daulatkhana*, the *hammam* attached to the *Haramsara* ('Jodhbai Palace'), all at Fathpur Sikri, as well as at Akbar's *Khilwatgah* in Allahabad Fort, the Barber's tomb in the garden of Humayun's Tomb and the Govind Dev Temple at Vrindavan near Mathura (1590s).

The Kabuli Bagh Mosque of Babur at Panipat and the *Kachh-pura Mosque* of Humayun at Agra, on the other hand, depict the arch-netted transition zones in pseudo-structural plaster relief work applied to the pendentives of the small domes of the lateral side bays. These are also later found in the central dome of Humayun's Tomb and at the Tomb of Tambolan Begum at *Khusrau Bagh*, Allahabad. This 'arch-net' or 'squinch-net' in the form of fake arches in plaster was also inspired by Timurid architecture. The corbelled pendentive concealed by elaborate plaster ribs is first found at the *Khanqah* (hospice) of Mulla Kalan, Ziyaratgah (1472-1501). Arch-netting similar to that on Tambolan Begum's tomb occurs at the *Khanqah* of Khwaja Zainuddin at Bukhara (sixteenth century).

The *chahartaq* plan was extensively employed by the Mughals in their mosque and tomb architecture. The naves of the western *liwans* of the Jami' Masjids of Fathpur Sikri and Shahjahanabad (Delhi), and the Badshahi Masjid of Lahore, are all constructed on the *chahar-taq* pattern. The earliest Mughal example is the *Kabuli Bagh Mosque* (c. 1527) of Babur at Panipat, where the *chahartaq* is employed on its central nave. The nave and

aisles of the central rooms of Muqarrab Khan's baradari at Kairana (district Muzaffarnagar) are also constructed on the *chahartaq* pattern. The square Mughal tombs, such as the *Khusrau Bagh* Tombs at Allahabad, are also *chahartaq* structures.

Axiomorphic borrowings from the Persian style are also quite prominent in Mughal architecture. They are in the form of gatehouses, portals (*peshtaq*), pillared halls (*aiwans*) and plans of tombs and mosques.

In Iran and Central Asia (Trans-Oxiana), masonry buildings were constructed with 'post-and-beam' (timber) porches. Two prominent examples are Ali Qapu in the *Maidan-i Shah*, Isfahan and the Balyand Mosque in Bukhara. Porched pillared halls raised on slender wooden pillars were known as *talar* in Iran and *aiwan* in Trans-Oxiana. In Iran, the term *aiwan* was used for an open-fronted room with a barrel vault. The use of the term *aiwan* to designate pillared constructions was adopted by the Mughals. Most such pillared constructions in India took place during the reign of Akbar. The *Badgir* ('*Hawa Mahal*') of the Jodhbai Palace, the *Chahar s'uffa* ('*Panch Mahal*'), the *Aiwankhana* ('*Diwan-i Khas*' or 'Jewel Treasury'), the entrance to the *Naqqarkhana* near Hathipol, the '*Rang Mahal*', all at Fathpur Sikri, and the inner quadrangle of the *Jahangiri Mahal* at Agra Fort, are examples of quadrangular *aiwans* inspired by Iranian prototypes. This building form was also sometimes adapted to an octagonal plan. The 'Qush-khana' near the *Ajmeri Darwaza* at Fathpur Sikri, the *Chihilsu-tun* in Allahabad Fort and the *Shah Burj* at Agra Fort are all octagonal *aiwans*.

Iranian architecture also initiated the expression of the aesthetics of the facade in its portal (*peshtaq*), an endeavour that was brought to fruition in Turkey and Mughal India. The construction of high *peshtaqs* and *aiwans* had long been established in the Iranian tradition.²³ The high *peshtaq* of the sanctuaries chamber was also an important feature of the Sharqi architecture of Jaunpur.²⁴ It has generally been argued that the high *peshtaq* of the Mughals, especially under Babur, was a result of the influence of Sharqi architecture. Parallels have been drawn between the facade of the Atala Masjid and Jami' Masjid, Jaunpur, and the facade of the Baburi mosques, the *Kabuli Bagh* Mosque of Panipat, the recently destroyed Mir Baqi's Mosque at Ayodhya and the Mir Hindu Beg Mosque at Sambhal.

²³ See, for example, Pinder-Wilson, 'Timurid Architecture', in *Cambridge History of Iran: The Timurid and Safavid Period*, Vol. VI, (eds) Peter Jackson and L. Lockhart, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 729,731; D. Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran, the Ilkhanid Period*, Princeton, 1955, p. 158.

²⁴ A. Fuhrer, *The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur*, ASI, new series, Vol. XI, Calcutta, 1889; Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture, Islamic Period*, Bombay, 1958.

A closer look of our sources and a comparison of the plans of these mosques with Iranian-Timurid structures however unfold a different story. Before coming to India, Babur had briefly occupied Samarqand (c. 1501), and re-occupied it later (1507) and campaigned in Bukhara up till 1511. The Sambhal Mosque was constructed by one of his nobles in 1526. Soon after his victory at Panipat in 1526 Babur had ordered the construction of the *Kabuli Bagh* Mosque. In 1528-29, Mir Baqi had the Ayodhya Mosque constructed. In 1530, during the reign of Humayun (and with four years of Mughal conquest) the Kachhpura Mosque was constructed. It was too short a time for the Mughals to familiarize themselves with the regional architectural traditions of India. Further, as we have noted earlier, Babur had been accompanied to India by two master masons who were well-versed in the Timurid traditions of architecture.

If we compare the plan of the *Kabuli Bagh* Mosque and the Kachhpura Mosque with the *Namazgah* Mosque at Qarshi, a town southwest of Samarqand, we encounter a striking similarity of style and planning. In all the Baburi and Humayuni mosques, as in the Qarshi mosque, we find the high *peshtaq*, *chahartaq* nave and lower lateral wings with four domed bays. It is also interesting to note that in his memoirs, Babur mentions the town of Qarshi near Samarqand.²⁵ Coupled with the existence of the typical Timurid feature of arch-netted transition zones in pseudo-structural plaster relief covering the pendentives, we can safely assume that these mosques took shape under the Iranian-Timurid influence.

The high *peshtaqs* subsequently emerged as the hallmark of Mughal architecture, not only in mosque but also in tomb construction. The earliest Mughal tombs with elongated *peshtaqs* are the *Sabz Burj* and *Nila Gumbad* near Humayun's Tomb.²⁶

As far as the ground-plan is concerned, the Mughal mosque closely followed the Iranian axiomorphic prototypes. By the fourteenth century, the Iranian architects had perfected the two- and *four-aiwan* (open-fronted construction with a barrel vault). The form of the two-*aiwan* mosque was achieved by having the sanctuary chamber with a high *peshtaq* preceded by an enclosed open quadrangle. The entrance portal (*aiwan* of the Iranian architecture) was constructed on the same axis as the *peshtaq*. The centrally located courtyard, which was also an indigenous idiom, was surrounded by double-storeyed cloisters (*riwaq*). Under the Mughals, this Iranian-Timurid prototype was used in conjunction with Delhi Sultanate elements to produce a new form. Thus, in the Khairul Manazil Mosque at Delhi we find that the tall *peshtaq* of the western *liwan* and the

²⁵ *Baburnama*, p. 84.

²⁶ For details on these tombs, see Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 36-37.

double-storeyed *riwaq* are typically Timurid. The single-aisled western *liwan* was itself built on Delhi Sultanate traditions. As in the Iranian examples, this single-aisled, five-bayed mosque has a single dome. In the Akbari Masjid near the Ajmer Dargah, the western *liwan* with multiple aisles and a dominant dome over the nave is Timurid, while the low single-aisle cloisters are typical of Delhi Sultanate architecture. The Jami' Masjid of Fathpur Sikri is again a *two-aiwan* mosque, which acquired its third portal (*Buland Darwaza*) at a later stage.

By the twelfth century the four- *aiwan* congregational mosque with domed chamber and cloisters had been perfected in Iran. In fact, it was the Jami' Masjid at Varamin (1322-26) which established the general plan for the subsequent Jami' Masjids of Iran.²⁷ In this type of mosque a harmonious synthesis of such traditional elements as the *aiwan*, the *four-aiwan* court and *aiwan-dome* combination was effected. The courtyard was framed by cloisters (usually double-storeyed) of equal height, on three sides, while the prayer chamber (western *liwan*) was given a heightened importance through its crowning dome and a higher *peshtaq*. In the middle of each of the other three arched faces of the interior court, an *aiwan* (in the form of an arched and vaulted niche) is introduced. As in the overall plan, these four *aiwans* can be seen as the arms of a cross. This type of mosque plan has been termed a cruciform plan.

The cruciform or *four-aiwan* mosque made its appearance in India during the Sultanate period (*supra*). Under the Mughals it is first encountered during the reign of Jahangir, but it became popular during the reign of Shahjahan. The first cruciform mosque constructed under the Mughals appears to be the Begum Shahi Mosque at Lahore (1611-14). The second mosque on the same plan is the Wazir Khan Mosque (1634-35), again at Lahore. Later, the Jami' Masjids of Agra and Shahjahanabad were also constructed on the same pattern.

Contrary to the Iranian *four-aiwan* mosques, these Mughal mosques emphasized the importance of the sanctuary by tending to isolate it from the cloisters of the courtyard and by diminishing the size and width of the latter. The Wazir Khan Mosque has two other changes. As at the Taj Mahal, this mosque has an additional court in front of the entrance (*jilaukhana*) which acted as a *bazar*. Secondly, the transverse *aiwans* of this mosque are no longer open-fronted in the Iranian manner, but are gate-houses with doors.²⁸

²⁷ D. Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran*, p. 731.

²⁸ For the non-Iranian influences on the Mughal congregational mosques, see Jose Pereira, *Islamic Sacred Architecture*, pp. 231-32.

Iranian architects and builders of the fourteenth century had also developed a technique for providing domed roofing to long rectangular structures. This was the technique of applying transverse arches and groin vaults.²⁹ In such construction the rectangular space to be covered was divided into square units by crossing it transversely from one longitudinal wall to the other. Short arches were applied to bridge the transverse arches, and provide the base for the domical vaults erected on the top. The in-filled spaces between the transverse arches were pierced with windows to let in light. This technique made its appearance in Eastern Iran where it was adopted in *Masjid-Kirmani* near the Tomb of Turbat-i Shaikh.³⁰ It is then found in such religious structures as the oratory near the Jami' Masjid at Yazd and the Tomb of Shaikh Ahmad Yasavi in Turkestan. In India we find one example of this kind of elongated vaulted structure from the reign of Shahjahan. But here it is in the form of a Safavid-inspired *bazar*, the *bazar-i musaqqaf*. This unique structure is the covered *bazar* adjoining the *Lahori Darwaza* of the Delhi Fort.

One of the most important axiomatic impresses of Iranian tradition on Mughal architecture was in the form of a plan which has been labelled *hasht bihishtor* noni-partite plan.³¹ In this plan the layout, which is preferably an irregular octagon (a chamfered square— *musamman-i baghdadi*), is divided by four intersecting constructional lines into nine parts, comprising a domed octagonal chamber in the centre, rectangular open halls in the form of either *peshtaq* or flat-roofed *aiwans* supported by pillars) and double-storeyed octagonal vaulted chambers in the corners. This plan provided the buildings a radial symmetry which hitherto was missing. The radial symmetry was further emphasized by the axial and radial passages which linked the nine chambers with each other. Typical Timurid examples of this were the Tomb of Abu Nasr Parsa at Balkh (c. 1460), the *Ishratkhana* at Samarqand (1464) and the Tomb of Sharif Abdullah at Herat (1487). A direct influence of the Tomb of Abu Nasr Parsa is found during the Mughal period in at least four tombs, three of which are in Delhi. The *Sabz Burj* and *Nili Gumbad* Tombs (c. 1530-40) near Humayun's Mausoleum, the *Afsarwala* Tomb (1560s), again at Delhi, and the Tomb of Shamsheer Khan at Batala (1588-89) have a noni-partite plan with angular units as semi-octagonal niches. As at the Abu Nasr Tomb, their central chamber is on a square plan.

²⁹ Pinder-Wilson, 'Timurid Architecture', p. 732; Lisa Golombek, 'Discourses of an Imaginary Arts Council in Fifteenth-Century Iran', in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, (eds) Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (being Vol. VI of *Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture: Supplements to Muqarnas*), E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1992, p. 5.

³⁰ Pinder-Wilson, 'Timurid Architecture', p. 732.

³¹ See Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 44-45; Jose Pereira, *Islamic Sacred Architecture*, pp. 236-37.

The most famous Mughal monumental funerary structures constructed on this Timurid plan are the Humayun's Tomb at Delhi and the Taj Mahal at Agra. The plan of Humayun's Tomb also appears to have been inspired from a 'boat-house'¹ which, according to Humayun's court historian, was contrived on the orders of the emperor himself. Khwand Amir writes:

Of all the wonderful innovations (*ikhtam'at*) prepared in that time on the Imperial orders, which owing to their novelty (*gharaib*) and beauty (*nazahat*) have spread to all parts of the world was the one which on royal directions, the royal carpenters constructed with the help of four boats in the river Jamuna (*Jayhun*). On each of these (boats) were constructed platforms (*saffa*) which are double-storeyed *chahartaqs* of elegant style. These four boats were joined with each other in such a way that these *chahartaq* (platforms) face each other. And in between each two of the four boats, another apartment (*taq*) was produced. Consequently an octagonal tank (*hauz*) resulted in the middle. And these *chahartaqs* were decorated with fine cloths and other valuable objects, due to which the mind of the intelligent (*aql-i darrak*) would be amazed by its beauty and magnificance.³²

If we compare the plan of Humayun's Tomb, which was designed by Mirza Ghiyas, the master architect who had accompanied Babur to India, the tomb appears to be a copy of Humayun's boat-house. The *chahartaqs* of the boat pavilions were transformed into stone double-storeyed vaulted octagonal corner chambers. The four 'apartments' connecting the boats were transformed into rectangular side chambers, and the central octagonal tank was now transformed into the octagonal domed sepulchral chamber. The Taj Mahal, on the other hand, is a single *baghdadi octagon* (chamfered square) laid out in the typical noni-partite plan. The Iranian axiomatics are brilliantly coupled with indigenous idiomatics and aesthetics.

Another example of a noni-partite tomb is the Tomb of Anarkali at Lahore, which, again, is one of the most ingeniously planned of Mughal structures.

