

CHAPTER-II

INDO-IRAN RELATIONS

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CHAPTER - II

INDO-IRAN RELATIONS

1. The Common Origin of Persians and Indians:

The Persians and the Indians who bore the common national name Arya appear to have been homogeneous in race. The ancient scriptures of the Hindus and the Persians bear a vivid evidence of the origin and early history of Aryas. About 1000 B.C. the Indians and the Persians had established themselves as a single cultural and racial entity with their frontiers meeting at Kabul, and what later came to be called Qandhar and Seistan, which were then politically parts of India.¹ "The Vedas and the Avesta both fully agree on the cause which led to the migration of the Aryans from their original homeland which is called Airyana Vaejo in the Avesta."² The Iran is from the Airyana of the Avesta and it is of greater significance than the term Persion. The name of the chief of the Aryans is obviously different in the Veda and the Avesta. The actual fact is that in both Indian and Iranian versions the leader of the Aryans is the son of the same person Vivasvat or Vivanghat and the fact shows that the same person is meant in both the Vedic and Avestan accounts.³ According to Vendidad, a book of the Iranians, Haptahindu (in Sanskrit Saptasindhu) was the cradleland of Indo-Aryan civilization. The Persian Haptahindu and Sanskrit Saptasindhu are two forms of the same word. It was one of the those

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1. The Discovery of India, J.L. Nehru, PP. 161, Calcutta, 1946.
 2. The Origin and early History of Indo-Iranian peoples, P.L. Bhargava, An Article Pubd. In - Indo Iran Ed. 1974.
 3. Avesta, verse no. 9 : 4 : 5, Yasna, 9, 13, 14.

fifteen provinces where the ancestors of the Iranians lived turn by turn before they finally settled down in Iran. The Iranians belong to the Aryan stock and they inhabited together in one place with the Indian Aryans, both the communities having been closely connected by ties of one language and one religion.⁴ Certainly some unavoidable problems for worshipping place had compelled the ancestors of both the Indians and the Iranians to leave their common homeland. The Indian Aryans leaving their homeland descended on the Indo-Gangetic plain areas and the Iranian Aryans after leaving the homeland settled down in Iran by the north-east and the north-west routes. Those Iranians who stayed in Media coming by the north-west route called themselves the Medes, while the other group who settled down in Fars in the south-west entering the country from the north-west route, called themselves the Farsis (Parsees, Persians)⁵. But the historical connection between the Iranians and the Indians began during the times of the great Achaemenian ruler, Darius Hystaspes, who sent an army and conquered Punjab in 512 B.C. At that time Punjab was the richest province of his empire, which was paying a tribute of 360 gold talents annually.⁶ Their religious conception of thirty three gods, the performance of yajna or yasna by the hota or zoatar, the spreading of barhis or baresman, the recitation of mantras or manthras, the offering of ahuti or azuiti, and the belief in the cosmic order ṛta or asha are

4. The History of the parsees of India, P.P. Balsara, An Article. Puld. In Indo - Iran, Pub. 1974.

5. Old Persian, Ronald G. Kent, Inscription, Darius Behsutun Columna I Line-15, Connecticut-1953.

6. Iran and India through the ages, F.C. Davar PP. 52, Bombay-1962.

some of the distinguishing features of both the religions, Vedic and Avesta.⁷

The languages of the Iranians and the Indians, Persian and Sanskrit, and modern derivatives of both the languages, are very similar to each other; hence, the Indians who spoke Sanskrit language felt a natural inclination to Persian words. This very easily explains the presence of thousands of Persian words in Indian languages including Assames also. As India was conquered by the Persianized Muslims, it was quite natural that the Persian language became the official court language of the country and many Persian words crept into popular use among the native languages. Thus Persian exercised a tremendous influence on them. We have already shown that the Arabs contributed indeed to the vocabulary of the Indian languages; but their cultural influence soon disappeared and came to an end. This is why it seems that a large number of the Arabs who came to this country either in the north or in the south were rather small and in course of a few generations they became merged with the native population, and instead of imposing their own language, Arabic, on the natives they themselves took to use the native languages. For instance, we can mention that the Moplas, a group of Arab merchants inhabiting in the western coast of Indian, are descendants of the Arab immigrants, but they no longer speak Arabic. They have been completely merged and integrated with the native population, and no trace of Arabs' cultural influence is left except Islam. On the other hand, the Persians, or to

7. Avests Yast 1st 1 : 12, 1 : 15

say better Persian speaking Muslims, came to this country in large numbers and continued to come in group after group supplying fresh blood and thus they were able to effect the whole country culturally.

