Chapter 5

IRANIAN PERCEPTIONS OF INDIA

Due to the long lasting relation between India and Iran we find many comments about India in the Persian books. These works usually are historical texts and the writer at the time of chronicling events gives a description of India. Two features of India attracted the attention of the Iranian: its wealth, and the beauty and variety of its nature. One of the Persian texts which has a description of India is a historical work, entitled Tarikh-i Wassaf. In this work the writer has praised India extremely.

Wasf-i Hind

This book is written by Sharaf ud din Abdullah Shirazi, known as Wassaf ul Hazra. The work is in five volumes written on the history of the Mongols. Indeed Wassaf takes up the history at the point where Ata Malik Juwayni, another historiographer in the Mongol court, and the writer of Tarikh-i Jahan Gusha (The History of the World Conqueror) closes his work. Wassaf’s book was designed as a continuation of that work, of which Wassaf expresses the highest opinion, and on which he expends a laboured panegyric. The date of the work as given in the preface is the last day of Shaban 699(March 1300). The facts recorded in the work the author professes to have gathered from the oral accounts of trustworthy persons. The writer comments on the incredible wealth of India:

The true account of that country is that it is a portion of the portions of the ocean full of accumulated curiosities and abundant wealth with plenty of all kinds of treasure and precious jewels, and charming products of ingenuity and honourable gifts of
merchandise, displaying the contrivances of the incomparable one. That country and all around it is fragrant with the odours of aloeswood and cloves and plains and precincts are vocal with the notes of parrots, saying "I am a garden, the shrubs of which are envied by the freshness of the garden of paradise."\textsuperscript{171}

According to some commentators of the Quran, the great ancestor of the human kind Adam, after banishment of paradise, dwelled in Ceylon, a part of India. This theme motivated Wassaf to describe India as follows:

Some commentators upon the Quran, in the account of Adam have stated that when our first father having received the order to "go down" was about to descend from the gardens pleasant to the soul and delightful to the eye, wretched world below. The all embracing grace of God made some of mountains of the Isle of Ceylon to be the place of his descent. This land is distinguished from all parts of the globe by its extreme temperateness, and by the purity of its water and air, together with the variety of its wealth, precious metals stones and other abundant productions are beyond description. The leaves, the bark, and the exudations of the trees, the grass and the woods of that country are cloves spikenard, aloeswood, sandal, camphor, and the fragrant wood of Mandal. White amber is the dregs of its sea, and its indigo and red Bakham wood are cosmetics and rouge for face; the throns and wormwoods its fields are regulators of the source of life, and are useful electuaries in the art of healing for the threos of adver fortune; its icy water is a ball of mumiya for the fractures of the world; and the benefits of its commerce display the peculiarities of alchemy; the hedges of its fields refresh the heart like the influence of the stars; and the margins and edges of its regions are bed-

\textsuperscript{171} Shara\textsuperscript{f} ud din Abdullah Shirazi, \textit{Tari\textsuperscript{k}h-i Wassaf}, Tehran, 1959, III, p. 300.
fellows of loveliness; its myrobalans impart the blackness of youthful hair; and its peppercorns put the mole of the face of beauty on the fire of envy; its rubies and cornelians are like the lips and cheeks of charming girls; its light-shedding recesses are all mines of coined gold; and its treasuries and depositories are like oceans full of polished gems; its trees are in continual freshness and verdure; and the zephyrs of its air are pure and adoriferous; the various birds of its boughs are sweetsinging parrots; and the pheasants of its gardens are like graceful peacocks.

If is asserted that Paradise is in India, be not surprised because Paradise itself is not comparable to it.  

The writer presupposes that some readers would not agree to such extreme praise of India, so he tries counter potential skepticism:

If any one suppose that these selected epithets exceed all bounds, and think the author indulges in exaggeration and hyperbole, let him, after a deep reflection on this matter, ask his own heart whether, since the days Adam till the present from East to West or from north to South, there has ever been a country to which people export gold, silver, commodities, and curiosities, and from which in exchange they bring away only throns, dregs, dust, pebbles, and various aromatic roots, and from which money has never been sent to any place for the purchase of goods. If by the will of God, he still deems my narrative to be overcharged with hyperbole, still he must admit these praises to be deservedly and justly applied. With all its diverse qualities and properties, it is reported that the extent of that territory is equal to the breadth of heaven.  

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172 Tarikh-i Wassaf, p. 300.
173 Ibid. pp. 300-301.
The considerable point in Wassaf’s account is that how could he offer such a description without visiting India? However such positive perception of India could be observed in the remarks of other Iranian. Ahmad Amin Razi the author of *Haft Iqlim* (*The Seven Climes*) wrote:

One of the advantages of India is that the traveller does not need to bring with him provision, because there is food, provender and a place of rest everywhere and the passenger could continue his journey. Moreover every body can live according his will, there is no restriction. The sensuality which favours sensuals and young people, is available in India more than any other place.174

Saib Tabrizi also has many verses through which he expressed his praise of India:

There is no head wherein desire for thee danceth not,
Even as the determination to visit India is in every heart.

*Hamchu azm-i safar-i Hind ki dar har dil hast,*

*Raqs-i sawday-i tu dar hich sari nist ki nist*

The same positive perception is reflected in the following verses of Abu Talib Kalim’s. He composed them when was leaving India:

I am the captive of India, and I regret this misplaced journey,

Whither can the feather-flutterings of the dying bird convey it?

Kalim goes lamenting to Persia [dragged thither] by the eagerness of his fellow-travellers,

Like the camel-bell which traverses the stage on the feet of others.

Through longing for India I turn my regretful eyes backwards in such fashion,

That even if I set my face to the road, I do not see what confronts me.

_Asir-i Hind am-o zin raftan-i bija pashimanam,_

_Kuja khahad rasandan par fishani murgh-i bismal ra?_

_Bi Iran mi rawad nalan Kalim az shawq-i hamrahan,_

_Bi pay-i digaran hamchun jaras tay karda manzil ra._

_Zi shawq-i Hind zan san chishm-i hasrat bar qafa daram,_

_Ki ru ham gar bi rah aram ni mi binam muqabil ra._

In another couplet Kalim called India the second paradise:

_**One can call it a second paradise in this sense,**_

 _That whoever quits this garden repents._

_Tawan bihisht-i duwum guftanash bi in m'ani,_

_ki har ki raft az in bustan pashiman shud._

Ali Quli Salim another Iranian poet composed verses in a similar vein:

_There exist not in Persia the means of acquiring perfection,_

_Henna does not develop its colour until it comes to India._

_Nist dar Iran zamin saman-i tahsil-i kamal,_

_Ta na yamad suy-i Hindustan hina rangin na shud._
Muhammad Said Ashraf Mazandarani, the renowned literary man in Aurangzeb period, wrote that every body who experienced the pleasuer of India. He lies down at nights towards India in his own country.\textsuperscript{175}

In contrast to praiseworthy assessments, there were negative perceptions of India. One of them was presented by Hazin. Since Hazin was a scholar of some repute it is appropriate to examine his perception and arrive at the reasons behind it. Hazin’s perceptions can be classified into three parts: social, political and literary.

\textbf{Hazin’s perceptions of India and its people}

We have already narrated the story of the English captain who dissuaded Hazin from the journey by describing the disadvantages of India. Hazin does not mention the captain’s exact statement, but it created an image of India in Hazin’s mind which was not favourable, although he does not hint at it in the following passage:

A captain of the English Frank Company (\textit{Jama’at-i inglishiya-i firang}) when he knew of my intention came to my residence and began dissuading me from going to Hindustan. He enumerated the ugly aspects of the departments of that country (an\textit{ mulk}), and he tried to persuade me to go instead to Europe (\textit{Firang}). He insisted on the matter, but I did not agree, and on same day I left everything behind there and boarded a ship all alone, and sailed in the direction of Sind.\textsuperscript{176}

Thereupon Hazin started a journey the end of which was not clear to him at all.