The noni-partite plan was also applied by the Mughals to tombs which were regular octagons. The Tomb of Shah Quli Khan at Narnaul, the Tomb of Haji Muhammad at Sirhind and the Tomb of Qutbuddin Muhammad Khan at Vadodara are some of the funerary structures of Akbar's reign which were regular octagons with noni-partite plans.

This plan was applied to palace buildings like Akbar's Pavilion at the Ajmer Fort and the *Buland Darwaza* at Fathpur Sikri, and *Rani ka Mahal* at Allahabad Fort. Pleasure

³² Khwand Mir, *Qanun-i Humayuni*, (ed.) Hidayat Husain, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1940, p. 52.

pavilions and water palaces like the *Hada Mahal* at Fathpur Sikri, Shah Quli's Water Palace at Narnaul and I'timad Khan's Water Palace (popularly known as *Burhia ka Tal*) at Etmadpur (Agra) were also constructed on this pattern.

The noni-partite plan was also applied to square structures. Akbar's Ajmer Pavilion and Shah Quli's Water Palace were square structures. The best example of this type is, however, the Tomb of I'timadud Daulah at Agra. These square noni-partite structures were probably constructed in the style of the *Khanqah* of Qasim Shaikh at Kermin, Bukhara and the Tomb of Ulugh Beg and Abdur Razzaq in the vicinity of Ghazni.

This plan was applied to a large number of Mughal *hammams*, for example, the *hammarn* of Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khanan at Burhan-pur and the imperial *hammams* at Fathpur Sikri.

From the above description it thus appears that the Indian architects and planners, especially those of the Mughal period, heavily borrowed their idiomatic, axiomorphic and aesthetic traditions from Iran. The beauty and uniqueness of the medieval Indian and Mughal architecture, however, was owing to these inspirations being intelligently synthesized with older indigenous elements. This synthetic tendency is seen at its best in the Taj Mahal, making it one of the best architectural achievements of world civilization.

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The first sizeable exodus of the Iranians in the Mughal Empire appears to have taken place with the return of Humayun from Persia in 1545; and now West Iranians began to predominate among the immigrants. A number of Iranian scholars, nobles and soldiers migrated to India along with him and joined his service.

If we consider the ethnic composition of the Mughal nobility from the reign of Akbar down to Shāhjahān, we notice immediately a high and disproportionate advancement granted to Iranis over the others throughout the period in the higher echelons of the Mughal nobility. The Persians and the Turanis on the other hand in the medium range of Mughal hierarchy remained largely equal in number.

It is generally held that this large-scale migration of the Iranians to India after the establishment of the Mughal Empire was a direct result of the unfavourable religious atmosphere which they faced in a resurgent Safavid Iran. According to a contemporary account, even the 'Tafzili Sunnis' (i.e., those Sunnis who give precedence to the Household of the Prophet) found it quite difficult to survive in the Safavid empire of Shah Ismail. But this reason for migration from Iran to India would imply that a majority of the Iranians who entered the Mughal service were Sunnis. However we have evidence

that most of the Iranians who joined the Mughal service were known Shi'ites or Tafzilis. Émigrés like Qāzi Nurullah Shūstari, Shah Fathullah Shirāzi, Hakīm Abul Fath Gīlāni and his brothers, and 'Urfī Shirāzi and Sharīf 'Amulī were known Shi'ites and religious persecution could not have been a reason for their departure from Iran. Mulla 'Abdul Qadir Badauni alleges that the 'Iraqīs' (i.e., the Shi'i Iranis) achieving great favour at Akbar's court had in fact become predominant (*ghālib*) over the Sunnis who had turned into a subjugated clan (*maghlūb*). Abul Fazl too alludes to the same allegation when he says that 'wicked people' allege that Akbar had himself become a Shi'ite. In fact, during the whole reign of Shāhjahān we do not come across any single instance of a noble who came to India due to religious persecution in Iran. Almost all these émigrés openly professed Shi'ism and yet were accorded high honours at the court of Shāhjahān.

The actual reason for the migration to India appears to be two-fold: On the one hand the Shah followed a repressive policy towards his nobles; on the other hand, Akbar initiated a policy which welcomed these émigrés with an open arm. The leading nobles of the Safavid court were frequently dismissed from their positions or even in certain cases executed. On the other hand in the Mughal administrative system even dismissal from service was a rare event. The Mughal policy is apparent in a letter sent by Akbar to his Iranian counterpart, Shah Abbas. In this letter to the Safavid monarch, Akbar advises him to 'practise endurance of burdens and the ignoring of the mistakes of the hereditary servants and new employees'. Akbar further cautions him of the dangers of executing nobles. Contrary to this behaviour of the Safavids, Muzaffar Alam has shown how the great Mughal sought to attract the talent from Iran to his court.

It was probably due to this large number of elites and scholars that another profound change occurred in the Mughal Empire. We know that under the Timurids at least till the reign of Humayun the spoken language of the court was the Chaghtai Turkish. It was not only the language in which Babur wrote his memoirs, but a language which was generally understood and spoken in the court. We have the testimony of Bāyazīd Bayāt that most of the nobles during this period conversed in Turkish and not Persian. But then need arose that the crucial documents like the *farman* and the *fathnama* before and after the Battle of Kanwa fought between Babur and Rana Sangram Singh be issued in Persian. The need also arose that a translation of the Indian portion of *Baburnama* be made in Persian. The audience of these documents was probably not only the erstwhile ruling classes (the Afghans) but also the new emigrants who were now heading towards the newly emerging empire. By the reign of Akbar, Persian emerged as the lingua franca of the court and the elites. By Shāhjahān's reign, we are informed that when a noble encountered a *mulla* delivering his lecture in *hindavi* at a madrasa he had to get it

translated into Persian in order to understand what was being taught. The elite nature of the Persian however becomes apparent from an anecdote narrated by Shaikh Farid Bhakkari: Mirza Ruhullah, a confidant of Jahāngīr was once passing through the territory of Jitpura which was under the charge of a Raja (a Hindu chieftain). The Raja hastened to receive him once he entered his area and threw a feast for him in an orchard. During the feast, Mirza Ruhullah saw a snake crawling from a tree near him and shouted '*mār! mār!*', which in Persian means 'snake, snake' but in Hindavi meant 'Kill! Kill!' The Mirza's soldiers thinking he was ordering them to kill the Raja pounced upon the hapless host and cut his throat.

Another group of émigré professionals was that of the artists and painters. It appears however that till the reign of Shāhjahān, the Imperial atelier had only a few from Central Asia or Persia. Of the known foreigners in the Mughal atelier only eight painters are mentioned in our sources or their works along with their places of origin. (See Table I)

Table III
Racial Origins of Painters

Place of Origin	Total Number	Humayun	Akbar	Jahāngīr	Shāhjahān
Herat	3	-	-	2	1
Shiraz	1	1	1	-	-
Tabrez	1	-	1	-	-
Central Asia / Samarqand	2	-	1	1	1
Kabul	1	-	1	-	--
Abbyssinia	1	-	1	-	-
Gujarat	12	-	12	-	-
Kashmir	12	-	11	2	-
Gwalior	1	-	1	-	-

Thus we hear of Aqa Riza Herati who joined service of Prince Salim. His son Abul Hasan, like his father served Jahāngīr. Another of his sons, Muhammad Abid served the

Mughal atelier under Shāhjahān. Abdus Samad of Shiraz, Mir Saiyid Ali of Tabrez, Farrukh Qalmaq, Muhammad Nadir of Samarqand and a painter identified only as Habshi (Abbysinian) were some of the other non-Indian painters serving at the Mughal court.

Khwaja Abdus Samad, a native of Shiraz joined the Mughal service during the reign of Humayun and attained high position under Akbar. During the reign of Akbar he attained a mansab of 400 *zat* and given a number of administrative responsibilities. Thus in the 22nd Regnal Year (that is 1578) he was appointed as the *darogha-i dār uz zarb* (Superintendent of the mint) at Fathpur Sikri. In 1583 he was given the charge of 'leather articles' due to his honest dealings. The very next year, that is 28th Regnal Year, when the charge of the Imperial household was given to Prince Murad, Abdus Samad was appointed as one of his deputies. His son Muhammad Sharīf, a painter in the Imperial atelier under Akbar, rose under Jahangir to a very high position. In Akbar's reign he enjoyed the rank of 200 *zat* which was enhanced by Jahāngīr soon after his accession to 5000 / 5000. He was also awarded the title of *Amir ul Umara*. During this reign he was not only enjoying a high position in the court but was also sent to command an army to the Deccan.

Aqa Riza of Herat, who joined the atelier of Prince Salim when the prince was at Allahabad, was another Iranian painter enjoying imperial offices. According to an inscription, Aqa Riza Musawwir was also appointed as the *darogha-i im arat* (superintendent of construction) of the mausoleum complex of Khuldābād (Khusraubāgh, Allahabad). His son Abul Hasan, according to Jahāngīr, far excelled his father and was awarded the title of Nādir ul 'asr (unique of the age).

Like the painters, singers (*goyinda*) and musicians who played various instruments too were men derived from varied backgrounds. It is interesting to note that only 33 % of these court musicians were of foreign origin (see Table II).

Table IV

Musicians and their Racial Origin

	Indian	Foreigners	Hindus	Muslims
Total	24	12	11	25
Percentage	66.7	33.3	30.6	69.4

A majority of the foreign musicians and singers (two-thirds), in the court of Akbar, hailed from Persia, while only a third came from Central Asia. Thus we find the mention of Usta

Dost, Mir Saiyid Ali, and Sultan Hashim, all from Mashhad; as well as Qasim Kohbar and Tash Beg Qipchaq both Central Asians, amongst the others in the list provided by Abul Fazl.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also witnessed a spurt in the migration of a large number of merchants to India because of the bright prospects there. Some of them were inducted into the Mughal nobility and rose to eminent positions. We have already mentioned the example of Ali Akbar Isfahāni. Another such person was Mir Jumla who first reached Golconda and from there migrated to the Mughal court under Shāhjahān. It was therefore quite natural for the Iranian merchants to flock to India in large numbers. Tavernier thus observes that:

...there are in Persia as in other kingdoms people having the spirit and the knowledge, but whose merit is not recognized and cannot find the patronage of the court. Angry by this or reduced to a secluded life and deprived of the means to make a fortune, they move out to India and offer their services either to the great Mughul, or to the King of Golconda or to the King of Bijapur.

It also appears from the available evidence that these merchants maintained notable contacts with the political authorities of both Iran and India. Thus Haji Rafiq, for example was particularly close to both Jahāngīr and Shah Abbas I. Jahāngīr himself mentions that Rafiq ‘frequently visited Iraq (Iran) and became an intimate of my brother Shah Abbas’. He was also awarded the title of *malik ut tujjar* by Jahāngīr.

Thus we see that the Iranian who migrated to the Mughal Empire were not only members of the ruling class but belonged to such social groups as painters, physicians, artists and merchants. They migrated to the country of their choice generally not to avoid religious persecution in their home country but to look for better opportunities which were on offer in the Mughal Empire. The Mughals on their part kept the doors open to the new talent they could draw from Iran. The Mughal Empire owed much to the work of these émigrés and they contributed much to the cultural renaissance that the Mughal Empire witnessed. The theme can be best summed up by quoting a dialogue which took place between Zainul Beg, the Persian envoy to the court of Jahāngīr and Abdul Latif Abbasi the protocol officer who received the Persian Ambassador and took him around the tomb of Akbar during the former’s official visit to that mausoleum:

(Then) he (Zainul Beg) asked: “Where do you hail from?” I said, “I am a Baghdadi (by origin), but my birth place is India. And Khwaja Muhammad Mirak is a Mashhadi”. He said, “Baghdad is called ‘Iraq-i

‘Arab and (the term) ‘two Iraqs’ is well known. Are you too in fact from Iraq?’ To this my reply was, “Yes! The country of Iraq also belongs to His Majesty Jahāngīr Padshah and the Shah (of Iran) also does not consider himself to be different from him. We are also among you and you also from among us”.

Despite this display of cosmopolitanism, it must be noted that so far as we can see from the mentions of marriages contracted by Iranian émigrés it would seem that generally a kind of endogamy was practised. One may take as an illustration the family of I’timad ud Daulah, the great minister of Jahangir and the father of his celebrated queen Nūr Jahān. But for three marriages (of Nūr Jahān, Mumtāz Mahal and Lādli Begam), all with members of the ruling family, all the known marriages contracted by this large family till the death of Jahangir were either within the family itself or with Iranians, those of Istajlu and Anju clans and the families of Khwāja Abul Hasan, Nūruddin Muhammad Kāshi and Ahmad Beg Khan Kābuli – all Iranian, except the last who could be a Khurāsāni. Further research on these lines into marriage-connections among other Iranian families is yet to be undertaken but will probably lead to a similar result. These assisted to help the Iranian immigrants to maintain a separate identity and ethnic reputation within the larger Indian society for a very long period.

Compatibility of Cultures and Convergence of Approaches in India and Iran

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What is that which binds India with Iran the most? Is it the consciousness about the common past; or sharing of cultural heritage; the time-tested friendly ties; economic bonds; or future aspirations? Although, each of these factors has its own share to contribute towards the mutual goodwill, it is possibly the compatibility, complementarities and convergence of the Indian and Iranian mind and spirit, thought and approaches concerning the essentials of human life that brings a unison and closeness in the two cultures of India and Iran. Both these cultures did not nourish on political interests or economic values; but nurtured upon cultural and moral sensitivity. These cultures are rooted in the sense of justice, strict ethics and emotional tenderness. Both respect high ideals and pursue them in order to realize the greatness that the pure human mind, soul and intellect can instil.

In remote past, the people living in the lands of ancient Persia (Iran) and the Indian sub-continent were geographically neighbours, commercially connected and culturally close. Archaeology attests to the fact. There were commercial links of the Harappan people with the western world; there are common or similar features among the Luristan antiquities with the early Indian artefacts; the Old Persian of the Avesta and the Vedic Sanskrit are akin and many parallels exist between the Avesta and the Rig- Veda, besides, the mythological and conceptual similarities. All these add up to establish the issue of the cultural fraternity of the Indian and Iranian people in remote past.