The word Hindu for Indian people is of Iranian invention and the Muslims (i.e. the Persianized Muslim) named our country Hindustan.⁸ The Persians were only responsible for the creation of Urdu as a new popular language and for enriching Indian languages by supplying them with thousands of Persian popular words. We shall mention here very briefly the influence of Persian on other Indian languages. But as we are concerned here with Assamese language, we shall describe the influence on Assamese in more detail and shall discuss the channel through which Persian words found their way into that language in the coming chapters.

2. Commercial Relations:

The Arabs and Persians, before the pre-Islamic period, on the coastal area of Persian Gulf, often transported their goods to India both by sea and land routes. Setting out from a port on the Persian gulf, they sailed to India, and coasting along and visiting the islands of the Indian Ocean en-route, they rounded the Cape Camorin and passed on to Bengal and Assam and further to China.⁹

In the early period, the trade activities between India and Babylon were being carried on via Persian Gulf, so Persia was easily included in the commercial line. In the Pessian history the Sassanian

8. Iran and India through the Ages, F.C. Davar, PP. 42 Mombay-1962.

9. Arab Wa Hind Ke Ta'alluqat, S.S. Nadwi PP. 30 Allahabad -1930.

rule from 226 to 651 A.D. and in Indian history, the Gupta rule from 308 to 544 A.D. is considered golden period. This period is undoubtedly most remarkable in the Indian history from the point of view of literature, commerce and colonial development.¹⁰

The historical record is available of the accounts of Persians and Arabs trading with India for long periods. In the beginning of the early commercial period of Persian history, the Persians were afraid of voyages, but their fear of the voyages disappeared during the Parthian regime, when the Persians carried on maritime trade from the Persian Gulf to the coast of ~~thana~~ ^{thana} on Western India.¹¹ The Persian traders established their commercial activities with southern part of India coming by sea-routes, while they maintained their commercial contact with North India through the land - routes.

Uballah was the most flourishing port on the Persian Gulf, near Basra, for Perso-Arab trade with India before Islam. Trading vessels in such way vessels from Abyssinia, India and China very often came to this port and halted at this port before they proceeded further.¹²

In Gujrat, the Persian trading tribe Gujar (origin Gurjar), on which the name Gujrat is founded, came to India between the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. and spread into different places of Gujrat and ultimately became the permanent dwellers of the province. On the western sea-coast of Gujrat, Cambay at the head of the Gulf, Broach of

10. A survey of Indian History, Sardar K.M. Panikkar, PP. 64 Bombay - 1962.

11. Iran and Indian Through the Ages F.C. Darvar, P.P. 76 Bombay-1962.

12. Arab Wa Hind Ke Ta'lluqat, S.S. Nadwai, PP. 31 Allahabad, 1930.

the mouth of the Narmada, Diu and such others are the sea ports which had been formerly busy trading with the ports in the gulf of Iran.¹³

In the middle of the sixth century A.D. Persian trade reached its zenith and the Persians became the masters of the Indian markets.¹⁴ After conversion to Islam the Persian Muslims in majority continued to hold the supreme position in the field of art of navigation. To be brief the trade in spices, ivory, gems etc., between India and Europe, which continued for many hundred years, was conducted by the Arab and Persian traders.¹⁵

Islam subdued Persia before it came to India and it met the Indians with a great deal of Persian influence. India and Persia came into close contact during the Muslim rule in India which was consequently a continuation of a long history. "But by far the most important channel was the trade between the Persian Gulf and western coast of India in which the Arabs and the Persians played the most significant role".¹⁶ The two centuries India and Iran exchanged commodities by the land routes from Lahore to Kabul, and from Multan to Qandhar and by sea routes also. India exchanged textiles, indigo and spices, Persian carpets, silks and pearls. Traffic for trade activities was so regular and punctual that letters of credit were

13 . Iran and Gujarat = Political and Cultural Relations, C.R. Naik, An article Pubd. In Indo-Iran, New Delhi - 1974.

