

## A Study on the Effect of Indian Literature through Translation into Persian Language in Iran

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**Abstract:** Relations, interactions, and cultural commonalities of Iran and India date back to more than three thousand years before and Aryans immigration. The evidence of this claim in the ancient era is the mythical commonalities. The relations of Iran and the Indian subcontinent, before Islam, have been based on common race, common language, and common customs. Iran and Indian subcontinent established through Dari Persian language the same relation that had established through Pahlavi, Avestan and Sanskrit languages before Islam. Translation and gaining alien words and translative interpretations are bred by clash of languages with together which stems from clash of cultures, and this clash and bind of cultures and languages with together is a quite natural and inevitable matter; because there is no language and culture that has not been influenced by other languages and cultures yet its intensity varies. As a language is richer and more powerful in terms of scientific, cultural, economic, and social aspects, it lends more words and concepts to other languages; and as a nation is more dependent upon another country in terms scientific, technical, economic, and political matters, it borrows more words and concepts from that country. This paper will study the probable effect of Indian literature on the Persian language from the perspective of translation.

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### 1. Introduction

Persian language has various aspects that research about them is a necessary task for all people of this land. For example, we are required to research into Iranian languages before Islam, local accents, old Dari language and also into contemporary Persian language, but what is most required for us is the contemporary Persian language and because contemporary and future Persian language is and will be influenced by translation from foreign languages, the most important matter of Persian language for us is translation and other matters of this language like revising old texts, etc. have secondary importance. One of the mistakes of universities and literature teachers is that they have not paid the required attention to this vital matter, i.e. contemporary Persian language and translation and so our today language has been influenced by bad and imperfect translations which have led to dozens of improper translation terms (Nahavandi, 1931).

No two nations have had such a longstanding close relationship as Iran and India had. Jawaharlal Nehru - the late Prime Minister of India - in a book titled as *The Discovery of India* writes that "among many races and nations that have had relationship with India and have penetrated into Indian civilization and culture, Iranians have been older and more unremitting than all". Relations, interactions, and cultural commonalities of Iran and India date back to more than three thousand years before and Aryans immigration. The evidence of this claim in

the ancient era is mythical commonalities. The relation between Iran and Indian subcontinent has been based on common race, common language, and common customs before Islam. Iran and Indian subcontinent established through Dari Persian language the same relation that they had established through Pahlavi, Avestan and Sanskrit languages before Islam. From Mughal Empire in India until British dominance over India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Persian language and literature and Iranian culture have played the superior role in the Indian subcontinent; though this relation was matched and combined with intellectual principles, Islamic values, and cultural and climatic requirements in this land and directed it towards a new creativity and growth (Heidari, 1972). This paper is aimed at studying historical aspects of the relation and effect of literature between two nations and one of the main routes of this relation is translation of literature because the greatest effect of translation is our familiarity with thoughts and cultural experiences of other nations. Though this familiarity might have led to radical imitation and copying in the beginning, it has later brought about critical thoughts and breadth of vision. So through literature and translation of other countries works, we are able to digest other cultures within our culture and reflect on them. This reflection is a starting point for thought and creativity.

### 2. The Effects of Translation from Various Aspects

Nowadays, translated works that are provided in the form of book, newspaper or via radio and television are regarded as the most important material of the Persian language. Through translation, some new forms enter into the language. So, when there are many translations in a period, language is developed. This development is not bad per se. Even historical experiences show that this process fertilizes languages and cultures. That's why today Persian language cannot be compared with the language of several decades ago in various literal, philosophical, and scientific aspects. No doubt, one of the reasons of this progress is translations from other languages, but it is sometimes seen that many alien words and terms that are in conflict with the spirit of Persian language have entered into this language through translation. This will hurt the Persian language. So, translators must be trained and adequate attention must be paid to the translation of the contents (Zabihollah, 1987). Translation penetrates into a language through two ways: entry of new words and changes in the grammar.

### **3. The Effect of Translation on the Persian Language Grammar**

#### **3.1 Entry of New Words**

Alien words enter into language necessarily and acceptance of some of them is inevitable. Terms and interpretations that have entered into Persian language from French, English, Arabic or other languages have a wide range and have penetrated into Iranian customs and all scientific, cultural, and social fields. Experts and researchers have identified and studied tens of thousands of these words and terms. Some words have entered into Persian language with no change. This has a general reason: familiarity with a new phenomenon that has a new concept.