Common Origin and Sharing

The theory of the common Indo-European origin of the Aryans was proposed by Sir William Jones who based it upon linguistic similarities in the Indo-European languages. So did the theory of Indo-Iranian religious schism by Martin Haug derived support from linguistic arguments. After the discovery of the Boghazkoi inscription, both of these theories held greater sway. The suggestion that the Aryans had a meeting point in Eurasia

from where they had spread out, gained strength. The Aryans were supposed to have first migrated to Iranian lands, and from there, came to India. In this way, they had a common source for their religious ideas embodied in their religious texts.¹ Further, it was supposed that the Avesta was a text dating, if not prior, at least of the same date as the Rig Veda.

Scholars like Spiegel and Justi, who were the exponents of the traditional school and had attempted at translating Zend by means of Sanskrit and the Avesta by means of the Vedas: "because Zend and the Avesta are closely related to Sanskrit and the Vedas"; forgot that "relationship is not identity."² "The traditional method as it starts from matters of facts moves always in the field of reality; the comparative method starts from an hypothesis, moves in a vacuum, and builds up a fanciful religion and a fanciful language."³ The comparative school developed the Indo-Iranian mythology. In the steps of Burnouf, it was Roth who showed that how the epical history of Iran was derived from the same source as the myths of Vedic India, and pointed out the primitive identity of Ahura Mazda with the Vedic deity Varuna. But the dangers of the method of the comparative school came to sight in the studies of the great Pahlavi scholar, Martin Haug "who giving a definite form to a system still fluctuating, converted Mazdaeism into a religious revolution against Vedic polytheism, found historical allusions to that schism both in the Avesta and in the Veda, pointed out curses against Zoroaster in the Vedas, and, in short, transformed, as it were, the two books into historical pamphlets."⁴

James Darmesteter, in 1879, while reviewing the approaches of both schools pointed to the fact that the translations of one and the same passage from the Avesta differed vastly under the divergent approaches of the scholars of the two schools. Both the approaches are important but it is necessary to strike the right balance to derive information. "In fact tradition gives the materials, and comparison puts them in order."⁵ According to James Darmesteter, there was one same source for the Vedas and the Avesta, and it was named as the Indo-Iranian- religion.⁶

K. C. Chattopadhyaya mentioned about the number of "deep-seated agreements in the religious outlook" of the two communities.⁷ "The differences that are discernible in the religions of the two communities can be easily explained through natural development, which was necessarily different in the two cases."⁸ Finally, he proclaimed, "In fact, Indians and Iranians were always friendly neighbours in antiquity, ever ready to learn from each other. Consequently an Indo-Iranian religious clash should be considered a pure myth."⁹ (*italics ours*).

Identification of the Royal Ideal

Historically, the Achaemenid Empire was the first world empire¹⁰ and it touched India. It stretched from Greece to the Hindukush, and thereby introduced India to the western world by the land route running through Iran. Achaemenian kings governed the northwestern parts of ancient India. Talented Indian scholars like Panini of Salatura were subjects of the Persian Empire. Soldiers from India served in Persian army. The satrapy of Gandhara paid a tribute of 360 talents of gold dust to the Achaemenid Emperor. Politically, the Achaemenian Iran left many important lessons in statecraft for the Indian to benefit from. It was the first empire in the world to contain multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-culture elements in its fold, who were amalgamated and assimilated by the administrative policies and vision of the emperors Cyrus, Darius and others.

Cyrus (II) treated his adversaries (King Astyages of Media, King Croesus of Lydia, King Nabonidus of Babylonia) with great generosity, presenting an example of his sensibility. Victory over Media was not destructive, rather forged a close union of the Medes and Persians yet kept the Persians as higher than equals. By 546 B.C., Cyrus (II) conquered Lydia, King Croesus received reprieve. When conquering Babylon in 539 B.C., Cyrus (II) treated Nabonidus with mercy and took generous steps to win over the people. Cyrus (II) presented himself as the liberator and legitimate successor of Babylonian throne, and not as a conqueror. He organised the return of the 40,000 Jews from their 'Babylonian captivity', back to Palestine under leadership of Zerub-babel and care of Persian officials. The Jews were allowed to rebuild their temple at Jerusalem.

A ruler with such qualities was ever an ideal to the Indian mind. In mythical legends, an emperor's policy tempered with mercy and justice, was praised. Kindness to the defeated and liberation of the captives were known as great acts. Cyrus could well stand among the ideal rulers of the Indian conception. Truly, the Indian ideal and the Iranian reality matched well, and thus, began the compatibility.

Inspiration and Emulation

"The Mauryan imperialism was an upshot of the Achaemenian imperialism and Ashoka build his policy on that basis" wrote Professor Ram Prasad Chanda.¹¹ He added, "Ashoka's Dharmavijaya or conquest of the world through Dharma is not a missionary movement, but a definite imperial policy - it is Mauryan imperialism perfectly pacified. Like the other elements in the environment of Ashoka, Buddhism, the religion of his choice, must have considerably influenced this policy; but this influence was only indirect."

Persian achievements in administering the large empire must have been an appreciated factor for Indian emperors, too, Darius (I) had reformed his administrative organisation and strengthened communications in the empire.¹² Darius (I) extended the satrapy system to the entire Empire "dividing power between the local officials so that each administrator kept others in check."¹³ Drawing a comparison with the Mauryan administration, we can surely trace the Persian ideas and institutions modified according to Indian conditions by the able Maurya emperors, Chandragupta and Ashoka. It cannot be said that Mauryan administration was wholesale borrowed, but the direction and course of the administrative set up was like the Persian one; and this was possibly because the rulers were aware of the Achaemenid experience of handling their organisation of a large and newly established empire.

The titles taken by the Achaemenid kings that appealed to the sentiments of the people, revealed a changed approach. Cyrus the Great, while in Babylon took the title as 'King of Babylon, King of the Land'. Darius (I) took for himself the title of 'Kings of kings' accepting other subject-rulers. The Maurya emperor Ashoka also appears to have been inspired by such values and followed the policy of benevolence and humility-even a step ahead of the Achaemenian monarchs. He took pleasant title of Devanampiyeti Piyadasi 'Ajata' and appealed directly to the masses through his edicts.

Diversity was invested in the Iranian land since the beginning. The reason is to be sought as much in the composite character of the population, as in the physical, geographical and climatic conditions in which and the assimilation of population took its long course. People figured as important in the Achaemenid policy. Cyrus (II) treated his conquered "subjects generously and left their institutions largely intact. In place of massacres and deportations Cyrus introduced tolerance and the rule of law."¹⁴ Cyrus (II) was not just a warrior but a more humane emperor, who treated his subjects generously and introduced tolerance and the rule of law. He was not only "a world conqueror and effective organizer, but the first to display that spirit of tolerance which is typical of the Iranian character."¹⁵ In his empire, "each people was to keep its own language, its individuality, its institutions and its religion, and to enjoy the benefits of the State of which it formed part."¹⁶ "Persian domination in most of the countries of the Empire was tolerable; it was a regime which combined firmness with goodwill."¹⁷

Ashoka consolidated his vast empire by accepting a paternal role towards his subjects: educating them of good values and ethics, and mitigating the strictness of governance with compassion and piety. He laboured for the general upliftment: moral, social, economic. Consolidation by 'sambhao'; reforms through persuasion on 'dhamma'; and

control with an anxious paternal outlook, were the preferred means adopted to achieve the objectives.

We learn from the scholars that the Aramaic language and the Kharosthi script were in themselves, Persian contributions. It cannot be anything strange that the epigraphic inspiration also came from the Persian land, as the connection between the Darius' and Asoka's edicts reveals. Also important is the fact that Asoka modified the usual Achaemenid format, just like he modified each bit of the Persian influence that he had received, and made his own adapted version. That was his innovative genius. Compared to the inscriptions of the Mauryas or the Indo Greeks, and even the Indo Scythians of the Northwest, the epigraphs of the western Sakas were textually superior.¹⁸ These later day authors were influenced by the Persian world which in turn was particular about the aspects of chronology, identities, precise facts and formal diction.¹⁹ Persian traditions were inherited and were followed by the royal scribes till the British rule in India.

Peaceful Coexistence: Tolerance and Goodwill

Religious toleration was another important aspect for the Indian and Iranian kings and subjects. "The Achaemenid period saw the rise of the faith preached by Zarathusthra, which became the state religion of Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I."²⁰ "Achaemenid kings, while appreciating the advantages of Zoroaster's teachings as a new established religion, nevertheless did not reject the cults of the ancient tribal gods."²¹ The Achaemenids were not staunch in religious outlook.²² Racial groups were allowed to retain their own religions. The lack of dogmatic religions in the Achaemenid Empire permitted the different faiths and sects to flourish side by side without rivalry. Pierre Arniot notes that "confident of Mazda's supremacy, the Achaemenids were content to allow subject peoples to follow their own lesser gods, and many cross-bred cults grew up around alien deities and figures of folk religion."²³ The Achaemenids none the less worshipped Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek and other alien gods.

On the Indian side, multiplicity of religious ways and divergent and challenging philosophical thoughts existed and flourished side by side, even before the advent of urban civilization. Acceptance of diverse faiths was well settled. As believed by many scholars, there was certain difference of opinion regarding certain gods in the Avesta and the Vedas; yet it hardly affected the cultural dialogue between the two cultures. The great Ashoka beseeched people to be bahu- sutras, and to respect and talk high about the faith of the others in order to earn more respect for one's own faith. Here, again, we find a convergence of the Indian and Iranian ethical sensibility and human sensitivity.

Constructive Transactions and Cultural Creations

Transactions between Iran and India did not stop in the periods of history following the decline of the Maurya Empire. The Sakas, Parthians (Pahlavas) and the Kushanas were carriers of Persian influence to India. Bactria was the gateway to India situated south of Sogdiana, at the northwestern tip of the Indian sub-continent across the Hindukush range where the River Oxus flowed. Bactria comprised of a mixed population of Persian, Ionian and Greek migrants since the days of the Achaemenid Empire. It was a satrapy of the Persian kings. South of Bactria and separated by the Hindukush, was the region of Drangiana near Lake Hamun or Zareh, as Justin referred²⁴, between Aria, Gedrosia, Arachosia and desert of eastern Persia. It sometimes included the neighbouring region of Seistan in its political boundaries. It was a heaven for the Scythians or Sakas who were uprooted and pushed by the Central Asian tribes further north or north-east. There were Sakas in Bactria and some in Drangiana/Seistan, and they shed the ways of their fierce ancestors, during their sojourn in the region.²⁵

The Scythian pride persisted in the temperament of the incumbents from Sakadvipa. Rulers belonging to the Karddamaka house remembered their Persian antecedents and with the use of "dama" (dama or danian) in their names, e.g., Jaya-darna, Rudra-dama, Dama-jada-sri, Bhartr-daman and many others, remembered "the Karddama river in the realm of Persians"²⁶ where they possibly belonged. Such longing is explicit in the famous Lion Capital Inscription at Mathura that tributes to the entire Sakasthana.

The Sakas were the carriers of Persian influence to India.²⁷ While in Persia, the Sakas had got acquainted with symbols of imperial power namely, the epithets, royal coinage, edicts and proclamations, the courts, and the regal attributes like sceptre, crown²⁸ and the royal throne. They preferred to develop the prestige of these paraphernalia of sovereignty, and particularly of 'the seat of power' or the simhdsana (throne) and to occupy it was privilege of king. The Sakas brought to India a new administrative system that they adopted from Persia.²⁹

Ancient Indian kings like Emperor Asoka and Kharavela had devised a policy of public welfare, including providing water to the people. The Sakas who came to India must have known the Persian and Bactrian water management during their sojourn in those regions. Later on, they could apply this skill for larger benefit. King Rudradaman's epigraph praised the hydraulic masonry work (constructed by Yavanardja Tushaspa, who is believed to be a Persian noble) as "rdjdnurupakrta" or "constructed in a manner worthy of a king". The inscription tells about the artificial Sudarshana lake, initially built by Vaisya Pushyagupta, the riishtriya of Chandragupta Maurya, and later added with channels and

conduits by yavanardja Tushaspa, the governor of Surashtra under Asoka, Rudradaman spent a large sum of money from his treasury on the restoration and Pahlava Kulaipa's son, Amatyasa Suvisakha, the governor of whole Anarta and Surashtra, completed the work for the dharmakirti-yasha of his master. The involvement of foreign (Yavana/Pahlava) expertise in the engineering work is also explicit. The appreciation for Persian innovations and expertise grew in the receptive Indian minds with long-drawn opportunity for the interaction given by history to the two sides.

The closeness of India and Iran (Persia) during the medieval days is well known and for the sake of brevity need not be repeated here. Language, literature, poetry, arts, crafts, architecture, philosophy, court protocol, etiquettes, administrative offices and procedures, developed and enriched as the result of the interaction. Marvels like the Taj Mahal could be created.

The Present Day Necessity

Presently, "the incompatibility of modern civilization with our tradition-bound civilization is one of the most important causes of the crisis in our society."³⁰ The sense of insecurity not only connects to the dreaded 'erosion of culture, or its 'supplanting by Western traditions,³¹ but also to the professed 'inevitability of globalization'³² and 'western as the only model for our transformation'.

An eminent educationist has commented, that "globalization has brought about a certain kind of economic fundamentalism as an ideological fact across the world, economics has become a kind of theology, which is pretending to be a science."³³ A journalist opines that "the whole process of globalization has not only produced an elitist bias in our public discourse but it has also moved the standards of our own moral and ethical values and judgments away from our anchorage to those which we feel are in conformity with the West."³⁴

As a principle, "no single historical culture or civilization can lay claim to an absolute universality."³⁵ If there is a single goal for all civilization, it does not mean that all shall speak a common tongue or profess a common creed, or that all shall live under a single government or all shall follow an unchanging pattern in customs and manners. The unity of civilization is not to be sought in uniformity but in harmony. The faith of the future is in co-operation and not identification, in accommodation to fellowmen and not imitation of them, in toleration and not absolutism."³⁶ Former President of Iran, Mr. Seyyed Mohammad Khatami has commented on the situations in the present world. It can be best put in his own words: "All human beings are entitled to participate in the activities that will shape the world in the third

millennium. No nation should be left on the sidelines because of some philosophical, political or economic arguments. The world should be shaped by the massive cooperation of all human beings. Though this notion up to the early twentieth century sounded like a humanist motto, today it is a necessity for the continuation of human life.³⁷

Present times demand greater cooperation, mutual respect and closer interaction. Time is inappropriate for eulogising own past glories and criticising others imperfections; but still enough for weaving interdependence and knitting a mutual connectedness, as a safeguarding effort. We need stronger bonds than boundaries. Social integration is essential even across the boundaries in Asia. For creation of understanding we need to promote the learning of the each others languages and arts. The features that are common to us must be highlighted. Respect for each others identity is good but it shall be better if we give greater recognition to the commonness in our different identities. And the best will be our understanding of the fact that each identity is an evolutionary entity which has borrowed from others in its development and shall continue to borrow if it has to develop further and survive.