14 . Influence of Islam an Indian Culture, Tarachand, PP. 30 Allahabad-1946.

15 . the Preaching of Islam, T.W. Arnold, PP. 263 Delhi - 1990.

16 . Indo-Iran relations Dr. N. S. Gorekar, PP. 4, Bombay 1970.

mainly issued and exchanged between Agra and Isfahan.¹⁷ Many commodities relating to dress were brought by Persian merchants to the Indian territories. Though these merchants, in many cases, were not Persian by race e.g. Afghans, Turks or Arabs, but they had to speak Persian to send their goods to the kings, princes and noblemen of India, as Persian was the official language. The names of cloths like Raisham, Kamkhab, Tanzeb, Aberavan and several varieties of cloth passed through Persian to Indian languages. An exhaustive list of words is given in the other chapter.

3. Literary and Cultural Relations:

The Indo-Aryans and the ancient Iranians were connected racially, but their religions and languages had a common back-ground. Both came out from the same origin; after their separation and departure, both were related linguistically and rationally; even after their separation from their original homeland, their ancestors continued to live together for a long time as it is proved by the comparative study of their languages. "The ancestors of Indo-Persians lived together for some time in the Oxus valley with a common language which afterwards was divided into two branches, India and Iranic, and which in course of centuries developed in comparative isolation as Sanskrit and Persian."¹⁸ The early Sanskrit language or Vedic language as we call and ancient Persian, the language of the Avesta, are morphologically and linguistically so closely connected

17. Indo-Iranica (Vol. X No.2) PP. 40 Calcutta-1946.

18. Indo-Iranica, Calcutta (Vol. X no.4) pp. 24.

that the 'Mantras' of Vedas can be translated into the Avestan language and the 'Gathas' of Avesta into Vedic Sanskrit with some slight changes. It will not be difficult at all even for a casual observer to observe the close affinity between the two languages. Besides the languages of the Avesta and the Vedas of an early period, we have the language of the inscriptions left by Cyrus the Great and Darius the Great; if anyone of us hears and he reads aloud, he feels himself unacquainted with Sanskrit.¹⁹ I have mentioned the following quotations from the inscriptions of Darius the Great as example.

"Uta naham uta gausha hazanam franjanam"²⁰

(I had the nose and the ears cut off.)

This particle of sentence comes from an inscription of Darius the Great and refers to his victory and to the punishment awarded by him to the rebel Smerdis whose nose and ears he had cut off.

No body can fail to note the striking similarity between Sanskrit and the ancient Persian, the language of the inscriptions. Another instance from the inscriptions as follows:

"Adam Karam parsam uta madam

fraishayam hya upa mam aha."²¹

(I sent the Persian and the Median army which I had with me).

19. Prachin Farsi Shilalekh, H.S. Tripathi, Sanskrit, Chhaya, Allahabad- 1994. Vide, Old Persian, Ronald G.Kent, Darius Behsutun, Connecticut, 1953, Second Edition.

20. Inscriptions, H.C. Tolman, Darius Behsutun, Column II, 70-78.

21. Old Persian, Ronald G.Kent, Darius, Behsutun Column II Line. 81, 82.

Connecticut, 1953 (second ed.)

These instances suffice, I hope, to substantiate my statement regarding the close affinity between the languages of the ancient Iran and Sanskrit. Even today the affinity between the two languages, after a long gap of not less than three millenniums, is obvious. If someone looks carefully, he can find scores of words even in modern Persian which are common to both Persian and Sanskrit. Though the Indo-Aryans and the ancient Iranians were connected racially, their religions and languages had a common back ground but classical Sanskrit and Persian developed separately and many of their root-words were common, as some are common to all the Aryan languages.²² For example we have mentioned the following root-words common in Persian and Sanskrit with their meaning in English.