- Invention of new technical tools and their entry
- Scientific discoveries
- Unfamiliar customs and entities that have already had no equivalent or have been in another form
- Some words have been translated with no change and entered into Persian language. Even among these words, there are daily affairs, pleasantries, and customs. Some sentences are also translated with no change and used in the Persian language
- Some literary and artistic words and terms entered into Persian language
- Some political terms entered into Persian language
- Some psychological terms entered into Persian language

There are numerous scientific and technical terms that have entered into Persian language in

different administrative, biological, military, legal, and economic fields. For brevity, we refrain from mentioning them.

#### **3.2 Changes in the Persian Language Grammar**

Grammatical structure of a language is regarded as its backbone and changes hardly. However, sometimes translation influences grammatical structure of the language. This occurs either in the form of emergence of new grammatical elements or prevalence of rare forms in the language.

- Change of fractional number in Persian language
- Adding nunation to the end of words and making adverbs
- Forming new junctions
- Appearance of quasi prefixes: many English and French prefixes have been translated by nouns or elements that have been converted into grammatical elements due to frequency of use.
- Appearance of quasi suffixes
- Some adverbs and adjectives have been created by translation
- Prevalence of some grammatical elements that existed in the past like passive verb, future verb, consistency of the verb with the inanimate complement, etc.

It must be noted that if some changes occur in the language grammar, its foundation changes. Sometimes these changes impose irreparable damages on the language and culture of a country which may be appeared in two ways: first, by forgetting the language of ancestors that cuts the relation with cultural and historical traditions; and second, by disturbing the relation among people by language, i.e. removing the appreciation that is basis for social mutual understanding and empathy. It can be stated that today we see the most detrimental effect of translation on the Persian language grammar. This effect has still reached nowhere, but it is a risk that cannot be disregarded. Inaccurate speeches and writings that are presented in books, newspapers, radio, and television confirm this concern. So, supervision of experts on the published translated texts, and programs, news, and movies of radio, television, and cinema seems necessary. Here, some common mistakes are presented.

- Switching the place of verb and subject and object in many texts
- Improper use of prepositions
- Improper use of verbs
- Using ambiguous and abnormal phrases

Verbal and written mistakes are further more than these items. Since you may know by a handful the whole, we suffice to say the above mentioned items.

Entry of these words and sentences into Persian language makes it ambiguous and reader or listener do not understand what the author, translator or the speaker means. Prevalence of these phrases stems from intellectual laziness of translators. Most of them do not know more than an equivalent for each foreign word and do not search or even think to find a more appropriate word. Albeit in most cases, changing words and using Persian words are not effective; rather the sentence structure must change. Wording must be Persian not words. The sentences that are not Persian change the whole language. Translation must not hurt the spirit of the language. Even for building new words, we must refer to the Persian language – whether in the ancestors' works or language of ordinary people. When it is necessary to build a word for a term, it is better to do this with regard to the spirit of Persian language, because mere Persian, but not familiar, words – even accurate – will not be welcomed by the society.

#### **4. Effects and Relation of Iranians and Indians Over Time**

##### **4.1 Immigration of the Iranians to India in the Safavid Period**

Before Mughal dominance over India in 932 AH, Iranians had political, commercial, and cultural relations with this region for over two thousand years (Shahabi, 1937). Among main reasons of these extensive relations, safe political conditions, proper climate, and favorable commercial conditions in this region can be mentioned. Bad Political, social, and economic conditions of Iran in different periods, particularly after Mongol attack, and intransigence of some kings and local rulers and religious prejudice of some kings can be regarded as among the most important reasons of Iranians' immigration. However great immigration of Iranians to India between 10 to 12 centuries AH that must actually be called cultural immigration, has been influenced by below factors:

- Intransigence and religious prejudice of Safavid kings, particularly Shah Esmail and Shah Tahmasb, made a large number of people in the central and southern parts of Iran who were Sunni immigrate to India.

- The role of mystics and scientists who had an ability and taste in poetry were faded due to increase in the role of religious scholars and they found no opportunity to publish their works and thoughts. On the contrary, the obstacles were little in India. So, they immigrated to this region immediately (Shahabi, 1937).

- By advent of Mughal Empire, their court became resort of thinkers, scholars and artists of different regions. Its fame was firstly heard by the neighboring country, Iran, and groups of lords of knowledge immigrated to India.

- Trade also increased relations between Iran and India in this period.

- Gaining court and military positions was among the main motivations of Iranians' immigration to India. After seizing the power, these persons supported their scholar, poet, and artist compatriots.

- Researchers of the literature history believe that Safavid kings did not care about Persian literature and poetry in this era.

- Political and economic pressures in the Safavid era were among the effective factors on immigration to India in this period. At that time, immigrants had two options: Ottoman and India (Ershad, 1986).