The Asian Shield

We have noted that the options open to us are mainly building immunity with the vitality provided by our own cultures.³⁸; moving forward with self-introspection and reforms, dismantling traditions on own models and providing adaptive thinking and higher goals to the society; or building concerted defence through closer cooperation in Asia. We will prefer to greater interaction in our society for building social bonds and create economic ties and interdependence. Not discussing the possibilities of the economic cooperation in Asia, we shall limit to the cultural issue only.³⁹

The trajectory of hybridization of culture or projection of each identity⁴⁰ cannot deliver the goods. If an Asian Shield is contemplated, it can be a composite one only, where each identity is important and visible, complementing the others, while the hybridization shall not be a deliberate or conscious policy, but an unhampered natural process. The Asian cooperation would rest upon this Asian identity. Surmounting the national identity, we must concern about the nascent Asian identity and for building this outlook we shall rely on writing a composite history for Asia. It shall neither advocate nor propagate any ideology nor should it glorify particular episodes and cultures. History for peace should reject exclusiveness and accept the mutual borrowings. Achievements should be considered the heritage of all and failures as defeat of humanity. Recognition to such a history should not be withheld nor denied nor objected. Identities are not drowned in a composite culture; they swim like fishes in the stream. The stream, the water, the fishes

and the vegetation, all shall be part of one scene. Wherever we differ, we must admit it as diversity. Diversity is natural to the world and does not negate equality. Wherever we can blend, or wherever we can harmoniously tolerate our differences, we can produce a composite culture.

Notes and References :

1. Chattopadhyaya wrote, "The similarities I have referred to between two religions are not only due to common heritage but also caused by the contiguity of the two countries, India and Iran, and a free movement of the peoples of the two countries, a point which is often overlooked in these studies." [italics ours] *Zoroastrian Religion* by Kshetresachandra Chattopadhyaya edited by R.S. Mishra and K.N. Mishra (BHU, Varanasi, 1979), pp. 2-3. See further, Abhay K. Singh, "Prophet Zarathustra, the Avesta and the Vedas-with special references to K.C.Chattopadhyaya's views" in "A Golden Chain of Civilizations: Indic, Semitic and Hellenic (from c. 600 BC to c. AD 600)" Vol. 1. Pt. 5, Section 1: Cultural Contacts and Movements, Edited by G.C. Pande (PHISPC, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, N. Delhi & MRML) 2012, pp. 229-48 [ISBN : 978-81-87586-55-5]
2. A scholar seeks the Avesta in the Avesta, and not Veda. Meanings of the Avestan words change in Sanskrit as well. [Avestan meregha (bird) = Sanskrit mrga (gazelle)]
3. Darmesteter James, *The Zend-Avesta, Part-I, The Sacred Books of the East (SBE), Vol. IV*, (OUP 1887MLBD, Delhi, 1980 reprint), Introduction, p. xxvii.
4. Darmesteter, op.cit., p. xxix.
5. "Tradition, as a rule, is wont to enforce the ideas of its own ages into the books of past ages. Tradition is always either new sense or nonsense The key to the Avesta is not the Pahlavi, but the Veda. The Avesta and the Veda are two echoes of one and the same voice, the reflex of one and the same thought: the Vedas, therefore, are both the best lexicon and the best commentary to the Avesta." [Darmesteter, op.cit., p. xxvi] "The Veda is not the past of the Avesta, as the Avesta is the past of tradition. The Avesta and the Veda are not derived from one another, but from one and the same original, diversely altered in each The Veda ... cannot help in discovery matters of fact in the Avesta, but only in explaining them when discovered by tradition ... " (Darmesteter, op.cit., p. xxviii.) .
6. The Indo Iranian religion had two general ideas at its base: that (a) there is a law in nature, and that (b) there is a war in nature. There was a "latent monotheism and an unconscious dualism" in the Indo Iranian religion, which faded away in the development of Indian thought "but Mazdeism lost in either of these two notions nor did it add a new one ... " ib id., lv ii -lix. See also, J.Darmesteter, 'The Supreme God in the Indo European Mythology' in *Contemporary Review*, Oct. 1879, p. 283.

7. Studies in Vedic Indian and Iranian Literature by Prof K. C. Chattopadhyaya" edited by V. N. Mishra (Agra, 1978) p. 124. For example, the monotheistic similarities between the Gathas and the Upanisads; resemblance of the P rajapati with Ahura Mazda; the theme of the conflict between the Good and the Evil in the scriptures on both sides; the concern for the protection for cattle in both religions. etc.

8. *ibid.*, p. 125.

9. *ibid.* p. 108. He cited the example from Brahma Parvan, Samba Akhyana of Bhavishya Purana about bringing of Maga priests from Svetadvipa (Iran) to help in the worship at the sun temple in Multan, by Samba.

10. "Historically, the idea of world conquest and the dominion of the 'four regions' or 'four quarters' originated with the rulers of Babylonia and Assyria. But this ambition was never realized by the lords of the Euphratean Valley to the extent to which it was realized by the Achaemenian Cyrus the Great of Persia. His son Cambyses added Egypt to the empire and Darius, son of Hystaspes the Achaemenian reconquered, enlarged and consolidated it." Chanda, Ramaprasad, "The Beginnings of Art in Eastern India with special reference to Sculptures in the Indian Museum, Calcutta", Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 30, 1927 (Reprint: Delhi, 1978). See further, Abhay K. Singh, "Iranian Empire: Indus to Mediterranean" in "A Golden Chain of Civilizations: Indic, Iranic, Semitic and Hellenic (from c. 600 Bc to c. AD 600)". Vol. I. Pt. 5, Section I: Cultural Contacts and Movements, Edited by G.c. Pande (PHISPC, Centre for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi & MRML) 2012, pp. 265-300; ISBN:978-81-87586-55-5

11. Chanda, *op.cit.*, p. 17. See further, Abhay Kumar Singh, "Persia: A Fountain of inspiration for Ancient Indian Kings" in Sinha, A.K. and Singh, A.K. (ed.) Dialogues between Cultures: India and Iran, (New Delhi, 2005), pp.102-120. (ISBN. 8179751201)

12. "The form of the government of the time of Cyrus was replaced by an administrative and fiscal organization which still respected national rights". Ghirshman, *op.cit.*, p.145. The institutional and infra- structural improvements were made to enhance efficiency; the policy innovations and reforms for consolidation of the empire. Establishment of communications and strategic capitals are the examples of the infrastructural developments while the revenue and religious policies may be cited under the reforms. Darius (I) introduced a legal code, improved communications, standardised weights and measures. He even planned a canal to facilitate trade.

13. Amiet, Pierre, "Persepolis", a chapter in Vanished Civilisations (Readers Digest, Sydney, 1988), pp. 140-45. There were 20 satrapies. p. 144. ,

14. Amiet, *op.cit.*, p.140

15. Wilber, Donald N., Iran: Past and Present (Princeton University Press, 1950) p. 21. See further, Abhay K. Singh, "Tackling Heterogeneity: Critique of the Achaemenid Policy of

Assimilation" in the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (65th Session, 2004), New Delhi, 2005-06; pp. 1009-1024.

16. Ghirshman, R., *Iran-From the earliest times to the Islamic conquest* (Penguin: Harmondsworth 1954, Reprint 1965) p. 144.

17. *ibid.*, p. 207

18. The rock inscriptions left by them were also different in nature from those put up by Asoka, since the two patrons differed in nature. While the inscriptions of Asoka show his personal involvement in the message,

the more recent inscriptions of the Western kshatrapas were, again, more close to the Persian stereotypes. Yet their contents are very different in certain major respects of diction and command from the Achaemenid ones.

19. This was borrowed into the Indian style, preparing a stereotype format comprising of a royal introduction; ancestry/dynastic connections; sovereignty's source; imperial territories; recount of the fulfilment of the royal duties; and biographical remarks. Patterns for chronology, genealogy, narration of events or exploits that were formulated, served as guides for the following periods of history. The influence of the 'eulogising part' of the inscription continued to dominate in coming times, when perfect eulogies were engraved. It was utilised in later epigraphs by talented scribes for praising their worthy patrons, e.g., like Samudragupta or Chalukya Pulakesin. See, Abhay K. Singh, "From King Darius to Rudradaman: An Epigraphical Journey" in A. K. Sinha and A. K. Singh (ed.), *Cultural Parallels: India and Iran*, (Anafnika, New Delhi) pp.153-169. (ISBN978-81-7975-174-9)

20. Wilber, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

21. Dandamayev in Harmatta, I., Puri, B.N., & Etemadi, G.F. (ed.): *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. II, (Delhi,)pp. 59-62. Zoroastrianism had not at that time become a dogmatic faith with rigid standards, and, naturally, various modifications of the new religion appeared. With this in mind, Achaemenid religion of the time of Darius I may be said to have been a form of early Zoroastrianism.

22. Wilber, *op.cit.*, p. 23,24. There was no temple at Persepolis, but that does not mean that there was no religion specially revered by the dynasty. The religion of the Achaemenids revolved around Ahura Mazda, the universal deity, obvious in the light of the sun and the purifying effect of fire. "Ahura Mazda ... the God of good, associated also with truth and light, and taught the immortality of the soul and the final judgement of humanity." Mazda remained the true light of the world, and his worship also played a key role in the Achaemenid's notion of government. The Achaemenids were the supreme people, just as Mazda was the supreme god.

23. Amiet, *op.cit.*, p. 143-4.

24. Justin referred to the Drangians as "lake dwellers". (Konow, Corpus, ii, 1, xxi-xxii). Isidore of Charax located Drangiana at Zarangiana, beyond Pura (Farah), and Sakasthan (Seistan) even farther beyond it. Herzfeld considered Sistan as Zrang. See, Raychaudhuri, H.C., Political History of Ancient India-from the accession of Parikshit to the extinction of the Gupta dynasty (University of Calcutta, 1972 edition) pp. 376 n. 2; P 377).
25. The Naksh-e-Rustam Inscription of Darius mentions the Saka Tigrakhauda-"wearers of pointed helmets", which were near the Jaxartes and the Saka Haumavarka-the Amyrgian Scythians possibly had earlier (900-800 BC) settled in Drangiana-Seistan region. Raychaudhuri, op.cit., p. 386 distinguished the "Sakas of Western Sakasthana (Sistan)".
26. H.C. Raychaudhuri notes: "The Karddama river may be identified with Zarafshan which flowed through the old Achaemenian Satrapy of Bactria or Balkh. The Uttarakianda of the Rdmdyana (Chs. 100 and 102) connects a line of Karddama kings with Bahli or Bahlika (IHQ, 1933, pp.33ff)." See, H.C.Raychaudhuri, op.cit. p.386 n. 3. For another view, see, LA, xii. 273. n.
27. The Sakas (Siihis) who came to "Surattha visaya" (Saurashtra in western India), were living in Seistan, under the authority of the Parthians; hence, more favourable to the Pahlavas. They arrived at the request of Jain monk Kalkacharya, reaching Ujjain in 62 BC. If we accept this date, the Western Sakas were earliest to occupy any seat of power within the Indian sub-continent. Definitely, they were rulers for almost three hundred years in Gujarat, Malwa and northern Maharashtra.
28. Rosenfield described their 'pointed caps' as 'helmets', so were made of metal. He also named them as 'crowns'; prototype of 'kirita-mukuta'. According to him there existed no exact parallels of these 'high ceremonial crowns' anywhere in the Near East except the female crowns at Hatra and Edessa.
29. The title Ksatrapa is a form of Kshatrapavan (= protector of kingdom) mentioned in the Behistun Inscription in Persia. Raychaudhuri op.cit., p. 392: "The Sakas introduced a political administration based on the kshatrapa system which they copied from the Parthians and which almost certainly implied a type of feudalism." Lohuizen de Leeuw, "Foreign Elements in Indian Culture Introduced during the Scythian Period with Special Reference to Mathura" in Srinivasan, Doris M. (ed) Mathura-The Cultural Heritage (American Institute of Indian Studies / Manohar, 1989) p. 74.
30. Mr. Seyed Mohammad Khatami, Islam, Dialogue and Civil Society, (JNU, New Delhi, 2003), p.79 It has been so diagnosed by the eminent statesman and former President of Iran, Mr. S. M. Khatami, and very well explained in his own words: "When a new civilization is created and the culture appropriate for it is entrenched, people who still carry around vestiges of the previous culture experience a contradiction when encountering a new civilization "
31. "Globalization is not the same as cultural homogenization there is a lot of cultural heterogeneity. As ideas and models moved from one place to other communities they were

life, namely as the householder in stage 2. Stage 1 is as a student living a simple life. Stage 3 is as a retired person offering voluntary community service to others. Stage 4 is as a renunciant, not necessarily abandoning the home today, but living a simple introverted life. Under such a lifestyle, only 25% of Indians at any given time (i.e. those in stage 2 as householders) would be consumerists."

39. Writes P resident K hatami, " Why not focus on the coming civilization, and adjust all transformations to fit that ideal. Such an ambitious plan requires that we critique both modernity and tradition." op. cit. .p. 86

40. "We have the paradoxical but still very important phenomenon: that globalization which supposedly unites people is coincident with the development of numerous kinds of often mutually conflicting identity politics all over the world." Sumit Sarkar in Vanaik, Achin (ed) Globalization and South Asia, Multidimensional Perspectives.

The similarities between Sikh and Persian Architecture

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Due to its rich soil and cultural heritage India has always been a source of foreign invasions, cultural ambassadors, poets, historians, painters and other curious travellers. These foreign interactions have always left a mark on our cultural fabric. One such undeniable association has been the Mughal Empire and its long period of rule in India. During their various political wars and other social obligations Mughal rulers sometimes took shelter in the vast and beautiful country of Iran and while returning back, they brought with them various architects, painters and other cultural ambassadors who left behind an undeniable mark on the fabric of Indian heritage.