Persian	Sanskrit	English meaning
Abr ابر	Abhra	Cloud
Asp اسپ	Ashva	Horse
Afsanah افسانه	Upakhyana	Tale, fiction
Abro ابرو	Bhru	Eyebrow
Ast است	Asti	Is
Astar استر	Ashvatara	Mule
Afat آفت	Apatti	Calamity
Ahan آهن	Ayas	Iron

22 . The Discovery of India, J.L. Nehru, PP. 146, New Delhi-1986.

Hazar هزار	Sahasra	Thousand
Mish ميش	Mesh	Sheep, ewe
Khar خر	Khara	Ass
Band بند	Bandha	Tie, rope
Cheshm چشم	Chaksus	Eye
Deh ده	Dasha	Ten
Diu ديو	Deva	Giant, god
Dukhtar دختر	Duhitr	Daughter
Kabutar کبوتر	Kapota	Pigeon
Half هفت	Sapta	Seven
Garm گرم	Gharma	Hot
Kar کار	Karya	Work
Nah نه	Nahi	Not
Nam نام	Nama	Name
Pa پا	Pada	Foot, leg
Muft مفت	Mukta	Free of cost
Surkh سرخ	Shukra	Red
Shutur شتر	Ustra	Camel
Jaw جو	Yava	Barley

Pasand پسند	Prasad	Liked
Murg مرغ	Mrga*	Hen, bird
Madar مادر	Matar	Mother
Pidar پدر	Pitar	Father
Brother برادر	Bhrata	Brother etc.

Such common words, as shown above, are a definite proof, of the fact that the ancestors of both the communities lived together and were in close contact with one another. Therefore, so close cultural and linguistic affinities were found among them.

As for the age, when they were living together, was most probably prehistoric and it is simply on the basis of the study of such common words that we have been able to come to this conclusion.

* Meaning is changed in Sanskrit and is used in the meaning of deer.

Coming to the historical background we find "The recorded history of the Parsees starts from Cyrus the Great of Fars who overthrew the Median empire in 549 B.C. and united all modern Iran under him."²³ After Cyrus the Achaemenian empire became "The vast empire which had ever appeared in Asia and which lasted two centuries."²⁴ Darius,

23 . The history of the Parsees of India, P.P. Balsara, an Article puld. In Indo-Iran, Pub. 1974.

24 . Darmesteter, Parsia and Parsis, edtd. G.K. Nariman, p. 1st pp. 4.

the Great of Achaemenians, was the king who constructed the first Suez Canal in 500 B.C. At one time, since the reign of Darius, a large part of north western India, including Aria (Harat), Arachosia (Kandahar) and Ghandhara, formed an important satrapy of the Persian empire.²⁵ The riches of this satrapy (Kshatrapa in Sanskrit) certainly had attracted the Persian colonists and merchants. This must have led to increase the intercourse between the Persians and the Indians, and the people of both the communities were compelled to lend and borrow words from one another. Taxila which was an important town in western India during this period, was also a centre of trade, in which Indian, Persian as well as Greek merchants met together and as the Persians and the Indians, were close together, there must have taken place cultural exchanges on a large scale. "It is of historical significance that the Sarnath pillar of Ashoka, which gives free India her national emblem, is the most convincing proof of Persian Influence on Indian Art not only in the floral and animal motifs but also in the delicate stone polish and the colossal proportions."²⁶ Chandragupta who laid the foundations of the first Indian empire, was inspired much by the Achaemenian empire of Persia and he followed it as a model in organising many of the institutions. That is why Persian manners were seen in and outside the court. So the indigenous ideas and attitudes, mixed with Persian thought and traditions, formed the composite culture of India.²⁷

25 . Persian Influence on Hindi, Dr. Haridev Bahri, pp. 1, Allahabad- 1960.

26 . Indo-Iranica, Vol. X, NO. 1 pp. 33.