- Another important factor that has been rarely discussed in the references is mysticism and its extension in India that made Iranian poets enthralled with Indian Dervishes privacy (Ershad, 1986).

Though immigration to Indian subcontinent was not confined to a specific part of Iran, the major share belonged to Eastern Iranians and residents of Transoxania. However, immigrants of other regions like Fars, Isfahan, Azerbaijan, and even Caspian coastal regions cannot be ignored (Shahabi, 1937).

##### **4.2 Cultural Relations and Interactions between Iran and India**

a. Babur: in 932 AH, Delhi was conquered by Babur and so the foundations of Mughal Empire were made (Navaei, 1998). Babur has been founder of this dynasty and has a book regarding his own life events known as "Baburnama" that has historical and literary value (Yusef Jamali, 2006). Babur was a great poet and composed poems in Persian and Turkish languages. The author of Kings Biography writes that he was unparalleled in the music science and composed Persian and Turkish poems skillfully (Salimi, 1993).

b. Homayun (937-963 AH): the turning point in the extensive entry of Iranian cultural elements into India was when Homayun, son of Babur, ascended the throne and took refuge in Shah Tahmasb court. Homayun was in Iran for near one year and since he was a scholar and poet, he took several Iranian artists with himself when returning to India. These immigrants started a new wave of immigration to India which made the circle of penetration of Persian language and literature into the Indian subcontinent more extensive. So there is no wonder that during Safavid era, a major part of Iranians poems have been composed in India. Homayun ignored Turkish language and encouraged use of Persian language in his court due to his interest in Persian language (Starabadi, no date).

c. Akbar Shah (963-1014 AH): the author of History of Angel has written about Akbar, son of Homayun, that "although he did not have perfect

literacy, he composed poems occasionally and had a full familiarity with the history science and Indian tales" (Starabadi, no data, 516). Akbar Shah standardized Iranian year and month instead of lunar year and month, and accepted Iranian celebrations like Nowruz and Mehregan as the official rituals (Salimi, 1993). Akbar Shah established the Poet laureate position and declared Persian language as the official language. On his instructions, many religious, philosophical, and story books of Hindus including "Mahabharata", "Atharvaveda", etc. were translated from Sanskrit and Indian languages into Persian language. Akbar reign period was the peak of immigration of Iranian scholars and poets to India to the extent that it has been mentioned in the references that more than fifty Iranian poets have been present in his court. Sabahi, Qazali Mashhadi, and Rokni Kashani were among the most famous Iranian poets in Akbar court (Nasrabadi, 1983).

d. Jahangir (1014- 1037 AH): Jahangir era was the peak of integration of Iranian and Indian art, literature, and thought. Jahangir has written his own biography in Persian language which is known as "Tuzak". Jahangir was interested in Iran civilization and culture. From among ceremonies and celebrations, he was only interested in Nowruz and held it every year quite gloriously. One of the important dictionaries that have been written in this period was Jahangiri Dictionary authored by "Hasan Anjavi Shirazi". Many poets have been present in Jahangir court: Taleb Amoli had the Poet laureate position in his court (Nasrabadi, 1984).

e. Shah Jahan (1037-1068 AH): son and successor of Jahangir inherited taste and knowledge from his father and ancestors. In poetry and knowledge, he was student of Qasem Beig Tabrizi Davaei Gilani. His court was trimmed with many scholars, physicians, and poets of that time. Among the most famous Persian poets of his courts, Kalim Kashani, Saeb Tabrizi, Mirza Razi Danesh, Seidi Tehrani, and Hajj Muhammad Jan Qudsi can be mentioned. It has been written that Shah Jahan was generous in giving Dirhams and Dinars to the poets to the extent that he rewarded Hajj Muhammad Jan Qudsi with Rupee as much as his weight for an ode (Naghavi, 1964).

f. Dara Shikoh: the eldest son of Shah Jahan is one of the Islamic thinkers and among the greatest writer of Islamic india. Most of his books have been written in Persian language and about mysticism including Sakinat ul-Awliya, Safinat ul-Awliya and above all, Sirr-e-Akbar (The Great Secret). This Prince did not have a happy end and was finally murdered by the order of his brother, Aurangzeb, in the controversy over succession (Starabadi, no date).

g. Aurangzeb (1068-1112 AH): the last great king of Mughan whose reign was concurrent with the reign of Shah Abbas II, Shah Soleiman, and Shah Soltan Hasan Safavi. During his reign, elegance of Mughan dynasty reached its perfect status. He was a skilful secretary and has a full familiarity with literary knowledge. But after a while, he murdered his brothers in the controversy over power and subsequently adopted a strict religious policy to the extent that poets were not immune from this strict policy and he even recommended poets to not think about poetry (Safa, 1983). It is surprising that daughter of Aurangzeb, Zeinab al-Nesa, was a poet and composed good odes and sonnets in the Persian language. However, there were some Iranian poets in his court like Aql Khan Razi that was Delhi moderator and has written Masnavi of Candle and Butterfly (Navaei, 1985).