During the Mughal reign, another religion that was flourishing outside any political influence was Sikhism. All ten Gurus lived during Mughal rule, in an era where Persian was the single most important cosmopolitan language. Anyone that hoped to be involved in the politics and poetics of the time needed to use Persian to communicate their aims. We know for sure that Guru Nanak Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh Sahib were fluent in Persian from their recorded wisdom in Persian, and we also see proof that Guru Arjan Sahib was a prolific Persian writer, who wrote numerous Persian *shabads* or hymns of wisdom in Guru Granth Sahib. There are further Persian *shabads* in Guru Granth Sahib that can be accredited to Bhagat Nam Dev, Bhagat Kabir, and Bhagat Farid. Since the time zone of these both was almost parallel, there can be seen some similarities between their architecture. To understand this similarity what better examples than the beautiful architecture of the sacred Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden temple) in Amritsar and the revered Imamzadeh Saleh shrine in Tehran.

The Sri Harmandir Sahib stands in the midst of a beautiful waterbody called Amritsar or *amrit sarovar*, from where the city derives its name. The shrine displays influences of different architectural styles, including Indo-Islamic Mughal architecture. The Harmandir Sahib is an open house of worship for all men and women, from all walks of life and faith. It has a square plan with four entrances with a circumambulation path around the pool. The complex is a collection of buildings around the sanctum and the pool. One of these is The *Akal Takht*, the chief center of religious authority of Sikhism. Additional buildings include various *Bungas* or Fortifications, different memorials marking historical events, a clock tower, a library the offices of Gurdwara Committee, a Museum

and a *langar* – a free Sikh community run kitchen that serves a simple vegetarian meal to all visitors without discrimination. Over 100,000 people visit the holy shrine daily for worship. The Gurdwara complex has been nominated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and its application is pending on the tentative list of UNESCO.

The Imamzadeh Saleh Shrine is one of the many Imamzadeh mosques in Iran and is one of the most popular Shia Muslim shrines in northern Tehran. The main mausoleum building includes a large rectangular building with thick walls and solid inner space of almost 5.6 square meters. In the year 700 AH Imam Zadeh Saleh there is an inscription that appears in the repair and alteration of entries has gone according to which the Kingdom of Ghazan Khan was at the same time. Imam Zadeh Saleh large wooden box inside the tomb probably belonged to the era of the late Safavid or Afsharid dynasties. Silver enshrine the eastern and north-eastern and western sides have netted enclosure is decorated with silver and wood lattice south side of the endowment of the late Mr. Mirza Saeed Khan, foreign minister late Qajar. The shrine is located on the north side entrance porch and the porch of the sanctuary, the tablet is rectangular adobe tile on its history in 1210 AH and the name of Fath-Ali Shah Qajar has been engraved on it.

In order to enter the outer *parikarma* or veranda of Sri Harmandir Sahib every individual has to cover their heads and wash their hands and feet. Once they are done with this, they come to the steps and they walk down a few steps to enter through a *deorhi* or an entrance gateway, through which one has to pass before reaching the shrine. The *deorhi* is an arch-like structure. The visitors get the first glimpse of the sanctum sanctorum or *Darbar* from the *deorhi*. This arch can also be seen when we enter the Imamzadeh Saleh shrine. These arches are visible at different points of importance within the shrines.

Similarities in the building do not end just at the entrance. Inside the Inner sanctorum of both buildings we can find an ambience of tranquillity and a soothing peace as we look and reflect towards God. The architecture aids that as we find carpets and chandeliers that add to the beauty and ambience of the place.

The roof of both, the mosque and the *Darbar* or Court of the Guru, has exquisite work.

A mixture of *Jaratkari*, a form of intricate in-lay work; *gach*, plaster-of-Paris work; *tukri* work; fresco-painting; and *pinjra*, lattice work are used for the decoration in and around Sri Harmandir Sahib. *Jaratkari* is a technique of studding semi-precious and coloured stones into marbles slabs. These slabs often have florid or geometrical borders which enclose delicate in-lay work using floral shapes and patterns. Beautiful designs are made on the walls with *gach* which is subsequently gilded. Excellent examples of this work can be seen in the Golden Temple at Amritsar. Sometimes, the *gach*-work is

rendered highly ornamental by means of coloured and mirrored cut-glass as well as semi-precious stones. This is called *tukri* (small piece) work.

Sikh architecture represents the last flicker of religious architecture in India. The Golden Temple at Amritsar is its most celebrated example as this is the only monument in which all the characteristics of the style are fully represented.

Although Sikh architecture undoubtedly originated with the idea of devotion, it underwent a certain transformation. Sikhs were given the mandate of being Saint Soldiers by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, due to which the architecture assumed the character of military fortification, in its later stages, which was reflected in a number of buildings throughout Punjab.

As a style of building-design, Sikh architecture might strike the lay onlooker as eclectic, a mixture of the best features picked up from here and there. But, it has more depth than meets the casual eye. While it shares Islam's stringent and uncompromising monotheism through austerity, it also celebrates its youthfulness and vitality with the playful polytheism of Hinduism. Eclecticism might have been its starting-point, but Sikh architecture has flourished to a state of artistic autonomy so as to work out its own stylistic idiosyncrasies. Inspired by Guru Nanak Sahib's creative outlook, Sikh architecture is a silent blend of humanism and spirituality.

Sikh architecture reflects a lively blend of Mughal and Rajput styles. Onion-shaped domes, multi-foil arches, paired pilasters, in-lay work frescoes, etc. undoubtedly follow from Mughal influence, more specifically of Emperor-Architect Shah Jehan's period, while oriel windows, bracket-supported eaves at the string-course, chhatris, richly-ornamented friezes, etc. are reminiscent of elements of Rajput architecture such as is seen in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, and other places in Rajasthan.

Use of water as an element of design has been frequently exploited in Mughal and Hindu architecture, but nowhere in so lively a manner as in Sikh architecture. Water becomes a *sine qua non* of Sikh building-design, as in the Golden Temple at a time and not merely an appendage to the main shrine. The gurdwara is placed lower down than the structures in the vicinity, unlike the masjid which are usually placed on raised platforms.

Thus, we can say that Iranian architecture displays great variety, both structural and aesthetic, from a variety of traditions and experience. Without sudden innovations, and despite the repeated trauma of invasions and cultural shocks, it has achieved "an individuality distinct from that of other Muslim countries". Its paramount virtues are: "a marked feeling for form and scale; structural inventiveness, especially

in vault and dome construction; a genius for decoration with a freedom and success not rivalled in any other architecture". On the other hand Sikh Architecture is a style of architecture that is characterized with values of progressiveness, exquisite intricacy, austere beauty and logical flowing lines. Due to its progressive style, it is constantly evolving into many newly developing branches with new contemporary styles. Although Sikh architecture was initially developed within Sikhism its style has been used in many non-religious buildings due to its beauty. 300 years ago, Sikh architecture was distinguished for its many curves and straight lines; Shri Kesgarh Sahib and the Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) are prime examples.

Reference:

1. S.S. Bhatti: *The Magnificence of Sikh Architecture*, The Tribune, 1999.
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4. Picture source: Internet

Tagore Response to Iranian Culture

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When Rabindranath Tagore arrived in Iran on 13 April 1932 India's contact with that ancient land was about two thousand and five hundred years old. The Indian poet was acquainted with this long history of his country's relations with ancient and medieval Iran and was now happy to have a chance to visit her as she was stepping into the modern world. He was no less aware of his people's ethnic affinities with the inhabitants of the host country. Barely two years before his travels in Iran he had said in his Hibbert Lectures delivered in Oxford in 1930 and published as *The Religion of Man* the following years that 'it has been a matter of supreme satisfaction to me to realize that the purification of faith which was the mission of the great teachers in both communities, in Persia and in India, followed a similar line.'

To the twentieth century India, however, medieval Iran or Islamic Iran was closer due to the circumstances of history, That Darius annexed the Indus Valley in the sixth century B.C. was not historically important for the modern Indian and the only known souvenir of that ancient conquest was the use of the word satrap, for centuries, the Persian title for a provincial governor. That the Kharoshthi script, a variety of Aramaic bore a Persian influence, that some of the rituals of the Maurya court had Magian elements or that there was a Persian prototype for the Sarnath capital would now interest only the archaeologist. But in the literature and art of medieval Iran our people found a living and continuing source of inspiration. M. Grousset, the French savant called the Taj Mahal 'the soul of Iran incarnated in the body of India'. And no less powerful was the influence of the poetry of Omar Khayyam, Sa'adi, Rumi and Hafiz. While it is possible to understand the most vital features of Indian mystical verse in terms of a native spiritual tradition, the influence of Persian sufism certainly gave it a new dimension.

So when Tagore visited Iran he knew, as Jawaharla Nehru said 14 years later in his book 'The Discovery of India', (1946) that 'few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout history than the people of India and the people of Iran.' The intimacies between the two countries in the realm of poetry were stressed by the leader of an Iranian Cultural Mission to India on the eve of our independence: 'The Iranians and Indians are like two brothers who, according to a Persian legend, had got separated from each other, one going east and the other to the west. Their families had forgotten all about each other

and the only thing that remained in common between them were the snatches of a few old tunes, which they still played on their flutes. It was through these tunes that, after a lapse of centuries, the two families recognised each other and were reunited. So also we come to India to play on our flutes our age-old songs so that, hearing them, our Indian cousins may recognise us as their own and become reunited with their Iranian cousins.

Perhaps what attracted both Tagore and Nehru in modern Iran was that its modernity was rooted in its great past. In his *Glimpses of World History* published two years after Tagore's visit to Iran, Nehru said that 'Iran's National revival is in the true Iranian tradition of two thousand years. It looks back to the early days, prior to Islam, of Iran's greatness, and tries to draw its inspiration from them.' Seventeen years later the distinguished French historian of Iran, R. Shirsman remarked: 'Modern Iran has once again adopted the outward forms of Western civilisation, but in spirit remains faithful to its native traditions.'

It was this regenerated Iran building up a great future on the foundation of great past, receiving a good deal from the West and yet ever revitalizing its Eastern identity which discovered in Tagore an ideal for a new Asia in a new world. The first expression of this view of new Iran about the Indian poet is a tribute to him from Rahim Zadeh Safavi on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. 'The fruit of the Western civilisation is fragrant and gaudy' Safavi said in his tribute published in the *Golden Book of Tagore* (1931) 'but in the taste of humanity it has no pleasing savour and some say it ruins the health. Eyes were anxiously looking in every direction and the human soul was in quest of its lost Beloved. All of a sudden, from the East, yes from the everlasting East rose the resplendent sun greeting our eyes. India once more sent her divine Poet herald out to the world.'

The sentiments of the people of Iran about the poet were conveyed to him by Foroughi, Minister of Foreign Affairs, in a message included in the *Golden Book of Tagore*. Soon after this the poet received an invitation to visit Iran. He recorded his impressions of Iran in two pieces of travelogue; *Parasyatra* (Trip to Persia) published in *Pravasi*, a Bengali magazine, in 1932 and *Parasyabhraman* (Travels in Persia) published in *Vichitra*, another Bengali magazine, the same year. A slightly abridged version of these two pieces was included in his book *Japane Parasye* (In Japan and Persia) in 1936. In 1963, the same version was issued as a separate book entitled *Parsya-yatri* (Journey to Iran) which gives in an appendix the portion of the original articles published in the two magazines and all addresses of welcome and the poet's replies which were in English. It also includes a picture of Tagore in Tehran on his birthday, and at the graves of Sa'adi and Hafiz in Shiraz, a facsimile of a poem composed by him in reply to an address presented to him on

the occasion of his seventy-first birthday celebrated in Tehran and a facsimile of the first page of the manuscript of the travelogue. English versions of the first and third chapter of the travelogue were published in the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly* as 'Journey to Persia' in 1937 and its second chapter appeared in *The Modern Review* as 'Asia's Response to the Call of the New Age' in 1932.

Arriving in Bushahr the poet realized that the Iranians were treating him as both an ethnic and spiritual kinsman. 'My relations with the Iranians have a speciality' he says in his travel-diary. 'First, I am an Indo-Aryan. The Iranians have been proud of their Aryan blood since ancient times and the feeling seems to be the stronger today. Secondly, it is believed that my poetry has affinities with Persian sufism.' In Bushahr where the poet stayed for two days there was a reception in his honour at which the governor of the province welcomed him as a 'representative of the descendants of the Indo-Iranian people and the symbol of whatever is beautiful and noble in the genius of the East'. 'The visit of Tagore to our country' said the governor in his address 'is significant as expression of liberal India's sensitive response to our intellectual achievement and her respect for our literature.' The governor also stressed the traditional bond between the two countries in philosophy, art and poetry and said that this bond would now be strengthened. In his reply the poet said that had he 'not visited Iran his life's pilgrimage would have been incomplete.' At a banquet in honour of the poet the governor called the poet the 'brightest star in the sky of the East which has cast its light on the whole world.'

Tagore had an occasion to express his thoughts on Persian poetry in reply to an address presented to him by the members of the Chamber of Commerce in that city. 'Persia's introduction came to me when I was a boy' the poet said. 'It was that of the ideal Persia, the Persia of the poets, the Persia which sends her welcome in songs to strangers across all barriers of geography. My father was intoxicated with Hafiz's verses. When I was a boy, I often used to listen to his recitation of those poems, and he translated them to me with a fervour of enjoyment that touched my heart. The vision of Persia was invoked in my imagination by the voice of our own poets who brought to my mind's sky the breath of your spring breeze with the enchantment of its blossoming roses and nightingale's songs. My arrival in your land today is therefore a continuation of the same enchantment and I am glad to mingle my voice with the rejoicing of life which has broken out in the air of your beautiful country fragrant with the perfume of orange blossoms. It brings to my mind once again how my father to the end of his days derived deep consolation from your poet's songs assimilating them in his devotional life.'

A very curious thing happened when the poet visited the grave of Hafiz in Shiraz. A large volume of Hafiz's poems was brought to the poet and he was asked to wish some thing

and then open it, the tradition being this that the page at which it was opened would indicate how the wish would be fulfilled. The poem on one of the two sides read: 'The gates of Heaven will open and with it the knots of all our problems. Can this be true? If due to our vain priests who only pretend to be religious they do not open after all, have faith in God who will open them. The poet was deeply touched by this fortuitous event, which reminded him, as he says in his travelogue, of the frowns of fanatic orthodoxy in his own country.