\textsuperscript{175} Ahmad Gulchin Ma’ani, \textit{Karwan-i Hind}, Mashhad, 1990, I, Introduction, p. 23.
\textsuperscript{176} The life of Sheikh Muhammad Ali Hazin written by himself, p. 86.
Ecological Determinism

Hazin believed that the weather condition had a special influence on the disposition of human. Thatta was the first port of call for Hazin on 7 March 1734 and the very first experience of India turned him remorseful. The lack of drinking water, hot weather and "the unpleasant condition" of the port annoyed him. He put down his impressions when he wrote his travelogue at Delhi in 1742:

During these eight years, from Thatta to the city of Delhi which is known as Shahjahanabad, I myself saw whatever I had [already] heared about the conditions, qualities and deportments of this country and its people, and also observed a good deal more that I had not even heared about, and which I could never imagined. I stayed in Thatta for more than two months, and cursed myself on my impatience to depart from Iran, and repented that I had not chosen to travel to the countries of Europe (mamalik-i firang). But the season for seajourneys was past, and summer had already set in, and so for going back return to Iran or anywhere else one would have had to wait for the coming season. In sum, in that city because of lack of water, and bad climate, and the ugly forms of behaviour in that city which are so common in this country, I became restless. People told me to go to the town of Khudabad, which is one of the flourishing places of Sind, and which is at a few days journey from here [Thatta]. The journey did not require much preparation and the town could be reached by boat, through the channel that passed from Thatta to the border of that town. It was destined to be so. I arrived in Khudabad by boat, but because of of the intensity of the heat, the infelicity of the climate, and attacks of sorrow and effect of the adversities, I fell prey to variety of sever maladies. For seven months, I remained helpless (bekas) and ill in that place.
When some of my illness became less severe, I found it difficult to remain there for various other reasons.\textsuperscript{177}

Unpleasant condition obliged Hazin to shift to Bhakkar, a place located at a few days journey from Khudabad, on the bank of the river Sind.

For about a month I stayed there [Bhakkar], and was totally overwhelmed by weakness and indisposition, so that I had to be carried on a palanquin to Multan. Having covered a number of stages with great difficulty, I arrived at a village close to the fortress of that city and camped there.\textsuperscript{178}

When he was in Multan, a violent flood took place followed by a cholera epidemic for five months. Hazin also was afflicted by this illness. It will not be an exaggeration if we say that he passed all of his time in India in sickness. Another time when he decided to go back to Iran, and thus travelled to Lahore in 1738, he had malaria. In a letter to one of his friends, very likely Nawab Sadr ud Din Muhammad Khan, Hazin talked about his illness and painfully wrote that he had become addicted to opium:

And now my illness is exchanged with another since I use opium.\textsuperscript{179}

Chronic disease along with difficulties of a permanent dislocation left an unpleasant impression of India on Hazin's mind.

\textsuperscript{177} The Life of Sheikh Muhammad Ali Hazin, tr. Belfour, p. 87.  
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid, p. 88.  
\textsuperscript{179} Ruqāʿī, Aligarh MS., 286, f. 29b.
Someone who has seen other countries knows the difficulties of India, and the reasons for this are numerous. The condition of this land is appropriate for those who are hardy, and its people are not aware of this, since they consider themselves the most happy in the world. Their temperament is such that they are not moved by hardship. Livelihood is not possible in this country without three things: abundant money, plentiful force and full skill. Even in the case of a conjunction of these factors, the situation would be very confused and a petty work is not done without distress and awaiting. The same work that is possible in other countries by one person, here is not possible even by ten, and in the case of employing several servants, the circumstances could be worse. 180

Undoubtedly Hazin’s illness and solitude increased his pessimism about India. He avoided marriage in Iran, and in India also he remained single.

It is clear that one reason for Hazin’s dissatisfaction with India was the climate of this country. He passed twelve years of his life in Delhi and around sixteen years in Banaras. These cities had a muggy weather in the summer. Hazin’s view of the weather of India can be gleaned from his composition:

In the hell of India which because of heat,
Is flaming the wings of grasshopper like the wings of a moth,
The trick of fate has made you gloomy, O Hazin,
What can one do, when the fish is now fallen on the desert.
The weather is so much hot that if blows a cold wind,
I listen to its blowing in vain,

180 Tazkirat ul Ahwal. p. 264.
A river is originating from every hair root,
The flood of perspiration may cleans this land.

Dar jahannam kadey-i Hind ki az tab-i hawa,
Shuli war chun par-I parwana buwad bal-i malakh,
Darad afsurdih tu ra shubaday-i charkh Hazin
Chi tawan kard kunun mahiyat uftadih bi fakh
Bas ki garm ast hawa ayad agar dam sardi
Mi daham gush zanad bihuda chandan ki zanakh
Har kasi ra shati az har bun-i muiy jarist
Shayad ar seyl-i araq shuyad az in khak wasakh

The reader could empathise with him when he remembered his birthplace, Isfahan:

This city is unique in all of the world because of the moderation and purity of the weather, the refreshing water, the magnificence and prosperity of the city, the abundance of old and new buildings and plenitude of graces.  

He wrote concerning the effect of weather of Isfahan on its people:

The perfection of souls and bodies of people is one of its effects, all inhabitants of this town are intelligent and acquainted with manliness and generosity.

As much as Hazin exalted his country, he treated India with contempt. In his assessment, the weather of India caused infirmity and self indulgence. In this connection, it

\[ \text{181 Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 163.} \]
\[ \text{182 Ibid, p. 163.} \]
is difficult to accept Mumtāz Hasan’s analysis who says in an introduction to Hazin’s *Diwan* that when Hazin entered India he was a psychopath and even petty hardships made him seriously angry, so if he went back to Iran, he would blame his friend hard.183

**Nostalgia**

The adverse effect of the Indian climate was magnified by distance from the scholarly environment of Iran. Hazin’s life in Iran shows that he was prolific in both learning and teaching. Migration to India snapped his links with Iranian scholars. Around 1745 in one of his verses he regrets the way he used his time in India:

> For ten years I wasted my life in India,  
> Nobody has dissipated his life like me.  
> Dah sal shud ki dar Hind umram bi raygan bi raft,  
> Zinsan kasi nadadi bar bad zindigani.

The alternative suggested by his associates to substitute learning for relation with kings and courtiers further deepened the malaise

> One reproaches me that scholarship is wrong  
> You should not neglect the livelihood  
> One pretends to intellection and tells me to grasp  
> The mercy of the generous king and the wazir  
> *Yeki az jahl zanad t’ana ki Danish ghalat ast,*

Yet he was condemned for seeking high status and wealth in India to which Hazin responded as follows:

Accidentally, I am subdued in India, not because of greed,
Nobody in the world could fight the fate.
Thank God that on account of the contentment,
I do not covet the gifts of the king and the wazir.

There was a third factor which aggravated Hazins deprivation. He was born in a Shiite family, and his training made him a faithful Shia. Devotion to the Shiite Imams is obvious from Hazin’s verses and one of his regrets in India was his separation from the shrines of the Imams. In the first phase of his travel, Hazin tried to go to Khurasan where the shrine of the eighth Imam is situated, but he did not succeed. Later (around 1165 AD as we saw) he decided to travel to Iraq via Hugli and in this order departed to Azimabad, but on account of his illness was detained. He did see the time spent in India as a great obstacle
in his way to the shrine cities. In a verse, addressed to the first Shiite Imam, Ali bin abi Talib he expressed his thoughts:

The migration of that chief aim has tired me,
The regret for loosing the favours has murdered me.
Destiny has closed my going back to your street,
I should become sorrowful because of this deprivation.

*Khasta mara hijrat az Kabay-i an astan,*
*Kushta mara hasrat az fawt-i ni'am dashtan,*
*Basta rah-i bazgasht, charkh bi kuyat mara,*
*Bayad az in rahguzar hasrat-o- gham dashtan.*

And in yet another verse addressed to the same Imam, he said:
Separation from you is one of my misfortunes, but why my bad luck,
Has thrown me to the black land of India.
I am not Joseph, why I am in the black hole of suffering.
Why my fortune imprisoned me in India?