27 . The Legacy of Persia, A.J.Arberry, pp. 89, Oxford, 1953.

The Persians being the patrons of art and architecture, came in contact with the Buddhist monks in India and developed the relations with that country. During the Sassanid period Ardshir Papakan , the founder of Sassanid dynasty, attempted to conquer the part of India formerly under the Achaemenians. From the cultural point of view their rule is also very important. This dynasty produced not only great conquerers but also distinguished patrons of knowledge and learnings; for instance, the university of Jund-i-Shahpur was established in Persia. This university served as a great centre of learning and particularly of medical studies, continuing down to the reign of the Abbasids of Baghdad. It was a university from which the Arab scholars obtained their medical knowledge.

During this period the cultural relations between India and Iran must have received a great impetus, though unfortunately a history of these cultural relations has only been gleaned from hints or casual references to them as a connected history of these relations has not been preserved to posterity. "The Sassanians employed Indian soldiers in their armies and friendly political, commercial and cultural relations with the Kushan kings of north India, especially in the third and fourth centuries A.D."²⁸

Iran was conquered by the Arabs during the reign of Umar, the second successor of Prophet Muhammad, and it was during this period that the conversion of the Persian people to Islam began. This initial and inconclusive conquest of Persia took about a decade to achieve the

28 . Persian Influence on Hindi, Dr. Haridev Bahri, pp. 1, Allahabad - 1960.

Muslim arms met with much more stubborn resistance than in Syria."²⁹ After the first four caliphs among the successors of the Prophet, the Umayyad rulers, a branch of the Quraish, took over the power and became the undisputed rulers of the Muslim world. This period was one of the darkest periods of the Persian history and the Persians were then treated as subject race. In the course of Arab rule in Persia. Arabic became the official language as well as the speech of cultured society and, to a limited extent, of ordinary parlance.³⁰ For fear of being compelled to embrace Islam and to save own religion from extinction, many of the Parsees escaped to the west, to China and to India. India was not unknown to those Parsees who came to India's west coast and they managed to keep their identity mainly because of their strong desire to do so. "The Maga Brahmans and the Gandhara Brahmans of North India, as well as the Brahmani Magis of the south, who were all Iranian origin, had come to India in early days but were lost in the big Indian population."³¹

After the Umayyads in Arab empire, came the Abbasids who rose with the help of the Persians. Hence the Persians were treated very favourably by the Abbasids and the Persians once more became a cultural and political force. In course of time they went on becoming a great force and they soon began to dominate the Muslim world, and thus their cultural influence was once more restored. "Though the Arab conquest gave the Persian administration a different orientation,

29 . History of the Arabs, P.K. Hitti, pp. 158, Hong Kong- 1985.

30 . Ibid.

31 . The History of the Parsees of India, p.p. Balsara, An Article, Pubd. In Indo-Iran, 1974.

Persia and India communicated with each other uninterruptedly:³² With the weakening of the Arab power represented by Abbasids, the Arab cultural influence also suffered a setback being replaced in the eastern part of the Muslim world comprising Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan and India by Persian cultural influence, and thus their language replaced Arabic and became second to it in importance. After a short spell of decadence, the Persians recovered their cultural influence and superiority and exercised it with great vigour.

It is commonly supposed that the Zoroastrians who did not like to stay in Iran under Muslim rule after Arab conquest, as has already mentioned earlier, migrated to India and the modern Parsees of India are their descendants. These Zoroastrian colonists or refugees must have brought and contributed a large number of Persian words to Indian languages (which were incorporated by them.) It was very interesting to note that Gujrati, as it is spoken today by the Parsees, is quite different from that spoken by the Hindus who use like other Indian languages a large number of pure Sanskrit words. It seems that Persian words found their way at the early stage into Gujrati and other Indian languages with which the Parsees might have been in contact.