On 23rd April the poet arrived in Isfahan where he was received by its citizens at a very largely attended meeting. Amongst the guests was a village poet who presented to the poet this poem of his, composed for the occasion. The caravans of India always carry sugar, but this time it has the perfume of the muse. O caravan, please stop your march, because burning hearts are following these like the butterflies which burn a round the flame of candles.

O zephyr, softly blow and whisper on the tomb of Sa'adi. Thereupon in joy Sa'adi will come to life in his tomb. Tagore, he is the unique, the philosopher who knows what is past and what the future holds. Let his arrival be blessed and fortunate in the land of the great Cyrus, an august descendant of who today fortunately wear's the crown of Persia.' The poet reflected on Iran's genius for preserving its unity and its soul through the ages. 'It is a wonder' he writes in his travel- diary, 'that Persia has been attacked by the Arabs, the Turks, the Moguls, the Afghans and yet its soul has ever expressed itself in its true identity. The main reason of this seems to be this that the unity of the people has only been strengthened by their successive rulers, Achaemenian, Sassanian and Safavi. The inner unity of the nation is particularly reflected in the history of its architecture. In the architecture and sculpture of the Achaemenian period there is the influence of Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian art. Actually the palaces of those days were the work of artisans from different parts of vast empire. But the soul of Persia gave unity to all those diverse influences." the poet then quotes the words of Roger Fry on the character of Persian art' This extreme adaptability is, I think, a constant trait in Persian art. We tend, perhaps to exaggerate the importance or originality in art. we admire in it the expression of an independent and self contained people, forgetting that originality may arise from a want of flexibility in the artist's make-up as well as from a new imaginative outlook In his reply to an address of welcome presented to him in Isfahan by its Municipality on April 27 the poet said that when his friend Mr. Dinshaw conveyed about an invitation to him to visit Iran, he thought it was in keeping with the tradition of the East when the Emperors represented the humanity of their nation and accepted their duty to establish

communications with foreign lands. The revival of this spirit in modern Iran has given me a new hope for Asia.'

On May 6 the scholars and writers of Tehran celebrated the poet's seventy first birthday at a very impressive function. The poet composed a poem to mark the occasion and it is included in the appendix to his book *verse called parihesh* as included in the fifteenth Volume of his complete works.

Iran all the roses in the garden and all their lower birds have acclaimed the birthday of the poet of a far- away shore and mingled their voices in a poem of rejoicing. Iran, thy brave sons have brought their priceless gifts of friendship. For they have known him in their hearts and their own. Iran, crowned with a new glory by the honour from thy hand this birthday of the poet of far-away shore. On this birthday of the poet of a far- away shore, finds its fulfillment.

And in return I bind this wreath of my verse on thy forehead, and cry: Victory to Iran.

On May 9 Tagore spoke at the Tehran Literary society giving his impressions of his travel in the country. 'I had some knowledge of Persia even before my coming. I had read something of your history and geography, and formed some idea of your people and your country. My imagination was aroused though your great poets whose call had come to me even though I had no direct access to them. I used to dream of Persia where bulbul made love to the roses, where in dreamland gardens poets sat round their wine cups and invoked visions of ineffable meaning. But now that I have come to your country my dream has been formed into a concrete image. The past age of Persia lent the World perfume of its own sunny hours or spring to the morning of that day and the silent voice of your ancient poet filled the silence in the heart of the poet of Modern India'.

On May 13 the eve of his departure from Iran, the poet summed up his impressions of modern Iran in a statement to a Danish journalist In Baghdad: 'Persia has been a great inspiration to me. The whole country is marching on a head very fast, Persia is being unified; baffling customs and superstitions ruthlessly eliminated; her educational and social foundations are being securely established on same healthy nationalism which is in harmony with the modern age Deeply touched by Tagore's admiration for the culture of Iran the government of Iran promised to endow a Chair for Persian in Visva- Bharti and conveying that decision to the poet the Iranian Foreign Minister wrote: 'Cultural and spiritual bonds have been in existence between Iran and India from very ancient days; but your visit to this land has renewed and strengthened these already existing bonds, which will be of mutual benefit for both countries.' Tagore gratefully accepted the gift and said

in a letter to the Foreign Minister that 'it was only worthy of the greatness of your nation and a most hopeful sign of the revival in Asia of the munificent spirit of her past.'

When the first incumbent of this Chair of Persian Culture in Visva- Bharti arrived in Santiniketan in January 1933 Tagore said in an address of welcome that 'in different chapters of our history India has communed with your' culture; through art and literature and philosophy we have built up a comradeship of civilization. These were the golden days of Asia's well expression, when in spite of barriers of language and distance her neighboring continents carried on a commerce of the spirit: rich in the wealth of realization, of wisdom garnered from many fields of effort and achievement.

Tagore's view of the Westernization of modern Iran is stated in the course of a conversation with a member of the Iranian Parliament published in *New Asia* in 1947. When this member of Parliament asked him about Iranian music he said that although he did not quite understand some of its features which should influence the west he would welcome such influence because Iran had a wonderful gift for assimilating influences from outside and coming out more fully with the expression of your own unique culture. In music, too you are sure to gain by European influence. But there was disagreement with a Member of the Parliament regarding how far Iran should be Americanized. The Member of Parliament said that he was one of those who believe that Persia should assimilate 100 percent of American culture. The poet observed 'when you speak of hundred percent Americanization you must remember that America herself is faced today with an imminent crisis and has yet to achieve a stability which will prove the soundness of her social and political machinery.'

Now more than forty years after Tagore's visit to Iran, his response to her culture deserves our attention as a very significant aspect of our relations with the rest of Asia. The Asian awakening in the first two decades of this century, in so far as India has a share in it, was, by and large, the result of the Japanese victory over the Russians in the war between the two countries in 1905.

That victory gave us a new self-confidence and encouraged us to believe in the possibility of throwing out our white colonial masters. On the cultural side, our interest was concentrated on South East-Asia and we were particularly happy about archeological searches in our country and abroad, "which stressed the influence of our culture on the Far East. Obviously, this was due to our colonial situation which prompted us to exalt our past if only to neutralize the ignominy of our present. We were irresponsive to the culture of the Middle East although historically we were so close to it.

The influence of the Perso-Arabic words was certainly profounder and more pervasive on our life and letters than the influence of China or Japan. In Bengali about two thousand and five hundred words are derived from Persia which was the language of our administration till 1838. But the educated Bengali would know more of what India gave to Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, China and Japan than of what she received from Iran. It is not unlikely that this indifference is mainly due to the communal situation in the country. The significance of Tagore's response to the culture of Iran is that it is the first instance of a serious attention to the culture of the Middle East in modern India. And it is a response which is not in the least warped by any sense of culture chauvinism or intellectual snobbishness. And it seems so important to remember that just ten years before Tagore's tribute to the work of Iran in the regeneration of Asia, C.R. Das had spoken of a 'Great Asiatic Federation' in his presidential address at the thirty-seventh session of the Indian National Congress held in Gaya in 1922. At the next session of the Congress Maulana Mohammed Ali suggested the organization of an Eastern Federation. Sarojini Naidu, Srinivasa Aiyenger and M.A. Ansari in their presidential addresses at the annual sessions of the Congress in 1925, 1926 and 1927 respectively stressed the need for Asian Unity and in 1929, only three years before Tagore's visit to Iran, Nehru spoke of an Asian federation in his historic address at the Karachi session of the Congress. 'If India has a message to give to the world' he said 'she has alone to receive and learn much more from the message of other peoples.'

Perhaps we have not given much evidence of such receptivity except that we have a flair for imitating the West. And even when we are inclined to turn to our Asian neighbors we turn more towards South East Asia than towards the West Asia or the Middle East. M.A. Ansari said in his presidential address I have mentioned that 'Fortunately we are so placed that a part of our population has cultural affinities with countries in the West of Asia while another has a similar relationship with countries living in the East of the continent. 'But this may not be really a good fortune for us. A nation's cultural relations with foreign countries should have the unity which it wishes to realize in its own culture. It would be fatal to imagine that only our Muslims can be interested in the culture of Iran while Hindu India alone can be interested in the culture of South-East Asia. I fear this kind of division of intellectual interests smogify, and to re-transmit.

This is what Tagore repeatedly affirms in his book on Iran. In a more recent work *The Cambridge History of Islam* published in 1970 Professor E. Yarshater stresses the Iranian respect for tradition even in change which prompted the princes of the Samanid dynasty to receive or encourage 'many old Persian customs' to give expression to the widespread of not always vocal, desire of many Persians for a distinct national identity. This again is

what Tagore mentions with great force in his travelogue. Sixteen years before Tagore's visit to Iran Sir Jadunath Sarkar wrote in his History of Aurangzeb that 'The Persian have been rightly called the Frenchmen of the East', their country has been the springhead of culture, thought, and fashion of the entire Islamic world. 'Tagore look upon that country as the home of a culture which was of universal interest. If now more than thirty years after the poet's death, we feel the need for a new intellectual basis for our cultural relations with Iran we will find it in what he said about that country in his Journey to Persia.

Indo-Iran Relations through Shahnameh

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It has rightly been said that India and Iran enjoyed friendly relations from time immemorial. Shahnameh (King Book or Book of Kings) of Firdausi (d. 416 /11025-25) the national book of the Iranians, is a testimony to it. Actually speaking, the voluminous Shahnameh is the only ancient detailed and illustrative account available at present about the Indo-Iran relations in different fields, particularly in cultural sphere.

Shahnameh, it should be pointed out at the outset, is not pure history. History writing, as is well known, is an art of comparatively recent origin. It has its own prescribed criterion. Since Shahnameh does not strictly fulfill this criterion, so it is regarded as an admixture of history, as it was known at that time, mythology, folk lore and traditions. At present the authenticity or otherwise of its contents, is not to be investigated. An attempt is being made to summarise what Firdausi has said about India on the basis of the established socio-cultural traditions prevalent among the Iranians of his time i.e. 10th century A. D. Most of the material presented by Firdausi, almost one thousand years ago in his Shahnameh, was as Firdausi puts it, preserved in the minds of Dehqans (elders, scholars,) who used to narrate it to the people. A part of it was also recorded in sources in Pahlavi language. On the basis of these records and traditions, the following works similar to Shahnameh, were produced before it, which are supposed to be among the sources of Firdausi:

1. Shahnameh or better known as Shahnameh-e- Bozorg by Abul Moua'id Balkhi.
2. Shahnameh by Abu Ali Mohammad bin Ahmad Balkhi.
3. Shahnameh-e-Abu Mansur in prose
4. Gashtasp Nameh by Daqiqi in verse form which was included by Firdausi in his Shahnameh.

Firdausi has further developed these already existing ancient traditions and narrated them in inimitable style, vigorous expression and beautiful Persian language.

Firdausi has referred to a number of countries and people in Shahnameh which had contacts with Iran in one way or the other, since ancient times. Egypt, Byzantine, Turan,

China, Kabul, India etc. are among those countries which were in perpetual contact with Iran through the ages. It is, however, to be noted that Firdausi has described more about India, its so called political and socio-cultural history than any other country referred to in Shahnameh. It again shows that the Iranian knew India and its people more than any other country.

It is gleaned from Shahnameh that the Indian sub-continent was a prosperous region. It was politically and culturally a force to reckon with. It was divided into various parts ruled by a number of monarchs of different dynasties. Kannauj, Kashmir, Sindh were important centres of political power. Among them, Kannauj was more powerful politically and culturally. Almost all of these rulers were in constant touch with the Iranian or Turanian establishments. Battles were fought; envoys were exchanged; trade was taking place between the two countries, games were exchanged, religious debates took place, offerings from both sides at court level were made, marriages between the royal families were solemnised, scholars, artists and artisans were exchanged; Indian philosophers particularly Brahmins were respected by Iranians for their immense scholarship. Indian astronomers and astrologers were in great demand in Iran particularly among the ruling class; Indian and Iranian rulers and their officers visited each other's country; swords, incense, and bells were among the Indian products generally used by the Iranians.

The following is a brief account of all these activities as described in Shahnameh:¹

Siyaush son of Kaikaus of Kayani dynasty of Iran once led his army in battle against Afrasiyab, the Turanian king. In this battle troops from Hind (India) reinforced the army of Siyaush.

Peeran, the wise Sipehsalar of Afrasiyab, was sent to India to extract tribute from India where he also fought a war. When Siyaush was executed, Rustam, for taking revenge of this unfortunate incident, mobilised his army which included soldiers from Kashmir. Faramarz, son of Rustam, was once made in charge of a grand army to liberate the entire land from Kargah to Hindustan and from Kashmir to Jadustan. At this time also Faramarz's army consisted of contingents from Kashmir.

There is a comparatively long description of a war between the Iranians and the Turanians in which the Indians fought along with Peeran. Here Firdausi, for the first time, gives the name of the Indian ruler as Shangal, the king of Kannauj. Peeran addresses him "O ye noble from India who rules over the land from Sharvan to Sindh. You aided yesterday to bring soldiers from all directions and after eliminating Iranian knights would, challenge Rustam and finally knock him down". Shangal again pledged to do the

same. The description of the arrangement of the army by Shangal is interesting and informative for it reveals the Indian system of warfare as known to Firdausi and his contemporaries. Shangal divided his army in three divisions. One division consisted of war elephants with columns of soldiers extending over two miles. The elephant Drivers wore multi- coloured headwear embellished with cornets and earrings. Gold necklaces adorned their necks and golden belts girdled their waists. The elephant backs were covered with Chinese silk cloth. A golden throne cum haudah was placed on a white elephant. Shangal ordered the beating of war drums. He then went into the open space between the two armies with an Indian sword in his hand. An Indian umbrella was held over his head. He called Rustam as a Segzi man which enraged Rustam. After abusing Shangal, in the ensuing encounter, Rustam lifted Shangal up from the saddle and flung him to the ground. The Turanians rushed to his rescue and carried him away to safety.

Afterwards Rustam waged successful campaigns in India. Kai Khusrau ruled over some parts of India.

Afrasiyab for saving himself from the Iranians, was once instructed to take refuge at Behishtgang where wise men from India and Byzantine were staying. Behishtgang and Gangdesh in Shahnameh obviously refer to some places in India. It should be mentioned here that the names of a number of persons and places of India referred to by Firdausi have yet to be recognised. If located, they may add to the authenticity of Firdausi's account. Lohrasp, a Kayani king, sent emissaries to some prosperous countries including India. Wise men and skilled artisans from India also flocked to the court of this king.