*Duri bi yik taraf, ki bi khak-i siyah-i Hind,*
*Andakhtì ast tiragîy-i bakht-i man mara.*
*Yusuf niyam, chira bi siyah chah-i mihnatom,*
*Bakhtam bi habs-i Hind chira kard mobtala?*
Like many scholars Hazin loved solitude, but some of his contemporaries could not understand the reason for that and misconstrued it as pride. In this regard Siraj ud Din Ali Khan Arzu wrote:

When the late Umdat ul Mulk Amir Khan Bahadur returned from Allahabad, Shaykh (Hazin) also came back to Shahjahanabad, and his aim from returning was his desire to be appreciated. Then he disappeared for sometimes like alchemy and phoenix. His aim from going into hiding was to increase the eagerness of people towards himself.\(^{184}\)

The first part of Arzu’s statement is not correct because Umdat ul Mulk’s return from Allahabad took place in 1743, and Hazin was already back from Lahore. Arzu’s judgment on Hazin’s isolation also is not right. Surely others also had a similar sense regarding Hazin, and in response to them, while referring to his life in India, he composed the following verses.

A mean reproaches me to be proud and arrogant,
A gander condemns me to vaunt and seeking for high position.
The baseless statement is not worthy to explain,
Hence, the pen of the scribe is wondering.

*Siَفْلَةَ يَتَامِيَ غَهْرُوْمُ زَانَادُ –َنِكْحِوْتُ أَيْتَ أَبَاءَ،ْ
Khَارَبِي نَسْبَيْ يَفْحَرُمُ دَاحَدُ أَيْتَ جَهْيْيْ خَاتِرُ.
Suكَحَانَي بَيْ سَرُّ أَبَنْ رَا نَاَتْاَوْنَ شَارِحَ نَيْوِسْهُ،ْ
Saِرُيِّ آنْدِيْشُي فُوْرُ بُرْدِيِّ بَيْ خَوْدَ كِلْيُيْ ذَاَبِرُ.*

Although the majority of the population of India were followers of Hinduism, the number of Muslims also was not few. Hazin expected Indian Muslims to be religious. Dargah Quli Khan, the author of *Muraqqa-i Dehli*, has a vivid description of public inclination to debauchery in the eighteenth century Delhi. Nadir's invasion of the capital stopped all this for sometime, but according to Hazin, after a period it was resumed.

A naïve (*sada dil*) asked me this point last night,
While he was disturbed and weeping,
Every thing in the world has a reason,
Weather it be evident or be concealed,
I am surprised why all Indians,
From aged to young persons,
After that frightening event, which distressed all hearts,
Like a disobedient pen which exceeds the pattern,
Have gone out of the right way.

*Pursid dush sadi dili az man in sukhan,*
*Ba sinay-i pur atash-o ba diday-i pur ab,*
*Kandar zamana har chi bud nist bi sabab,*
*Khah ashkar jilwa kunad, khah dar hijab,*
*In ma’ani az kuja sar zadah dar ta’ajjob am,*
*ki abnay-i Hind jumlagi az sheikh ta bi shab,*
*Yikbara b’ad-i hadisay-i jan gusal ki shud,*
*Az iltihab-i atash-i an sinaha kabab,*
*Chun kilki kaj ravi ki zi mistar bi dar rawad,*
*Gardida and yik Qalam az jaday-i sawab.*

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A Silver Lining

It is true that due to his obsessive attachment to his own country, Hazin had no pleasant time in India, while his illness aggravated his discomfort, but he had friends who cheered him up. In the letters to them, mostly Iranian, but also Indians, he used terms of endearment, such as sahib-i man (my master) jan-i man (my life), and ummid gah-i man (my hope). His politeness with them was unique also. In Hazin's view, Raja Ram Narayan was a valuable friend due to his compassion, generosity and devotion. Any how Hazin's condition compelled him to stay forever in India, and he became habitual of living in Banaras.

Since Hazin was qualified in religious guidance (ijtihad) some people sought legal opinions from him. One of Hazin's treatises under the title of Risala Fatawi, contains 37 legal questions and their answers. These questions were posed by one of the Indian scholars. One of the questions is on the rate of the bride money in India (mihr). The questioner asks that the rate of bride money in India is high and men usually are not able to pay the amount to their wives and whether the marriage contract is valid in such cases. Hazin replied that if the amount of the bride money is such that the man can not afford, then the marriage contract is valid, although the act is not entirely pious.

Hazin and Banaras

One important question concerning Hazin's life and experience in India was why Hazin chose Banaras for living. He came to Banaras in a round about way. He left Delhi in 1161/1747 roaming about for a while in the cities of Bengal province and around Banaras.

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185 Ruqaat, Aligarh MS., 286, f. 42a.

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before he settle down there. He preferred Banaras over all other cities. Since Banaras was a center of Hinduism, Hazin’s residence there is a bit surprising, especially when we review his following couplet:

I want my escape from uncleaned India, and no more than that.
I want to have my dip in the river Euphrates, and no more than that.
The desired death is in Najaf
I want to live my life for that, and no more than that.

_Az Hind-i najis nijat mi khaham-o bas,_
_Ghusli bi shat-i Furat mi khaham-o bas._
_Margi ki bi kam-i dil buwad dar Najaf ast,_
_Az bahr-i hamin nijat mi khaham-o bas._

It seems that one of the main reasons for the selection of Banaras by him was the presence of Raja Balwant Singh the ruler of the region. The Raga encouraged Hazin to settle there. According to the compiler of _Tarikh-i Banaras_ the Raja took a great liking to Hazin and was very much interested that he lived in Banaras. Reciprocally, Hazin also showed his sincerity to maintain his relations with him. Even at the time when the Raja revolted against the Nawab of Awadh, he requested the Nawab to forgive the fault of the Raja. He also recommended to the Nawab to let the Raja remain as the ruler of that place. Subsequently the Raja appointed Hazin as the tutor of his son, prince Chet Singh. The tutor chose a particular seat for his student on which he used to sit at the time when he was

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taught. The prince student also presented gifts to his tutor in the form of cash that amounted to forty thousand rupees.\footnote{188}{Ghulam Husain Khan, \textit{Balwand Nama}, Ms. National Archive of India, p. 155.}

In Banaras Hazin had not only friendly terms with the Muslims of that city, but Hindus also paid him great regard. The writer of \textit{Makhzan ul Gharaib}, a collection of biographies of Persian poets; after describing the superiority of Banaras over the other cities of India from the point of view of its prosperity and habitation writes:

The people of Banaras, whether they are Muslims or Hindus use the dust of his feet as collyrium for their eyes. People came to pay their homage to him from far and near and spoke with great pride that they had the opportunity to pay their visit to the Sheikh.\footnote{189}{Sheykh Ahmad Ali Khan Hashimi Sindilwi, \textit{Makhzan ul Gharaib}, Lahore, 1968, pp, 803-804.}

Besides the above mentioned reasons, the geographical position of Banaras was such that it was situated between Bengal and Awadh. Both the regions were governed by the rulers who followed the Shiite tenets of Islam. Hazin, without giving preference to one region over the other was enjoying the patronage of the rulers of both the regions. After some years of residence in Banars, Hazin built a small mosque at a place called \textit{Ruzay-i-Bibi-Fatima}. The writer of \textit{Tarikh-i of Banaras} dated the construction of this mosque to 1167/1753 when Hazin was sixty four years old. The construction of this mosque indicated Hazin's decision to stay in Banaras. Later he built another mosque, larger than the previous in the enclosure of the garden that belonged to him. It seems that Hazin built the small mosque for his personal use. Whether he built the second mosque for the reason that many
visitors who came to meet him needed to pray is a matter of speculation. Hazin later built his burial place near the first mosque. The smaller mosque was demolished by Hakim Mohammad Ja’far, the motawalli of the garden of Hazin in 1336/1917. Khatak attributes this measure of the motawalli to the fact that Mohammad Ja’far wanted to provide a larger space for the devotees who came to pay their homage at his shrine. Hence he demolished the first structure of the mosque and rebuilt another mosque in a wider space. From the point of view of Khatak the demolition of that mosque was not a wise measure.

Space for the bigger mosque was provided by demolishing the original smaller mosque and the western room of Hazin’s house. This unwise step was taken in order to provide room for the people who assemble in the Fatimain, in the compound of the tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Ali Hazin, on various occasions; and all of whom could not be accommodated in the smaller mosque at the time of offering prayers. In so doing Hakim Muhammad Jafar, and his associates have destroyed for ever, historical buildings which were important both from the view of their antiquity and association with Hazin.\(^{190}\)

Those who lived with Hazin during the last days of his life have mentioned that he suffered from no ailment. He did all his works himself up to the end of his life. He left his will, wrapped himself in his cloak and then gave up life. He lived for seventy six years and ten months.