Mahmud Ghaznavi, as it is well known, was a great lover of Persian literature and his court was adorned with a good number of poets like Firdausi, Farrukhi, 'Unsuri and 'Asjadi. From their own work it is evident that these poets had accompanied Mahmud in some

32. Indo-Iran relations, Dr.N.S.Gorekar, p.p. 12-13, Bombay - 1970.

of his expeditions on India. Farrukhi, 'Unsuri and 'Asjadi had written a poem in Persian on the sack of Somnath.³³

Though it is historically accepted that the Ghaznavids, the Ghorids, the Khaljis, the Tughlaqs, the Mughals and also the 'Adilshahis and the Qutbshahis were either of Turk or Mongol origin, yet before they arrived in India, the dominant influence of Persian culture had largely absorbed these Muslim rulers, and consequently, most of them adopted the Persian language, customs, conventions and mannerisms.³⁴ It is true that these adventurers, racially Turks or Mongols, were culturally Persians.

Abu Raihan al-Biruni was one of those numerous outstanding scholars who established cultural contact between India and Iran. This Persian origin versatile genius historian, mathematician, physicians and philosopher (973 A.D. - 1084 A.D.) is appropriately considered to be the unaccredited intellectual ambassador of Persia to India.³⁵ The illustrious al-Biruni is as much known in India as in Iran, the land of his birth.

Sultan Mahmud, during his sojourn at Lahore, engraved on his coins the Islamic "Kalimah" (attestation of faith), La-Ilāh- Illā-lāh Muhammadur Rasūl-ullāh (there is no God save Allah and Muhammad is His Apostle), in its original Arabic form and its Sanskrit rendering; Avyaktam ekam, Muhammadah avatarah³⁶. As there is no word to convey the exact significance of "Prophet" and avatara is the closest approximation of the term, so avatara was used as the

33. Iran and India through the Ages, F.C. Davar, pp. 148 Bombay- 1962.

34. A short history of Persian Literature, T.N. Davare, pp. 7, Poona- 1961.

35. Iran and India through the Ages, F.C. Davar, pp. 142, Bombay 1982.

36. This Sanskrit rendering is confirmed by Prof. H.S. Tripathi, formerly Head of Deptt. of Sanskrit, Allahabad University.

translation of prophet.³⁷ Mahmud's these coins substantially prove the fact of Indo-Iranian unity in medieval times. The full significance of Persian contact between India and Persia was realized under the reign of Akbar the Great. "Between 1556 and 1666 seven Indian embassies went to Persia and twenty three Persian envoys came to India."³⁸

Most of the Urdu poets, were well versed in Persian and began their literary career by composing verses in Persian. Persian adopted the Arabic script which opened the flood gate of Arabic words. Urdu adopted the modified Arabic script called 'Perso-Arabic' which made the absorption of Persian words by Urdu. On the other hand the famous Hindi poets tried to make their own writings more and more intelligible to their patrons by incorporating Perso-Arabic words and ideas. As Persian was a sweet language, so it became the language of correspondence and communication between the Muslim states and the Hindu states.³⁹ Thus Persian exerted a powerful influence on the languages and literature of the country and inspite of the national awakening and reaction against all things foreign, Persian words would have managed to continue in common speech, the language of daily life.

During the early days of British ascendancy and decay of the Mughal power, Persian merchants and businessmen continued their commercial relations with India. During the ascendancy of the Mughals, the whole life of India was virtually dominated by the Persians, whether administrative or political and religious or cultural. The fact was that Persian remained the official language of this country, being used even by governments other than the Muslims also. For

37 . Ibid, pp. 144.

38 . Indo-Iranica (Vol. VIII, no.1) pp. 18-19.

39 . Persian Influence on Hind, Dr. Haridev Bahri, pp. 9 Allahabad- 1960.

instance, the court language of the Marathas, though they themselves were Hindus, was Persian. The British, too, during the 18th and early 19th centuries till English was adopted as the official language of the state, made extensive use of Persian in their official correspondence. A knowledge of Persian was considered to be a necessity for British officer proceeding to India to serve under the East India Company. British officers themselves took a keen interest in Persian language and literature. A very interesting instance of British interest in Persian language in India is that once Warren Hastings, the governor general of India, ordered one of his commanders to submit a report of the region under his command; whereupon the said commander asked for permission to submit the required report in Persian, apologising for his inability to do so in English as he had forgotten that language. When John Jacob, a young British military officer, was killed by the mutineers, Mirza Ghalib lamented his death in the following words.