When Goshtasp, son of Lohrasp, sat on the throne, he ordered a fire to be lighted and Indian incense was burnt in it. Indian rulers sent offerings to Goshtasp.

Aspandiyar, a great warrior and son of Goshtasp, travelled all over India to propagate Zoroastrian faith. Coming to know about his faith and being convinced of it, the rulers of India accepted his ways and conventions. It is further interesting to note that Firdausi informs that these rulers burnt all the idols and lit fire in their places to demolish the very convention of idol worship.

Great men of Hindustan used to talk about the exploits of Rustam, the Iranian national hero. In the battle between Faramarz and the king of Kabul, a great number of notable Indians were killed. The relations between Iran and India continued when Darab (Dara or Darius the III) sat on the throne. It was he who invited experienced Indian engineers to dig a canal that would carry the water to every province. Darab, on being defeated by Alexander, wrote a letter to Foor (Porus) of India for help. It should be pointed out that the details given by Firdausi about Alexander and his expeditions in India

are not only interesting, revealing and detailed, but hardly found in the Indian sources of that time. In view of the comprehensive account of Alexander's Indian expeditions, it can be assumed that a record of them was available to Firdausi. Successors of Alexander ruled over Iran for nearly eighty years. It is possible that the account of Alexander's exploits in India was maintained by these successors of his and the same, in some form or the other, was available to the Iranians.

The account of Alexander's Indian campaigns in *Shahnameh* as referred to earlier, is important because of the scarcity of such material in Indian sources. Hence it is being reproduced here in brief:

While returning from China, Alexander marched from Chagran to Sindh. The horsemen of Sindh welcomed him for they were dissatisfied with Foor. The ruler of Sindh at that time was one named Bandava, an exalted and reputed horseman.

Alexander then approached a city in India called Milad ruled by Kaid. Before attacking the city, he wrote a letter to Kaid asking him to surrender. Kaid, in response to this letter, sent an epistle offering the following four things which were unknown to the world:

1. A daughter, Fughestan, on seeing whose face the sun will become dark. The odour of milk emanates from her two lips. On seeing her erect stature the cypress becomes curved. She scatters pearls while talking. Her wisdom transcends the beauty of her appearance and countenance. Her expression nourishes wisdom. She is Godly and possesses a modest mind free from excesses of any kind.
2. A cup which, if filled with water or wine, does not get emptied even if the material therein is consumed for ten years by a number of people. Its level also does not decrease by drinking.
3. A physician who is able to diagnose the disease on seeing the tears of the eyes. His association with the court will save the king from disease.
4. A philosopher who can predict to the king all that is going to happen from the revolution of the sun and shining of the moon.

Alexander, on receiving the letter from the Indian king, selected a few men from among the Byzantines known for their wisdom, knowledge and non-violent nature. He sent them to see these four things. They saw all the four objects and were bewildered seeing the beauty charm and radiant face of the daughter of the king. The Indian king handed over all the four things to these officials to be taken to Alexander.

The king selected everything that was most appropriate to send with his daughter (as dowry) to Alexander. Ten camels were laden only with denars (gold coins). One hundred camels were laden with dirams (silver coin). Three hundred camels were laden with cloth and royal pearls. An imposing howdah was made out of fragrant wood covered with gold and jewels. Thrones were mounted upon ten elephants. A saddle was put upon the most imposing elephant. Along with these commodities, Fughestan, the Indian princess departed along with the Byzantine officials with tears in her eyes.

Alexander tested the philosopher, the physician and the cup sent by king of India and found them as unique and worthy as claimed by the king and so demanded nothing further from him. Alexander then marched towards Foor (Porus) and wrote him a letter to surrender to which Foor did not agree. On the contrary, Foor admonished him that: your inner mind is like the Satan's rust. Do not sow seeds of meanness in the world. Be afraid of Nemesis and evil reaction of the times. I have sought to reform you by embellishing your mind with wisdom. In the ensuing battle the interesting detail of which has been given by Firdausi, Foor, with mountain like body mounted on a dragon, was finally killed in the battlefield. Alexander then handed over the throne to one named Suvorg to rule over India.

Alexander also goes to the land of Brahmins and holds a lengthy and useful dialogue with them about their contribution to the welfare of the world. The Brahmins explain the transitory nature of this world and need for its renunciation. Alexander was satisfied with this discussion with Brahmins and so offered many gifts to them, but none took anything for they were free of avarice.

The devastating expeditions of Alexander in Iran and India did not deter the people of these two countries from re-establishing their age old friendly relations.

Ardshir (224- 241 AD), the founder of the Sassanian kingdom, had friendly relations with Kaid of India who was also a wise man. Ardshir consulted him about the future of his monarchy. Yazdgard, another Sassanian ruler, sent deputations to India and Bahram Gur came in disguise as an envoy to the court of Shangal, the Indian ruler.

What Bahram saw in India and particularly in the palace and court of Shangal is again revealing about the social and cultural conditions of India at that time. When Bahram approached Shangal's palace, he saw the door and curtain of his court and the palace was a magnificent structure well guarded with weapons and accessories. Horsemen and elephants were stationed at the entrance. The noise made by the clanging of symbols and ringing of bells rent the air. Bahram, himself a king of a prosperous country, was amazed at the appearance of the court. He informed the door keeper: "I am the envoy of the

victorious Bahram". The master of ceremonies of the court immediately contacted the king who ordered the curtain to be lifted and had Bahram the envoy escorted with honour to the presence of the king. Bahram walked in gracefully. He saw a room whose ceiling was made of crystal. As he came nearer to Shangal, Shangal sat down on the throne wearing the crown. The base of the throne was made of gold and crystal. Shangal was wearing trousers made of silver and gold inlaid with numerous pearls. Shangal's brother was sitting at the foot of the throne wearing a jewelled coronet. Shangal's adviser was sitting next to him and the king's son was standing in front of the throne. Shangal ordered a golden chair to be put at the foot of the throne for the Iranian envoy to sit.

After knowing the identity of Bahram, Shangal married his daughter to Bahram who took her to Iran. Afterwards Shangal paid a visit to Iran along with the rulers of Kabul, Sindh, Sandal, Kashmir and Multan.

It is interesting to note that, according to Firdausi, Iran and India exchanged epistles in their own languages. Obviously, therefore, those conversant with Pahlavi were present in Hindustan and those well versed in Indian languages were available in Iran. Shangal, because of the close family relations with the Iranian royal family, gave Sapinu the right over India. This farman was written in Indian language on silk. It was Shangal who sent ten thousand Lories (singers) both male and female who were expert in their art. In Iran they were provided with a bullock and a nass to be engaged in cultivation of land. Nushirawan came to India and stayed here for sometime. Indian traders used to visit Iran to sell Indian products. The Iranians were supposed to be so close to India, its culture and religion that once Qaiser-e-Rum asked Kharrad son of Burzeen: "What is the status of a Hindu as far as his religion is concerned. Whatever they may worship, are they really idol worshipers or what are they, themselves, essentially? Kharrad explained: "In India, the cow and the moon are the rulers. They do not turn towards God nor the revolving heavens. None of them has any love for body. They do not turn away from the revolving sun and do not regard people like us as learned. Everyone of them who lights the fire plunges into it to burn himself. They believe that there is a fire in the atmosphere by the command of the all ruling God, which the learned men of India call by the name of Ether. They give description of it with their eloquent tongue in a pleasant manner, saying that the earthly fire merges with the fire above, thus burning away all their sins. Hence they think it right to light fire and burn their bodies in it."

An account of the Indian game chess (shatranj) given by Firdausi is too detailed to be found in Indian documents of that period. It should be pointed out that there are some sources in Arabic, Sanskrit and Pahlavi on shatranj but the modern historians still refer to Shahnameh in connection with shatranj which means that Shahnameh is indispensable in

this regard. Since the information furnished by Firdausi about shatranj throws more light on its history, a summary of the same is given here.

An Indian envoy from Kannauj to the court of Anushirawan presented the game of chess alongwith other offerings like elephants, umbrella horsemen from Sindh, rubies, diamonds, Indian swords sheathed in jewelled scabbards and some other products of Kannauj.

In the preparation of the chess board a considerable ingenuity was spent. The envoy conveyed the Raja's message in Indian language to say:

“Tell the wise men of your court to discover the fine points of this game. If they succeed in this task and are able to surpass those who already know this game, I shall send with pleasure to you whatever tribute is demanded or otherwise tribute should not be demanded from this land.”

Anushirawan asked Buzarjmehr, his wise minister, to unravel the mystery of this game. He, after a prolonged endeavour, was able to unravel the nature of the game and informed the king accordingly. The king informed the Indian envoy that the solution to this fine game has been found which amazed the Indian envoy. As a return gesture, Buzarjmehr invented the game of backgammon (Nard) and brought it to the court of the Raja of Kannauj. The Indians could not understand this Iranian game. Buzarjmehr, therefore, explained it to the Raja and his courtiers.

Firdausi, apart from it, has also described the story of the invention of chess which was narrated by an old man named Shahu that: there was a king in India named Jamhoor more famous than Foor (Poras). He was wise, alert and enlightened. His capital was Sandal. His wife was also equally wise, intelligent, skillful, learned and peace loving. She gave birth to a son by Jamhoor who was named Gav. Jamhoor died after sometime and his wife married Jamhoor's brother named Mai who also sat on the throne of Sandal. The queen gave birth to another son by Mai who was named Talhand. At this time Gav was seven years old. Mai also died after a lapse of some time and so the queen sat on the throne to be handed over to the elder son Gav when he reaches puberty. When the time to succeed to the throne approached, both these step brothers differed on the question of succession to the throne and hence there was a war in between the two. Talhand was killed in the battle which grieved the queen. Gav with the help of his advisers invented the chess board to explain the movements of the armies to his mother to show that he never intended to kill his brother.

Firdausi has given a detailed and vivid descriptions of chess in not less than 10 pages

which shows the deep interest of the Iranians in this game of India. It should also be pointed out here that there is a treatise in Pahlavi entitled *chaturang Namek* on chess which may be one of the sources of Firdausi.

Firdausi also refers to another historic event in the annals of Indo-Iran relations. It is the translation of *Panchatantra*, one of the Indian Classics, into Pahlavi by Burzuy, the physician of Anushirwan's court.

Burzuy once intimated Anushirawan about his going through a chronicle of the Hindus and coming across an account of a herb in the mountains of India which, if collected under guidance and compounded with the required knowledge, when sprinkled upon a dead man, he starts speaking. Anushirawan permitted Burzuy to visit India with a companion and innumerable gifts including Byzantine silk which the Hindus wore.

Burzuy came to India and embarked on exploring the herb with the co-operation of the learned physicians of India but to no avail. Ultimately another wise man of India, when contacted by Burzuy, told him "We also came across that reference and then investigated it. I shall narrate now our findings. The enlightened mind should realise the significance of what they have heard. The herb is to be regarded as the learned man and knowledge as the mountain which remains far away from the gaze of men throughout the year. The dead body is like an ignorant which remains unhappy everywhere. A man, undoubtedly, remains full of life with knowledge. Blessed is the painstaking persevering man. When a man becomes helpless due to ignorance, the herb is like *kalileh* and knowledge like the mountain. It is a book which guides you to knowledge".

You will find this book in the royal treasury. The king, however, showed the book to Burzuy and permitted him to study it in his presence and not to copy it. Burzuy used to read daily only that much part which he could memorise and translate the same at his residence regularly. Thus he brought the book to his country.

This account of India and the political and cultural relation between India and Iran, the two ancient countries, given by Firdousi in his *Shahnameh* is both interesting and important. As referred to earlier, *Shahnameh* is not strictly a book of history. Hence, this account is yet to be corroborated by other such sources which can be relied upon historically. However, till such verification is not forthcoming, Firdousi's account deserves to be regarded as a basic source for the concerned subject.

Cross Cultural Relation between India and Iran

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In this article, the main focus will be on the cross-cultural relation between India and Iran. Further, the efforts taken by Aligarh Muslim University in strengthening the cultural and academic relation between India and Iran and how the Persian language helped in promoting Indo-Iran Relation. The relation between India and Iran is boundless. I have tried to capture how the cultural, political, religious, economic, and linguistic relations had bridged the gap and brought the two great nations closer and connected.

1. Introduction

Studying the relationship between the two Countries of India and Iran is thought-provoking and it helps us to look to the past for understanding and increase our knowledge. The first thing that allure while studying the relation between the two nations is the saying of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru who wrote in his book *Discovery of India*¹ ***“Among the many people and races who have come in contact with Indians and influenced India's life and culture, the oldest and most persistent have been the Iranians”.***

“I used to dream of a Persia where bulbuls made love to the roses, where in dreamland gardens poets sat around their wine cups and invoked visions of ineffable meanings. But now that I have come to your country my dream has been formed into a concrete image that finds its permanent place in the inner chamber of my experience ... I have visited Sa'di's tomb; I have sat beside the resting place of Hafiz and intimately felt his touch in the glimmering green of your woodlands, in blossoming roses. The past age of Persia lent the old world perfume of its own sunny hours of spring to the morning of that day and the silent voice of your ancient poet filled the silence in the heart of the poet of Modern India.”

2. They share a common origin

The Pre-Aryan and Aryan period is the earliest phase of The Indo-Iranian relationship which could be traced back to the tribal phase. The archaeological evidence also indicated the Indo-Iranian connection during the Age of Harappan civilization. The Harappan people are believed to have imported silver, copper, turquoise and lapis lazuli from Persia and Afghanistan.ⁱⁱ Iran supplied silver, gold, lead, zinc, turquoise to ancient India. Ivory was imported from India.ⁱⁱⁱ The relationship continued in the Vedic phase also. Moving further the founder of the Achaemenian dynasty in Persia was Hakhamanis. During the Achaemenian period, some parts of northwest India came under the Persian Rule Emperor Cyrus (550 – 529 B.C.).^{iv} Achaemenian art and architecture had a significant influence on India. After the fall of Achaemenid period and towards the end of 1st century BC, a line of kings with Iranian names, usually known as Pahlavas, gained the brief suzerainty of North West India. According to legend, St. Thomas brought Christianity to the kingdom of one of these rulers – Gondophares^v. The Sassanian period in Persia (226-651 AD) coincided with the Gupta period (308-651 AD) in India. The name of Pulakesin, the ruler of the Deccan, was known in Persia. It was usual to exchange Embassies between Persia and India. **One of the murals in Ajanta caves near Mumbai depicts a Hindu king with men in Sassanian dress.**^{vi} Indian peacock, dragons, cocks and spiral creeper adorn Sassanian monuments.^{vii}

3. Language not a barrier

Language is the foundation for communication, exchange of ideas & thoughts. It connects people more when they learn some words are surprisingly similar. The same has happened with Persian and Sanskrit. The ancient Iranian language of Avesta has numerous words in common with Sanskrit. The Persian word KHUDA goes back to Avesta Hvada, which is svadha in Sanskrit (inherent power). The Avesticbara survives in the name of Baghdad and it is Sanskrit bhaga or better known bhagavan).^{viii} In India, the Persian influence is seen in the Hindi. The common man uses many Persian words which have become a part of the daily language. The common Persian words used in Hindi and Urdu are chaddar, chera, dil, khoob and kharab zaroori and zameen etc.