Khatak’s effort to find Hazin’s will was in vain. His conclusion about the disappearance of Hazin’s will indicated the violation of the will’s executors of the financial

part. But there is a copy of Hazin's will in Subhanallah Collection in Aligarh University, written in Muharram 1178 A.H. two years before Hazin's death [Appendix III]. This relatively detailed will is recorded at the end of Hazin's Tazkirat ul Muasirin. Towards the end of the will, Hazin writes that his dwelling place is a mosque (meaning that it should not be sold or be donated) and requested from the executors of the will to take care of it. He starts his last word with the plea of forgiveness from God:

This is the last writing by this humble, the needy for the pardon of forgiving God, Muhammad, called Ali al-Jilani, a will for the faithful friends, may the exalted God make them prosperous. The first advice is the practice of piety, and draw lessons from the uncertainty and disloyalty of the world. May all friends be successful and prosperous.

Regarding my will about my possessions, although it is ususal that the will is written when there are transactions or possessions, I have none. But since in the sacred religion, it is mandatory to write a will, I am responding, and I write these words in order to obey the respectable legislator. Since death is inevitable, I requested (my friends) to do their best in executing the will of this needy, and expect its reward from the exalted God. I, in the state of awareness and with free will, appoint the high ranking, Mirza Muhammad Hasan, May God protect him, the son of Mirza Ibrahim as my legal executor, and request the refuge of all good people, Mirza Muhammad Jafar Nishaburi and Mirza Sayyid Ali, and from Muhammad Jafar and Mir Muhammad Ali to help him (in executing my will)... First the burial ceremony should be held according to the injunction of the religious law...I left some rupees from my legal income to be spent for this purpose, if it is available, spend it; and I have no heirs at all; there are some servants who suffered the toil of (my) service, and they are shelterless, needy
and encumbered by a family; firstly comfort them that they stop crying and not anxious of their lonliness; and they should not be wandering until [the customary] forty days, and (later) stay at this house as they are now, and their meal should not be reduced, and (the will executors) attend to their affairs... and (beware) that this place should not to be deserted; it is a mosque, and the reward of its maintenance is great, and adorn the burial place of this humble, with reciting the verses of the Quran, and beware that all unjustly practices would be punished later, and it is evident to the people that I did not have any transanction with others, today there is not a bit of others’ claims over me, and I am not indebted to anybody... nothing of my wealth- even one dirham- is with someone. What I have taken in possession and what there is in this cottage is visible to all. On the whole they are not worthy of mention; some old dress, and some clay and copper utensil with some ragged carpet... and one copy of the great Quran, written by the late father, and a small Sahifa, one copy of Miftah ul Falah, and one copy of diwan of verses (very likely his own), and a few other papers. The will executor has authority to keep them or distribute them or sell them... I was alone in this world, and I depart to the other world in a foreign land; every body who dies in a foreign land becomes martyr... Written on Muharram 1117 A.H.191

Hazin’s tomb in Fatiman is a simple grave built of red stone on a raised platform. His grave is not covered with anything. On the tablet of his tomb some of his verses are carved which Hazin permitted while he was still alive.

191 Tazkirat ul Mu’asirin, A.M.U, Subhanallal Farsiya, 920, 71a-72b.
On the top of the table is Allah, the holy name of God followed by these sentences:

Ya یا پروردگار

العبد الراحمی للرحمن ربه محمد المدعو علی ابی طالب الجیلانی

At the foot of the table is the following verse:

Rawshan shud az wisal-i tu shabhay-i tar-i ma

Subh-i qiymat ast chiraghi mazar-i ma

Our dark nights have brightened up through your union

The down of resurrection is the torch of our tomb.

On the eastern side of the tomb appears this verse:

Zaban dan-i mahabat budi am digar ni midanam,

hami danam ki gush az dust peyghami shanid inja.

I’ve been a pupil of love and know nothing else

Only this much I know that the ear heard a message from the friend here.

And on the western side is the following verse:

Hazin az pay-i rah peyma basi sar gashtagi didam,

Sar-i shurida bar halin-i asayish rasid inja.

Through the path- traversing foot O Hazin I’ve seen many troubles

The mad head came to the pillow of peace here.192

Hazin’s perception of Indian Emperors and Courtiers

In the last pages of his travelogue, Hazin explains the relation between the Iranian and Indian Emperors. He goes back far in history of the legendary Iranian kings. Treating

legends as history he writes that in the ancient period Indian rulers were appointed by the Iranian kings. According to Manuchihr's order, Sam bin Nariman came to India and appointed Kishurāy as the ruler. Likewise Kayqubad send the renowned Iranian hero, Rustam-i Dastan, to this land and he assigned Suraj as the ruler of India. When the Iranian rulers left India, the Indian rulers rebelled against them, so they had to come back and appoint another ruler.\(^{193}\)

Hazin explained why ancient Iranian monarchs appointed a deputy in India, and why they themselves did not stay in this country:

The reason wherefore the kings of Persia would not retain the government of Hindustan in their own hands is manifest to every clear-sighted person. No man, who has a residence and place of abode such as the province of Persia, which in their nature and essence are the best adjusted and most noble, and to all outward appearance are the most beautiful and perfect habitation in the known world, will ever be able to by his own choice reside in Hindustan. Every person’s nature is so formed that without necessity he will never consent to a long abode in this country; and this feeling is common to the king, the peasant, and the soldier.\(^{194}\)

This part of Hazin’s comment shows his prejudicial outlook towards India; which does not match up with his scholarly status.

Hazin’s favourable opinion towards the Iranian kings extends to the Safavids. According to him, Babur got his kingdom back with the support of Shah Isma’il I. Mutually Babur remained a sincere friend to the Safavid king. He expressed his loyalty to

\(^{193}\) Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 272.
\(^{194}\) Ibid, p. 272.
the Safavid king by reciting *khutba* and minting coins in his name. In Hazin’s opinion the subsequent Mughal emperors did not cultivate such relations with the Safavids. Of course in distress they sought help from Iranian kings, but they later turned a cold shoulder. Hazin castigates Muhammad Shah for his indifference towards Shah Tahmasp’s difficulties. To make the matter worse the Mughal king established communications with Mir Wais, the leader of Ghilzai Afghans, whose son Mahmud invaded Isfahan in 1722. Sarkar’s comments on the diplomatic rupture between Iranian kings and the Mughal emperors accords with Hazin’s remark:

The conduct of the effete court of Delhi towards Persia had been marked by violation of diplomatic usage and courtesy and even by unfriendly negligence. For several generations past there had been an exchange of envoys, presents and diplomatic courtesies between the Mughal Emperors of India and the Safawi Shahs of Persia. Abbas II continued this practice even after he had wrested Qandahar from Shahjahan and fought four campaigns against Mughal arms. At all events, formal letters of congratulation used to be written by one court to the other at every new accession to the throne. But Muhammad Shah forgetting this usage, neglected to felicitate Shah Tahmasp II after he had overthrown the Afghan usurper and recover the throne of his ancestors. Nay, the Delhi Government, no doubt out of a timid love of quiet, had kept up friendly relations with Mir Wais and his son Husain (the usurpers of Qandahar), though the latter had raided the province of Multan and ravaged the imperial territory.\(^{195}\)

Essentially Hazin considered the Tamurids of Iran and India as incompetent rulers.

In his view, Sultan Husain Mirza Bayqara (1470-1506) was the best king among the

\(^{195}\) *Nadir Shah in India*, pp. 15-16.
Timurids of Iran, and others were no match to him or worthy of praise.\textsuperscript{196} The reason for this view is evident. Both Timurids, in Central Asia and India, were descendents of an invader who gained sovereignty by invading other countries, and to this end resorted to destruction of the country and its culture. Moreover in Hazin’s opinion, a noble ancestry was necessary for rulers, while Timurds were devoid of such lineage. The Timurids called themselves Chaghtai Turks, and looked towards the Mongols as half barbarians “nevertheless they prided in tracing their descent from Chingiz Khan, and drew constant inspiration from the life, work and the Yasa (laws) laid down by that great conqueror”.\textsuperscript{197} If Hazin was favourably disposed towards Sultan Husain Bayqara it was also on account of the latter’s reputation as a patron of literature and learning.