ہائے میجر جان جا کوب، کیا جوان مارا گیا! سچ اوس کا یہ شیوہ تھا کہ اردو کی فکر
کو مانع آتا اور فارسی زبان میں شعر کہنے کی رغبت دلواتا۔⁴⁰

"The Fort William College was founded in 1800 by Lord Wellesley under the principalship of John Gilchrist who was a great scholar of Persian and Arabic."⁴¹ These instances eloquently speak about the interest of the British in Persian which continued to be the official language of the country serving as the link language till being replaced by English in 1835 due to the powerful onslaught of Lord Macaulay on the Indian system of education and native languages.

40. Khutut-i-Ghalib, etd. By Malik Ram, pp. 345, Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu Hind, Aligarh-1962.

41. Persian Influence on Hindi, Dr. Haridev Bahri, pp. 14, Allahabad - 1960.

Even though during the British period of the twentieth century many prominent scholars like Muhammad Husain Azad, Allamah Shibli Numani and Muhammad Iqbal, made an effective influence on the Indians by their contributions to the Indo-Persian literature. Allamah Iqbal contributed to the Indo-Persian Literature by his remarkable writings in the form of *Asrar-i-khudi*, *Rumuz-i-Bikhudi*, *Piyam-i-Mashriq* and *Zabur-i-'Ajam*.⁴² Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Indian education minister of Nehru ministry, rightly remarked on the Persian influence on the Indian life and languages: In every walk of Indian life the influence of the Persian language and culture is evident to this day. In all the languages of India we have thousands of words derived from Persian. For almost eight hundred years, Persian held a dominant place in India life. Thousands of Indians, many of them Hindus, used this language with great skill and mastery. They had created an immense literature of Iran.⁴³ Thus it can be safely said that their literary and cultural contacts have left their permanent impress on the Indian languages and literatures and those permanent impress have enriched the Indian languages and literatures.

Almost all the Indian native languages have been more or less deeply influenced by Persian vocabulary through a wholesale borrowing of Perso-Arabic words.⁴⁴ The deep influence of vocabulary, grammar metaphor, prosody and style is obvious on Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi and Bengali.⁴⁵ The Persian words like *namaz*, *darbar*, *padshah*, *sipah-salar*, *jamadar*, *kurta*, *shalwar*, *shawl*, *biryani*, *pullao*, *shirgand*, *shakarpareh*, *narangi anar*, *anjir*, *pazeh*, *gluband*, *gushwarah* are available in most of the Indian languages with slight modification by the native

42 . Glimpses of Persian Literatuer, A.A. Hekmat. Pp. 78 Calcutta. 1956

43 . Indo-Iranica, Vol. IX, No. 1 pp. 15-16, Calcutta - 1946.

44 . Elements of the Science of language, I.J.Taraporewala pp. 235, Calcutta - 1962.

45 . Influence of Islam on Indian Culture, Tarachand, pp. 140, Allahabad - 1946.

people. Gujrati has the large admixture of Persian words as Gujrat was under the Muslim domination for nearly five centuries. The overall influence of Persian on Bengali language is very deep and a permanent addition of some two thousand and five hundred Persian words is there in Bengali vocabulary.⁴⁶

The Persians were responsible for the creation of urdu language which was enriched by Arabic and Persian words and in course of time it became a literary language. The influence of Persian on Hindi is very wide and several thousand words of Perso-Arabic origin have become enriched in Hindi language.⁴⁷ The Persian influence on Kashmir language is very predominant and its vocabulary has been enriched by Persian and Arabic words. The influence of Persian on Marathi language is very deep and lasting also. The influence of Persian and Arabic languages is quite deep on the Assamese language about which we shall discuss elaborately in the coming chapters.

46. Indo-Iran Relations, Dr. N.S. Gorekar, pp. 51, Bombay- 1970.

47. Ibid, pp. 41.