### 4.3 Immigration of Poets and Writers to India

We become familiar with the reasons of immigration of artists, particularly poets, to India in the last paragraph. Studying the biography of these persons will be certainly beneficial for achieving the results of this immigration. In the following, some of the most important persons who have played a particular role in diffusion of language, literature, and culture between Iran and India are mentioned.

a. Sanaei Mashhadi: Khajeh Hasan under the pseudonym 'Sanaei' is among poets of the tenth century AH who has been the subject of many critics conversation due to changing the poetry style. Lack of his familiarity with the requirements of literary sciences, similar to many other poets of his era, has brought about reprimands of the opponents. He lived in Khorasan under the support of Soltan Ebrahim Mirza, the ruler of Khorasan in the Safavid era, and had composed many odes in his praise until this prince was murdered by the order of Shah Esmaeil II. When Shah Esmaeil ascended the throne, he composed some odes in his praise that did not draw his attention. Subsequently, Sanaei immigrated to India to improve his life (Nahavandi, 1931). Then Sanaei went to India. Sanaei came to Akabr after a while and joined the poets of his court and finally died in 995 AH in Lahur (Safa, 1983).

b. Qazali Mashhadi: he was born in 926 AH in Mashhad. He joined the court of Shah Tahmasb, but he was soon accused of atheism and could not reside in Iran for fear of malevolent persons. Qazali went first to Deccan and then to Jaunpur and served the ruler of that region, 'Ali Qoli Khan Sheibani'. It was at this time that he had gifted his thousand bits epopee known as 'Novel Role' and received a gold coin for each bit (Safa, 1983). When Sheibani family was killed by Akbar Shah, Qazali was caught by

Akbar troops and drew the attention of Akbar and subsequently Akbar Shah assigned him the position of Poet laureate. During the last six years of his life, Qazali wrote biography of Shahab and submitted it to Akbar (Nahavandi, 1931). He was the first poet who was Poet laureate in the Mughal Empire and finally died in 980 AH in Gujarat (Shahabi, 1937).

c. Orfi Shirazi: Orfi is among great poets of tenth century AH who were famous in Iran and Ottoma. He was born in Shiraz in 963 AH and studied there. He went to India when he was 26 (Safa, 1985). Orfi was supported in India by Hakim Abolfath Gilani, the physician of Akbar court. By entering into the court of Khan-e-Khana, he reached a position that was superior to everyone to the extent that Bari Khan gave him seventy thousands Rupee for one of his odes and then Orfi entered into the court of Akbar Shah; Although this golden period was not so long because he died in 999 AH in Lahur when he was 36. Except for Majma al-Abkar and Farhad & Shirin that remained unfinished, a Saqi-Nama has also been written by him (Starabadi, no date).

d. Saeb Tabrizi: Mirza Ali Esfahani known as Saeba is among the great Persian poets in the Safavid era. He was born in 1016 AH in Isfahan. After studying literature and poetry, he turned to his father job, i.e. business, but he could not fulfill his emotional needs by business. So, he traveled to India and went to Zafar Khan (Zarinkub, 2000). Then he went to Kabul and finally entered into the court of Shah Jahan. After six years of presence in the court of Shah Jahan, he returned to Iran with his father and became the Poet laureate in the court of Shah Abbas II. He lived until 1081 AH and his circle in Isfahan was an intimate place for lovers of Persian poetry and literature. Saeb was the best poet of Shah Jahan era. He was a poet that princes of Rome and other kings requested his Divan in their letters and Shah sent it for them as a gift. Saeb was one of the most prolific poets of his time. His poems are generally ode and sonnet and has Masnavies titled as "Qandehar-Nama" and "Mahmud & Ayaz". His sonnets are integrated with mysticism, wisdom, and abundant meanings. Contrary to most poets of this era, Saeb has had friendly relations with the Iranian kings.