When Hazin arrived Delhi in 1739, the Mughal imperial power was on the decline. Earlier, Bahadur Shah who was himself not a potent king (1707-1712) did not permit his nobles to impose their desire to dominate. Bahdur Shah, rejected the desire of Zulfiqar Khan, a powerful noble to appoint his father, Asad khan as the wazir. The Emperor said to the \textit{mir bakhshi} that two pivotal offices of the Empire should not be concentrated into the hands of the father and the son.\textsuperscript{198}

After Bahadur Shah’s death the princes engaged in warfare with each other to take possession of the throne. This weakened the Mughal sovereignty further. Enthronement of unworthy emperors caused the employment of incapable persons as high officers of the court. These \textit{amirs} considered their interests superior to the interests of the Empire.

\textsuperscript{196} Tazkirat ul Ahwal, p. 271.
\textsuperscript{197} R.P, Tripathi, Rise and fall of the Mughal Empire, Allahabad, 1963. p. 1.
\textsuperscript{198} Zahir Ud Din Malik, The Reign of Muhammad Shah, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 6-7.
Selfishness motivated them to implement faulty policies and every one tried to eliminate others from the scene. This process lasted to the end of the Mughal period. 199

Prince Raushan Akhtar, Bahadur Shah’s grandson became the emperor on 29 September 1719 on the will of two brothers, Hasan Ali Khan and Husain Ali Khan. Like the previous Emperors, Muhammad Shah’s court had become the field of political competition among the *wazir, mir bakhshi* and other countries.

When Hazin entered Delhi in the seventeenth year of Muhammad Shah’s reign, one of the Emperor’s favorites was an Iranian noble, Umdat ul Mulk Amir Khan II. He was the son of Amir Khan I the governor of Kabul in Aurangzeb’s reign. Amir Khan was neither a notable military nor a civil administrator, but his closeness to the Emperor was on account of his pleasing manners. He also had a poetic talent. Umdat ul Mulk was the leader of the Irani group in the Mughal court. This faction dominated other groups after Nadir’s return to Iran and strengthened its position. Umdat ul Mulk’s popularity near the Emperor provoked his rivals, Nizam ul Mulk and the Wazir, Qamarud Din Khan, to drive him out of the court. This antagonism compelled Muhammad Shah to appoint Umdat ul Mulk as the governor (*subadar*) of Allahabad, where he remained for four years. Afterwards the king summoned him to the court in 1743 and by this time he had obtained considerable power. Umdat ul Mulk’s influence made him arrogant towards the Emperor and his high officers. Eventually his rudeness towards the emperor got him killed on 25 December 1746.

Hazin’s fame as a man of literature and politics caused the Mughal Emperor, Muhammad Shah to demand his presence at the court through the customary mediation of Umdatul Mulk, but Hazin declined the offer. 200 While Mir Husain Dost denied any meeting

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199 Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shah Wali Allah and his time*, Canberra, 1980, pp. 121-122.

between Hazin and Muhammad Shah,\textsuperscript{201} Muhammad Husain Azad mentioned that Muhammad Shah met Hazin and during the visitation asked him to accept a ministry but Hazin declined the offer.\textsuperscript{202} According to Tabatabai, since Hazin was indifferent towards wealth and also because he foresaw the decline of Muhammad Shah’s power, he refused to cooperate with the Emperor.\textsuperscript{203} Tabatabi’s assessment could be true, but it is also possible that Hazin did not consider the Mughals as capable rulers, and this may have been reason another for his indifference towards the court and imperial service.

Poetry was the link between Hazin and Umdat ul Mulk. According to the author of \textit{Makhzn ul Ghara’ib}, Umdat ul Mulk hastened to meet Hazin as soon as the latter came to Delhi in 1736 and entertained him in his home. Then the Iranian noble gained a \textit{jagir} for his countryman at forty thousand rupees near Akbarabad (Agra). What is worthy of mention here is Arzu’s statement regarding the date of the meeting between Umdat ul Mulk and Hazin. Arzu writes that Amir Khan met Hazin when the former came back from Allahabad i.e. in 1156/1743 and gained for Hazin a sum of 20 lakh \textit{dams} (copper coins) from the emperor. Due to Hazin’s fame and Amir Khan’s affinity with him, it appears that the latter had to meet the Iranian poet before 1743, the date mentioned by Arzu.

The matter of the grant given by Muhammad Shah to Hazin is a point that many \textit{tazkiras} have mentioned repeatedly. The value of this gift is described differently in the sources; Arzu puts its value at of 20 lakh \textit{dams}.\textsuperscript{204} The author of \textit{Maqalat ush Shuara} has mentioned that Muhammad Shah was devoted towards Hazin, and added that it is

\begin{footnotes}
\item[203] Siyar ul Mutaakhkhirin, p. 615.
\item[204] Majmaun Nafais, p. 379.
\end{footnotes}
rumoured that a sum of one thousand rupees was fixed for his expenses.\textsuperscript{205} According to Mir Husain Dost, Umdat ul Mulk entertained Hazin, and introduced him to the King to get a \textit{jagir} near Akbarabad worth forty thousands rupees. Mir Husain Dost indicated that the financial help to Hazin by the Mughal court was given after the return of Umdat ul Mulk from Allahabad to Delhi (1743). According to this source while Hazin had rejected grants before, Umdat ul Mulk gained his confidence and offered him a subvention of a few lakhs. He then handed over the grant to an agent with the instructions to pay over the proceeds to Hazin at each harvest.\textsuperscript{206}

The financial support given by Umdat ul Mulk dried up after his murder in 1746. Hence a few years later, around 1752, in the course of a letter to Haji Ghulam Husain, Hazin complained of his financial stringency.

One of my friends had written regarding my expenses. What could I do? I can not think of a remedy. I don’t have a trustworthy servant, and I am not able to supervise every thing [myself]. I am not in a good mood and the material things (properties) have never been worthy of my attention. My food is a morsel and I am wearing a denim cloth for three to four years. Nothing is spent extravagantly. But my debts are due to the expenses of this country, especially due to my travels; and I can not settle anywhere unless ill my expenses go down. If I stay somewhere for one or two years, it is like living in a caravanserai and I am waiting like a traveller. However, I hope God

\textsuperscript{206} \textit{Tazkira-i Husaini}, p. 106.
comes to my rescue and does not leave me indebted to someone. I received one thousand rupees and I have sent its receipt separately.207

Hazin had some friends who frequented the Mughal court and kept him abreast of the court politics. One of them was Nawab Sadr ud Din Muhammad Khan with whom Hazin corresponded frequently. Nawab Sadrud Din was the grandson of Ali Mardan Khan, governor of Qandahar during Shah Abbas' reign. Later, Ali Mardan Khan left the Safavid service because his enemies accused him of rebellious designs against Shah Safi, and he joined Shah Jahan's court. Incidentally Nawab Sadrud Din also was not agreeable with the Mughal courtiers. Although he was cordial with Samsam ud Dawla Khan-i Dauran, and the latter invited him on account of his literary merits to attend the imperial court regularly, the Nawab refrained and mounted personal attacks on Khan-i Dauran and other nobles. Sadr ud Din and Hazin had similar views on politics. In the Nawab's opinion, a notable ancestry was necessary for a wazir and without it his competence was compromised.208 The following remark clearly shows the rivalry between the Mughal nobles in this period:

During this period (the reign of Muhammad Shah) the post of wizarat was the most coveted goal of a noble's life. It lured and tempted noble after noble to plunge headlong in a war of succession after another. It was the conflict and competition for this prize which widened the rift between different sections of the governing class, and ultimately destroyed the power prestige and position of the emperor.209

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207 Hazin, Ruqaat, A.M.U, 286, f. 51a.
208 Nawab Sadr ud Din Muhammad, Irshad ul Wuzara, Persian MS., A.M.U., Abdus Salam Collection, Copy in Noor Microfilm Center, f. 61b.
Undoubtedly the inefficiency of the courtiers was the result of incapability of the emperor, and Hazin was aware of it. Hence despite the interest of the Emperor to meet Hazin he refrained from going to the court, so Muhammad Shah decided to visit Hazin at his residence, but Hazin left home.\(^{210}\) Azad however writes that a meeting did take place between the two.\(^ {211}\)