Therefore, many scholars and researchers are passionate about learning Sanskrit and Persian. As mentioned by Prof (Late) Syed Amir Hasan Abidi in one of his articles titled Indian Elements in Indo-Persian Literature “Mullah Sheikh Sadullah (Masih) (Jahangir’s period) translated the Ramayana into Persian after studying Sanskrit literature for 12 years in Banaras during Jahangir’s time. Some of the lines of Ramayana of Masih have

been highly appreciated and quoted by men of literary taste. In one of the couplet in praise of Sita's Purity is considered to be the best in the whole mathnawi:

Tanash ra pairahan 'U' ryan na didah

Chu Jan andar tanu tanu jan na didah.

Her nakedness was not revealed even to her garments;

For she was in her robes like an unseen soul in a body.

Another couplet portrays Sita's disappearance into the earth:

Gareban-e- Zamin shud nagahān chak

Dar amad hamchu jan dar qalbe khak

Suddenly the earth gaped

And as a soul enters the body, she was taken in^{ix}

Several Hindu and Jain religious and philosophical texts from Sanskrit and Prakrit were translated into Persian. These include the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads, Bhagavata Gita, Nalopakhyaṇa (Nala and Damayanti), Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Siva Purana, Skandha Purana, Vayu Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Harivamsa, Atharva Veda, Yoga Vashishtha, Sankara Bhasya, Atma Vilasa, Amrita Kunda, Prabodhacandrodaya, Vajra Mahatmya.^x There are 24 different translations of Ramayana and 8 different versions of the Bhagavata Gita, 11 of Bhagavata Purana and 6 of Mahabharata in Persian language written by Hindu and Muslim scholars.^{xi}

4. Religion the binding force

Religion is one of the binding force between the people of two countries. In the 11th century AD, Islam came to India from the side of Persia through Sultan Mohammad Ghaznavi. The subsequent influence of Islam when it reached India had a rich Persian influence. Some new ideas like the Shi'a movement took shape in Islam. Islam became the common element that linked the Persian and Indian elites. Ghaznavi brought along a number of poets, artisans and religious persons who settled down in India.^{xii}

After Islam took over Persia, Zoroastrianism all but disappeared from Persia. The followers of the religion fled Persia and took refuge in Western India enriching the cultural and social life of India. They are today known as Parsis. The Parsis began arriving in India from around A.D. 636. Their first permanent settlements were at Sanjan,

100 miles north of Bombay. They are believed to have built a big fire temple at Sanjan in A.D. 790 with the fire which they had brought from Iran with them.^{xiii}

The hymn of Gayatri resembles the Gatha of the ancient Iranians. The vedic ritual of Agni and the Avestic ritual of Atar were similar. The Hindu Gods and Goddesses like Indra and Bhadrīka resemble Ahura Mazda and Mithra.^{xiv} During the Vedic period, gods were divided into two classes the devas and the asuras (In Iranian daevas and ahuras). **In India devas came to be more powerful** than the asuras and the latter word eventually took on the meaning of a demon. **In Iran the reverse took place** and the daevas were denounced as demons by Zoroaster. They still survive as such in the divers of Persian folklore, especially though Ferdowsi's epic Shah Nameh).^{xv}

Zoroastrian priests who spread the worship of fire and Sun and erected temples at Taxila and Multan.^{xvi}

To this day, there are close similarities in the Persian festival of Nowruz (Iranian New Year) also celebrated by Parsis in India and Holi as both are centered towards fire.

5. Political and Economic connection

The ancestors of the Supreme Leader of the Iranian Revolution Late Imam Khomeini had migrated from their original home in Nishapur to the Lucknow region of northern India towards the end of the 18th century. They settled in the town of Kintur. Imam Khomeini's grandfather Sayyid Ahmad left Lucknow in the middle of 19th century on pilgrimage to the tomb of Hazrat Ali in Najaf, Iraq. Although he stayed back and settled in the town of Khumayn in Iran, he continued to be known as “Hindi”. Even Imam Khomeini used “Hindi” as pen name in some of his ghazals.^{xvii}

India and Iran signed a friendship treaty on March 15, 1950. In addition to the Embassy in Tehran, India has two Consulates in Iran, one in Bandar Abbas and other in Zahedan. Before the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Shah of Iran visited India twice (March 1956 and February 1978) and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Iran in 1963. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Prime Minister Morarji Desai visited Iran in April 1974 and June 1977 respectively. After the Iranian Revolution, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited Iran in 1993 and President Rafsanjani paid a visit to India in 1995. Indian Vice President Shri K. R. Narayanan visited Iran in October 1996. President Mohammad Khatami visited India from January 24-28, 2003 as the Chief Guest at the Republic Day parade. Both sides signed “**The New Delhi Declaration**” which set forth the vision of strategic partnership between India and Iran. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Iran to attend the 16th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit held in Tehran

from August 28-31, 2012. Prime Minister met Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Ahmadinejad.^{xviii}

The first tripartite meeting of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of India was held on September 11, 2018 at the Deputy Foreign Minister level in Kabul, Afghanistan. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan Hekmat Khalil Karzai represented Afghanistan, whereas, the Indian and Iranian delegations were led by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale and Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Abbas Araghchi, respectively. The meeting focused on consolidating economic cooperation, including Chabahar, as well as enhancing cooperation on counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, and continuing support to the peace and reconciliation process that is led and owned by Afghanistan. During the visit of President Rouhani to India in February 2018, MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine and a MoU on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine was signed.^{xix}

The 2018 International Day of Yoga was organized in the Indian Embassy School (Kendriya Vidyalaya) in Tehran. To commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (from October 2018 to October 2019), a series of events were organized.

6. Trade and Commerce

During the prehistoric time there was **trade between the coast of southern Iran and India** through the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. The Harappan people are believed to have imported silver, copper, turquoise and lapis lazuli from Persia and Afghanistan.^{xx} Iran supplied silver, gold, lead, zinc, turquoise to ancient India. Ivory was imported from India.^{xxi}

Trade expanded mainly because Achaemenians introduced coinage, which facilitated exchange. India exported spices, black pepper and imported gold and silver coins from Iran.^{xxii} The grape, introduced from Persia with the almond and walnut, was cultivated in the western Himalayas.^{xxiii} One of the earliest Indian words for a coin is Karsa (also a small weight), which is of Persian origin.^{xxiv} Bam, in south-east Iran, was a major commercial and trading town on the famous Spice Road, a major tributary of the Silk Road, that connected trade routes from India through Iran to Central Asia and China.

In recent time the two countries have in place several Bilateral Consultative Mechanisms at various levels which meet regularly. The 18th India-Iran JCM was held in New Delhi on December 28, 2015. It was co-chaired by former External Affairs Minister, late Smt Sushma Swaraj and Dr. Ali Tayyebnia, Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of

Iran. MoU on cooperation in trade, finance, energy, infrastructure and cultural issues was signed during the JCM.

7. Art and Architecture

The Taj Mahal (“the soul of Iran incarnates in the body of India”, according to M. Grousset, the French savant), Fatehpur Sikri and Humayun Tomb are among the finest examples of the synthesis of Indo-Iranian style in architecture. Beginning with Qutab Minar, the Iranian influence is visible. The arcuate forms, domed structures, plane and smooth walls, slender polished pillars and spacious halls with squinches and stalactites were Iranian.^{xxv} Handicraft like weaving of carpets, making of pottery, metal work and writing, binding, illuminating and illustrating of books, all developed with Iranian influence. Carpet weaving, enamelling, embroidery, inlay work, miniature painting, glass and glazed ceramic tiles, paper, leather, papier mache and metal crafts emerged from that period.^{xxvi} In the seventeenth century the Persian carpets had designs characteristics of the Mughal taste with staggered horizontal rows of plants or a plant-filled lattice. Its subsequent popularity is often linked to Nadir Shah who brought back considerable booty from his Indian campaign and also the scheme was used in the decoration of his palace. The theme remained popular for carved stone revetments, tile work and textile. Inclusion of the new floral designs on carpets and ceramics probably reflects a broader popularity, stimulated by familiarity with both European and Indian goods.

8. Exchange Programmes and Education

Indian universities are a popular destination for Iranian students for higher studies. Several high ranking Iranian officials and professionals have studied in India. There are a large number of Iranian students studying in universities at Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore and Delhi. The ties between the two countries are expected to flourish over years without being sidelined by the world politics.

An Iranian scientist travelled along with a team of Indian scientists on an Indian ship on a scientific expedition to Antarctica in 1998.^{xxviii}

The Aligarh Muslim University possesses an exceptional treasure house of rare Persian Manuscripts on which extensive research can be performed. The Department of Persian A.M.U. Aligarh, has played a pioneering role in introducing valuable and extremely rare Persian Manuscripts to the scholars of Persian Literature globally. Prof. Azarmi Dukht Safavi became the Founder Director of the Institute. She has more than 150 publications to her credit in different national and international journals and takes the glory for enlargement of Persian Language and Literature.

The Department of Persian, AMU is one of the oldest and leading departments of the University. Some other scholars and writers of International repute like Maulana Shibli Nomani, Prof. Hadi Hasan, Prof. Zia Ahmad Badayuni and Prof. Nazir Ahmad of AMU have meritoriously contributed towards the expansion of Persian studies. Many young researchers of the department are also playing a major significant role towards the growth of the department and have been seen strengthening the Persian language on different national and international fronts.

9. Publications

Several Iranian publications were printed in India in the early 20th century. The first Iranian Persian weekly was published by India (as also Egypt and Turkey). These included *Habl-ol-Matin* newspaper (published in Calcutta for 40 years), *Ahang*, and the sermons of Iqbalol-Dolleh. The first Iranian Persian weekly was published from India.^{xxix}

10. The Name India and Iran

People are patriotic for their Country and feel proud in introducing themselves as Indians or Iranians. It is very surprising to know that **The name of India has come from Iran through a long relay** – Iranic to Greek to Latin to English and finally to India with its dominance of English. India is a Greek word written 'India' in the Greek alphabet and pronounced Hindia. It comes from Hindos 'the river Indus' from the old Persian Hindu, the Persian pronunciation of the Sanskrit Sindhu. (In Avesta and old Persian an initial s was pronounced h).^{xxx}

Similarly, **the name Iran is related to Sanskrit Arya** (noble). The ancient Persian also used the name 'Arya' and the word survives in the word 'Iran'. Iranians are one of three peoples of the world who have called their countries 'Land of Nobility' or 'The Noble Land'. Iran is the Avesta word *airya* 'noble' with the toponymic suffix *-an*, denoting a geographical area. The name of Ireland is Eire in Irish language and *aire* means 'noble' in Irish. Aryavarta is the sacred land bounded on the north and south by the Himalaya and Vindhya mountains, and extending from the eastern to the western sea. The name Iran and Aryavarta are close relatives and denote the abode of the excellent ones, the noble and respectable people, those faithful to their land. The Persian speaking Azerbaijan is the ancient word *aryanamvajah* 'the power of the Aryans', which celebrates the emerging sway of the Iranians in the second or third millennium BC.^{xxxi}

11. Technology

India and Iran signed many MoU's in different fields. One important Implementation Protocol between Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of S&T and Iran's

Ministry of Science, Research and Technology on Cooperation in the Fields of Science and Technology again bought the two closer.

12. Bollywood and Fashion - A common Language

Indian cinema has a large audience in Iran. Early Iranian cinema had close links with India. Ohanian, the director of the first Iranian silent film, *Abi va Rabi*, (1929), left Iran for India and continued his academic career in Calcutta. Subsequently he returned to Iran in 1947, where he died seven years later. As a young writer and poet, Sepenta went to India in the mid-1920s to study ancient Persian language and history. In Bombay, his friendship with professor Bahram Gour Aneklesaria (an expert in old Iranian languages) encouraged him to consider the new and developing medium of film. Sepenta made four more films for Imperial Film Company in India: *Ferdousi* (1934), *Shireen va Farhad* (1934), *Ceshmehaye Siyah* (Black Eyes) (1935) and *Leyla va Majnun* (1936). Interestingly, he also made one film for the East India Film Company in Calcutta. All of his films dealt with the glorification of the old Iranian culture or the optimistic future of a modern Iran.^{xxxii}

Conclusion

India and Iran have managed to nurture multidimensional relationship, secured within a long history of cultural ties and kinship. The Indo-Iran relation is a vast subject and it is impossible to summarize in few pages. I have tried my best to cast a glimpse of important areas that connect the two nations such as History-Origin, Language, Religion, Politics, Trade and Commerce, Art and Architect, Education, Publication and even tried to capture Bollywood and Fashion exchange.

To summarize the various historical links proves the Indo-Iranian relationship i.e Pre-Aryan and Aryan period, Achaemenids Era (559-330 B.C.), Parthian Era (250 B.C. - 226 A.D.) and Sassanid Era (226 A.D to 651 A.D.). Though, there are many relations between the two, but what connect the People at large is ***“Language”***. As far as religion is concerned Islam came to India from the side of Persia through Sultan Mohammad Ghaznavi. Today Islam is the second-largest religion in India, with 14.2% of the country's population or approx. India and Iran signed a friendship treaty on March 15, 1950. In addition to the Embassy in Tehran, India has two Consulates in Iran, one in Bandar Abbas and other in Zahedan.

Over the years they share common Arts, Culture, Education, Trade, Cinema, Fashion and other traditions. Even today they enjoy friendly relations and collaborate in a comprehensive range of fields such as bilateral trade and commerce.

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