#### 4.4 Hindu Persian Poems

The Persian poetry reached a high position through Hindu poets as well as Muslim poets. Among these poets, 'Mirza Munahur' known as Tusni and 'Chandrabhan' known as Brahman, and 'Benvazi Lal' known as Vali can be mentioned. Although these poets were not regarded as great as Orfi, Kalim, and Saeb, they had high positions at their own time. Among them, Brahman had a particular position. The author of Rana Biography writes about him that

"poems of Brahman show that Hindus have not only understood Persian language very well, but they have also added to its richness. Brahman gained a high position among the poets of his own time. He learnt Persian and Arabic languages from 'Abd al-Hakim Sialkubi', the salient scholar of Shah Jahan era. Deep information of Brahman and his dominance over the Persian language drew the attention of the Prince Dara Shikoh. Brahman not only reached high positions under the support of this Prince, but he could also write a valuable book about Persian literature and poetry named as "Chahar Chaman". Brahman sonnets are very valuable in terms of method. The movement that he created among Hindus for learning Persian language encouraged a lot of them to learn this language better than ever (Kamrani, 1959).

#### 5. Findings

Since nations of the world have always been in contact with each other for various occasions, their languages, literatures, different cultural matters, and customs influence each other and this is a natural matter. Albeit this effect is sometimes more and sometimes less depending upon conditions; particularly in such countries as Iran and India that have many historical, lingual, and cultural commonalities, this effect is quite evident. Similarities that exist between Persian and Indian languages are confirmed by comparing some words of these two languages like father, mother, brother, daughter, head, body, arm, tooth, elephant, bafflehead, barely, wheat, and so on (Romlu, 1978).

As regards literature, if we compare the Persian literature with an important part of Indian literature, we see many works that have been translated from Persian works or influenced by them. For example in Urdu literature, this lingual and literal effect is quite evident. However, the effect of Persian language and literature is not merely confined to the Indian language and literature. Many languages and literary works of the world have been influenced by Persian language and literature and many works have been created under the influence of Persian works. Several books, papers, and PhD theses have been written about the effect of Persian language on the Indian local languages. Existence of over 60 percent of Persian words in the Urdu language, 40 percent in the Indian language, and near eight thousands Persian and Arabic words in Bengali language and many words in the Indian subcontinent languages (near 20 percent) during 350 years of relation between Persian governments and the Indian subcontinent people reflect the scope of Persian language influence (Taheri, 1989).

Existence of many Persian and Arabic words in 'Ramayana' depicts too much prevalence of Persian

language in the Indian subcontinent. These words are prevalent in the Indian language: "face, null, garden, market, court, fear, pedestrian, salty, arrow, thought, simple, deep, cavalry, sign, world, paper, color, equality, saddle, forgiveness, fruit, horn, bow, hot, neck, quiver, power, contemptible, broad, prison, art, mouse, panther, worm, sin, enough, frenum, white, oh, nothing, firuz, young, balm, herald, ewe, etc." (Safa, 1985)

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first intellectual prime minister of India has referred many times to Iran culture and history in his works. When he talks about the relation between Timurid Dynasty in India and Iran in the Safavid era, he states his opinion on the influence of Persian culture on India and writes, "All new Indian languages are full of Persian words. This is evident for the languages that are descendants of the ancient Sanskrit language, and particularly for Indian language that is a mixture of different languages is very natural, but even Dravidian languages of South India have been under the influence of Persian words" (Salimi, 1993).

### Conclusions

Translation and getting alien words and translative interpretations originate from clash of languages with together, and clash of languages stems from clash of cultures with together. Clash and bind of cultures and languages with together is one of the factors of societies, sciences, arts, and knowledge progress and is a quite natural and inevitable matter; because there is no language and culture that has not been influenced by other languages and cultures. The results of natural process of cultures and languages clash are entry of lingual words into another language which is called borrowing by linguists and also translation. That's why new linguistics has attached a great importance to these two issues and has highly discussed in this regard, particularly some translative terms and interpretations may be called "translative borrowed elements" like many scientific, literal, artistic, and newspaper interpretations that have entered into our language.

With regard to what was mentioned about historical and communicative aspects, as a language is richer and more powerful in terms of scientific, cultural, economic, and social factors, it lends more words and concepts to other languages. And as a nation is more dependent upon another country in terms of scientific, economic, and political matter, it borrows more words and concepts from that. That's

why today, European words and concepts that are language of industry, art, science, and new knowledge enter into languages of smaller and more dependent countries more than any other language. Indian literature and culture have been mainly influenced by Persian language and literature due to historical events, rulers' government, travel and association of poets and writers. So, with regard to the effects of translation, it could rarely enter its words and terms into Persian literature and one can claim that Persian language has been immune from the influence of Indian literature and culture.

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