During Nadir's invasion of India, a serious rivalry erupted between the three significant Mughal courtiers, Nizam ul Mulk Asaf Jah, Khan-i-Dauran and Saādat Khan Burhan ul Mulk. While Nadir's march from Nadirabad to Delhi took nine months, the Emperors men were not unanimous in their decision to fight him. Hazin mentions in his travelogue that when he was going from Sirhind to Delhi, he crossed Muhammad Shah's army which had traversed four stages (chahar manzil) during two months.\(^ {212}\) The Emperor tried to bring about reconciliation between Khan-i Dauran and Nizam ul Mulk, and both the nobles held discussions for several days regarding military preparations and defence plans, creating the impression that a close understanding had been reached between them. But under the appearance of formal coordination the two nobles entertained the deepest distrust against each other and their old rivalries persisted. Whatever plan was put forward by Khan-i Dauran in the king's council was opposed by Nizam ul Mulk, and whatever was suggested by the latter was openly contradicted by the former.\(^ {213}\)

When Hazin was informed of the deep antagonism among the imperial nobles, he stated that if such a situation prevailed it would be better if Nadir occupied all of India.\(^ {214}\)

\(^{210}\) Ghulam Hamadani Mushafi, \textit{iqd-i Surayya}, Delhi, 1934. p. 22.
\(^{211}\) Azad, \textit{Nigaristan-i Fars}, p. 210
\(^{212}\) \textit{Tazkira d al Ahwal}, p. 280.
\(^{214}\) Azad, \textit{Nigaristan Fars}, p. 29.
It is in this context that one should examine Hazin’s perception of the courtiers, some of it reflected in his satirical verses. Hazin’s satires of Indian courtiers are mostly inserted in his *Diwan*. These pungent satires are omitted in some copies of his *Diwan*. Nawal Kishore’s printed text has omitted them as well. The Lytton library manuscript includes the most part of these verses, such as the following, referring to the king and his courtiers:

The king in this lucky year
Is looking more for good and bad omens
He became intimate with puppies
He treats them as his companion and courtiers (*yar o musahab*)

*Khusraw-i ahd dar in sal-i niku,*
*Bishtar sal-i niku mijuyad.*
*Ulfat andakhta ba sog bachigan*
*Hama ra yar-o musahab guyad.*

Walih Daghistani, Hazin’s friend writes that although the king, the nobles and other people had expressed perfect kindness toward Hazin, he satirized them stringently. 215 Khatak also criticises Hazin and finds his staires impossible to justify, for the king had been very kind to him. 216 Earlier, however, Khatak narrates the remarks of Ali Ibrahim Khan Banarasi that at the time of Hazin’s arrival in India there was no trace left of any knowledge or sign of learning, because of the king’s indulgence in sports and play, and the nobles’ self-indulgence. Men of all professions having transgressed their limits and

relinquished their former rules were committing inauspicious deportments and originating abominable and unpraiseworthy fashions.\textsuperscript{217}

In Hazin's view immorality was unacceptable whether by the Mughal or Safavid kings. We know that he was deeply devoted to the Safavids, but when he was informed of Tahmasp's immorality, he composed the following verse addressed to him:

Oh! The king, what is the result of the heavy wine?
And what is the result of boundless inebriety?
The king is drunk, the country is ruined and the enemy back and forth
It is evident what would happen in such a situation.
\begin{verbatim}
Shaha zi may-i giran chi bar khahad khas?
Waz mastiy-i bi karan chi bar khahad khas?
Shah mast-o jahan kharab-o dushman pas-o pish,
Peydast kaz in miyan chi bar khahad khas.
\end{verbatim}

Hazin's conduct was devoid of flattery. As a scholar of some repute, he avoided adulation during meeting statesmen. When he visited Shuja 'ud Dawla in Banaras, did not pay him more than half a bow and told that a whole bow is meant for kings and escorting is reserved for mujtahids and ulama. This statement shows that in Hazin's view the rank of religious scholars was higher than kings.

Hazin was conscious of the effects of political turmoil, warfare and destruction around him. At that time, the Maratha invasion of central and northern India was a major event. Hazin has some notes on Maratha incursions in the northern and eastern parts of the

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid, p. 27.
subcontinent after 1754, but on account of his practice of not mentioning dates, the account is not systematic.

During several months the enemy (ghanim) has campaigned and plans to conquer the lands. Since the landowners and all people know that, in the case of success of the enemy, they would lose their lives, property and honour, they put up resistance. Some days passed in fighting, and eventually they were defeated and the enemy ruled over the land. They have advanced up to the river Chambal. At the moment, on Friday, the twenty third, it is the eighth day that the enemy has passed the river and has come this side. They have occupied Dholpur Bari and the region around. People say that the troops of the enemy consist of one lakh soldiers, but more informed people say that, they are sixty thousand cavalry and numerous infantry while a huge group is following them. Although the state of this ruined town is evident, no body can imagine its condition unless sees it.  

In order to examine Hazin’s political views, his position on the quarrel between the Nawab of Awadh and Raja Balwant Singh is significant. When Hazin migrated to Banaras, the governor of this town, Raja Balwant Singh, revolted against Shujaud Daula (1756 AD). The Nawab went to quell the Raja’s rebellion and consulted Hazin in this regard. Since Hazin enjoyed the financial support of the Raja, he advised the Nawab to come to terms with him. Circumstances eventually forced the Nawab to do that. In a letter written on 4 Shaban (no year) Hazin has a report of the conflict between the Nawab and the Raja.

I had entered this ruined town (Banaras) after I left Azimabad (Patna) with several fatal diseases. Accidentally and on account of the imprudence of the governor of this

place (Raja Balwant Singh), suddenly the victorious troop arrived. The havoc reached such a degree that people had to flee; the crops were plundered and houses were burnt. It is strange that I am still alive. The tumult is not describable on account of its intricacy. While the governor was appointed again, the Nawab's army came back, and in order to warn him, they left a group of soldiers, as so far this army is here, and it is rumoured that they would leave here during the coming days. ²¹⁹

Like wise Shah Alam II and Shujaud Daula met Hazin in 1764, before their defeat at the hands of the British at Buxar. Hazin advised them not to fight the British, and told them in case of an eventuality, they should rely on their cavalry. He likened Shujaud Dawla in the political affairs to a child and forbade him to fight against the British. ²²⁰

The advice that he had given to Shuja ud Dawla for not fighting with the British was remarkable. This assessment he had made after realizing the military strength of the Nawab. He foresaw that the fight would bring defeat to the Nawab. The result would be to accept all the terms and conditions laid by the British. This judgement was not based on his partiality or any interest that could be with the British. He advised the Nawab on rely to his cavalry in order to meet the challenge of the enemy in a better way and more forcefully.

Hazin took the view that a country can be ruled with political stability and prosperity only by a strong monarch. He also believed that even though scholars may not be apart of the political apparatus, they had some responsibility towards their country. His disenchantment with Muhammad Shah had various causes. In his view, the Mughal king was lacking in necessary qualifications as emperor. His weakness and debauchery prevented him from becoming a powerful king. The other cause of his dislike was his

²¹⁹ Ibid., f. 66b.
²²⁰ Nigaristan-i Fars, p. 216.
Mongol ancestry, which Hazin regarded as nomadic, uncultured and barbaric. Moreover, in Hazin’s view, Muhammad Shah was indifferent to Shah Sultan Husain Safavi’s plight, when the Ghalzai Afghans invaded his capital, and also he was unconcerned towards Sultan Husain’s son, Shah Tahmasp after that event. In Hazin’s opinion the Mughal king, instead of giving assistance to the Safavid king, was inclined toward his rival, Mir Wais Afghan. Moreover when Shah Tahmasp asked Muhammad Shah not to admit the fugitive Afghans, he shirked off this request.

Finally the Mughal king had employed incompetent persons as his counsellors. The presence of these courtiers in Hazin’s opinion caused the fall of the monarchy.

Hazin’s Perceptions of Indian literary men: Prejudice and polemics

When Hazin was living in Delhi and later in Banaras, he interacted with persons who acknowledged his excellence in literature and poetry. They usually presented their verse compositions to him for correction (tashih). Sher Afghan Khan alias Bāsiti (d.1784) met Hazin in Banaras and showed him his Diwan. When the renowned Iranian poet read it, he explicitly told him that it should be washed all over. He then advised Bāsiti to compose quatrains. Khushgu also was settled in Banaras and visited Hazin to show his verses. When Abd ul Hakim Hákim met Hazin in Banaras, the latter asked Hákim to recite some of his verses but he was told that the poet did not remember them. Hazin then invited Hákim

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221 Iqd-i Surayya, p. 15.
222 Bindraban Das Khushgu was a poet, and writer of a tazkira, entitled Safina Khushgu. He was one of Siraj ud Din Ali Khan Arzu’s disciples. Arzu wrote in his Majma un Nafais that Khushgu was his constant companion for 25 years. See Storey Persian Literature, C.A. I, pp. 826-827.
to dine in his house and bring his composition. The next day, Hākim went to Hazin’s residence and presented him his odes. Hazin read them carefully and praised the verses.224

Hazin’s disciples came from diverse backgrounds, and they were both commoners and elites. The list includes Mirza Haidar, Bijan, a resident of Jais in Awadh; Chet Singh, Maharaja Balwant Singh’s son, who ruled Banaras from 1770 to 1781 and picked up a good deal of Persian; Mirza Muhammad Hashim, known as Dil; Shaikh Gulshan Ali Gulshan; the son of an influential trader in Banaras Madh Ram, Mirza Abd ur Rida Isfahani, Matin; Raja Ram Narain, whom Hazin granted the takhallus (nom de plume) Mauzun; he was appointed the governor of Azimabad and granted the title of Raja by Mahabat Jang; Saiyid Khairat Ali Dehlawi, Mushtaq; Mirza Ali Naqi Khan, Naqi; Mir Muhammad Sami Dehlawi Niyazi; Mulla Muhammad Abd Ullah, Sabiq. Sabiq would visit the residence of Hazin every day to recite all he had composed. Hazin in turn recited his own verses to Sabiq; Muhammad Ahsan Khan Dehlawi, Sami.225 Since these people were conversant with Persian language and literature, they mainly benefited from Hazin’s competence in poetry, but there were others who were aware of Hazin’s knowledge in other sciences to take advantage of it. According to Shushtari, Tafazzul Husain Khan (1727-1801) who specialized in philosophy and logic, studied under Hazin in Banaras.226 Mir Muhammad Husain Faizabadi (d.1205) also has been mentioned as one of Hazin’s pupils in India.227

Before deliberating on Hazin’s critical opinion of Indian literary men, a review his own poetry is necessary.

224 Abd ul Hakim Hakim, Tazkira Mardum-i Dida, Lahore, 1961, p. 66.
225 Khatak, Shaikh Muhammad Ali Hazin His Life, Times & Work, pp 70-76.
226 Tuhfat ul Alam, p. 364.
Hazin’s poetry

Hazin was inclined towards poetry right from his childhood, although he did not find much support for it in his family:

I enjoyed it (poetry) a lot. I was interested in composing verses but only in private. When my teacher was informed, he forbade me from composing verses and my late father insisted on that too. I abandoned it, but I was not able to give it up entirely. Whatever came to my mind I wrote it down although I kept it a secret.\textsuperscript{228}

Hazin’s other teacher in his childhood was Shaykh Khalilullah Taliqani who himself composed verses occasionally. He was supportive of Hazin’s interest, and asked Hazin to recite his verses for him. In addition to this, the teacher gave him a glimpse of austerity which impressed him:

For more or less forty years, he was contented with a robe and during night and day he was satisfied with a morsel. Explaining the quality of his asceticism and the manner of his life will require a lot of time.\textsuperscript{229}

It is quite possible that spending three years under a teacher who preferred a secluded corner to association with people influenced Hazin’s disposition. Shaykh Khalilullah was the one who gave the pen name “Hazin” (sorrowful) to this unknown poet who later acquired distinction.

\textsuperscript{228} \textit{Tazkiratul Ahwal}, p. 152.
\textsuperscript{229} \textit{Tazkirat ul Muasirin}, p. 116.
It was customary among the Persian poets to copy distinguished versifiers. This method was known by different titles, like imitation (taqlid), following (payrowi), going to meet (istiqbal) and rejoinder (jawab). Although the poet was imitating, yet at the same time, he wanted to show his superiority over the model poet. According to Mushafi, the compiler of Iqd-i Surrayya (Necklace of Pleiades), a biography of poets, Hazin versified an elegy in the style of Shaukat Bukhari when he was seven, and recited an ode in response to Wahid uz Zaman Mirza Tahir’s ode⁴, when he was nine years old. Mushafi continues that Wahid uz Zaman took Hazin in his arms and encouraged him.⁵

The privilege of growing in a family where poetic assemblies were organized provided further impetus to Hazin’s creativity as can be seen from the event he describes:

One day a group of talented poets gathered in my father’s house. I was also invited to this assembly. One of those present recited a couplet of Mulla Muhtasham Kashi and my father asked me to compose another couplet in the same field. Instantly I composed a distich and recited it, then I composed further. Everyone was surprised. Then my father said to me: I allow you to compose verses now, but not so much that you waste your time. He presented me his penholder for composing those verses.⁶

In his Diwan, Hazin pointed that at the peak of creativity, verses flew from his pen effortlessly:

⁴ Wahid uz Zaman Mirza Muhammad Tahir was one of the dignitaries in the Safavid period. He had various occupations in their court such as historiography in the court of Shah Abbas II and Wizarat in Shah Sulaiman’s reign. He composed verses also. (See Tazkirat ul Muasirin, pp. 141-142)
⁵ Ghulam Hamadani Mushafi, Iqd-i Surrayya, Delhi, 1934, p. 21.
⁶ Tazkiratul Ahwal, pp. 157-8.
Without my will, the idea erupts from my lips,
Since the eloquence is near me temperamentally\textsuperscript{233}

\textit{Nukta bi khart mi rasad bi labam},
\textit{Chun tabi'ist naghz guftari.}

At that time Hazin's right hand was injured during horse riding, and he was under treatment for one year. Still he was not discouraged to compose verses and wrote them with his left hand. He wrote a \textit{masnawi} (long poem), \textit{Saqi Nama}, of one thousand couplets in this period.

Hazin experienced unrequited love in his youth. The result of this experience was an acute illness. This is all that we know of his love-life:

In those days, one of the accidents and strange events that befell me, was the attraction of a beauty and the allurement of an accomplished lady, which drove my heart to distraction.\textsuperscript{234}

Since he was not able to write during his illness, others wrote down his verses. In Hazin's view these verses were special and he collected them along with that he had composed from the outset. It was in this manner that his first \textit{Diwan} was prepared which includes \textit{qasaid}, \textit{masnawis}, \textit{ghazalyat} and \textit{rubaiyat}, totalling almost seven or eight thousand couplets.\textsuperscript{235}

\textsuperscript{234} \textit{Tazkirat ul Ahwal}, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{235} \textit{Ibid}, p. 175.
Hazin was a distinguished poet and his opinion was counted as the final word among Iranian poets. When he came back to Isfahan from his first journey to Shiraz, Mirza Abu Talib Shulistani, a literary personality of Shiraz, asked him to judge the works of two poets, Jamal ud Din Abd ur Razzaq Isfahani and his son, Kamal ud Din. There was an argument among literary men about the poetry of the father and the son, and when Hazin gave his opinion everyone agreed. Hazin expressed his views in the form of an elegant *masnawi* in which he preferred the son’s verses to the father’s. 236

Many writers paid compliments to his poetic talent. Waleh Daghistani described him as follows:

> In eloquence of speech and clarity of writing he was matchless. In rhetoric he was the wonder of his age. In truth, there is no poet like him in today’s world. The height of his eloquence reaches the degree that the thought is unable to reach. 237

Hazin compiled his second *Diwan* including ten thousands couplet in Isfahan before 1715. He prepared his third *Diwan* with three to four thousand couplets after 1717. While Hazin has indicated that he collected his fourth *Diwan* before 1729 at Mashhad, in *Tazkirat ul Ahwal*, in one of his verses he refers to its completion in 1742 in Delhi: 239

> It was in the year of thousand and hundred and fifty five that
> The copy of the forth *diwan* was completed
> Its qasida, ghazal, qit‘ah and ruba‘i

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238 *Tazkirat ul Ahwal*, p. 225.
239 *Diwan-i Ashar*, p. 168.
When you count, they are two hundred couplets more than three thousands\textsuperscript{240}

\textit{Hizar-o yik sad-o panjah-o panj-i hijri bud,}

\textit{Ki gasht muskhay-i diwan-i charumin sipari.}

\textit{Qasida-o ghazal-o ruba’i-i an,}

\textit{Du sad fuzun zi hizar ast-o si chu har shimuri.}

This statement created the impression that Hazin composed his fourth \textit{Diwan} in Delhi, while in fact he rewrote it there. He intended to compose a \textit{masnawi} like \textit{Bustan} by Sadi Shirazi, and in this order composed one thousand couplets, but he was not able to complete the work.

When Hazin was writing \textit{Tazkirat ul Muasirin} in 1751, he referred to five \textit{Diwans} that he had penned. Sirajud Din Ali Khan Arzu, Hazin’s contemporary poet referred to his fourth \textit{Diwan} as the last.\textsuperscript{241} Probably Arzu’s statement was made before the fifth \textit{Diwan} was composed or became public.

Like many other poets, Hazin praised his poetry a great deal:

\textit{My pen is like that sugar-crunching parrot}

\textit{Which is renowned in the sweetness}

\textit{I expect that a jeweller}

\textit{Purchases my pearls}\textsuperscript{242}

\textit{Kilkam an tuti-i shikar shikan ast,}

\textit{Ki buwad shura dar shikar bari.}

\textit{Chishm daram ki chun guhar sanji,}

\textit{Guharam ra kunad kharidari.}

\textsuperscript{240} \textit{Ibid}, p. 168.

\textsuperscript{241} \textit{Majmaun Nafais}, p. 379.

\textsuperscript{242} \textit{Ibid}
Hazin's expectations were not fulfilled in India. His poetry was criticized and he became dejected, as can be seen from the following couplet:

I swear by God who created the universe by a sign
I scorn poetry and I wish I was devoid of this art

*Bi khudayi ki az isharat-i kun*

*Alami ra namuda m'imari*

*Ki mara shir-o sha'iri ar ast,*

*Kash budam az in hunar ari.*

And more:

What I gained from popularity and poetry is that
The eloquence made my value concealed in the world
The lowliness of poetry buried me
I have been buried alive under this dullness

*Tarfī az shuhrat-o az sh'ir ki bastam in ast,*

*Ki sukhān qadr-i mara kard bi alam mastur.*

*Zillat-i sh'ir furū burd mara dar dil-i khak,*

*Zir-i in gard-i kisadi shuda am zinda bi gur.*

Hazin's dissatisfaction with poetry had another reason. The beauty of Hazin's verses caused his contemporaries to pay attention more to his poetic side than to his scholarly character Waleh Daghistani has only a short sentence regarding Hazin's scholarly achievements. Moreover Arzu wrote in this regard:

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*Rriyazush Shuara*, p. 200.
It is mentioned that Shaykh is a scholar and author of some books, but no books by him in hikmat and kalam are found; meanwhile by studying his biography, his works would be known. Yes he composed verses. 244

Khatak has ascribed this statement to Thabât, but the point is that he refers to Hazin’s work Masabih ul Azlam fi Iraat il Kalam, to say that:

This is a clever remark, meaning that Hazin is ignorant of philosophy and kalam. The existence of the present treatise certainly gives a lie to the statement of Thabat which could not make as early as 1157 A.H. (viz., the date of composition of the present treatise). 245

In Hazin’s period, the demand for poetry was so high that every body called himself a poet and verifying all the claims was not possible. Hazin had high standards. Composing verses was not as easy as common people had imagined, and versification needed many qualifications. The norm was that someone by composing some fair verses could not become an established poet. 246

Hazin composed different types of Persian poetry such as qasida (laudatory poem), ruba’i (quatrain) and ghazal (lyric poem). Hazin’s most beautiful verses are his ghazals, which form seven thousands of his verses. 247 Love is the main factor that plays the most vital role in his poems. The study of his ghazals creates an impression on the mind of the reader that Hazin is speaking with himself in terms full of love. The expression of love may

244 Majmaun Nafais, p. 380.  
245 Khatak, Shaikh Muhammad Ali Hazin His Life, Times & Works, p. 189.  
246 Tazkirat ul Muasirin, p. 94.  
have had his personal experience at the background, an emotion that started with wordly affairs but gradually turned into spiritual sentiments. In one of his verses typical of his love-theme he praises love and pays homage to it in these words:

How wonderful is love, that turned a drop into ocean
It made my heart the shell for pure pearl.

Marhaba ishq kaz u qatray-i ma darya shud,
Dil-i ma ar sadaf-i guwhar-i ijlali kard.

A lot of Hazin’s poetry was original, but some of it was inspired by old masters. Hafiz was one of them. One finds many ghazals in which Hazin imitates Hafiz by using the same meters and rhyming words. In the frame of the meters and words used by Hazin, he has moulded the ideas of love in the same fashion that has been the style of Hafiz. When he while writing of the adventure of his love in his youth, he mentioned the following verses of Hafiz:

I say it openly, and am happy in what I say
I am love’s slave, and free, else of both worlds
There is nothing on the tablet of my heart, but the Alif of my beloved’s stature
What can I do? my master taught me no other letter.

Fash mi guyarn-o az guftay-i khud dilshadam,
Banday-i ishqam-o az hard u jahan azadam.
Nist bar lawh-i dilam juz alif-i qamat-i yar,
Chi kunam harf-i digar yad nadad ustadam.
Hazin’ Style in poetry (Sabk-i Hindi)

Hazin believed that his poetry was in the Iraqi style. He composed the following verse in a letter to one of his contemporary scholars:

In the style of Iraqi, from India
I am sending the draft of my work to Isfahan
Zi kilk-i Iraqi nigad-i khud az Hind,
Sawadi bi khak-i Safahan firistam.

Since the discussion of styles in Persian poetry is put up, it is proper to introduce them briefly. The first Persian style in poetry after Islam, was Sabk-i Khurasani, because the practitioners of this style were located in Khurasan, the seat of Samanid (819-1005) and Saffarid (867-1495) dynasties in Iran who were supporters of the New Persian language. The abundance of long qasida and scarcity of ghazal, the lack of figures of speech, the existence of a specific meaning between the couplets of a poem, and description of the beauties of nature were some of the features of this style. Among the prominent poets of this style, Unsurî, Farrokhi and Firdawsi are worthy of mention.248

After Khurasani, a new style appeared in Iran which was known as Sabk-i Iraqi which flourished in the central part of Iran, known as Iraq-i Ajam. This style reached its peak in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and contrary to the previous style, poetry of this style was devoid of long qasida, and more inclined towards ghazal. Along with the tendency of versifying ghazal, the poetry of this period gained elegance and softness. In Sabk-i Iraqi, the words of the poet were fluent and charming and his phraseology was

without intricacy. The existence of some mystically oriented terms like wine (may) goblet (saghar), the old wine seller (pir-i mayfurush) and the like are abundant in this type of poetry. Jamal ud Din and Kamal ud Din Isfahani, S’adi and Hafiz are among the most popular poets of this style. The beauty of Hafiz’s verses motivated poets to imitate him in composing ghazal

Hazin was influenced by the style of his period, as can be seen from the verse quoted above. However, there is a suggestion that the language of Hazin’s poetry is Sabk-i Hindi or the Indian style, which is not very complicated and esoteric style, but rather a temperate one. There are some basic questions concerning this specific style which need to be addressed.

The lineage and nature of Sabk-i Hindi

It is noteworthy that a specific style of poetry does not appear suddenly. Many factors cause gradual transformation in the method of writing poetry over time. These gradual changes show themselves more openly in a specific era. The case of Sabk-i Hindi demonstrates this.

Some believe that this special style emerged in the early sixteenth century. Those who do not agree with this view say that since in the early sixteenth century a new school of poetry in Iran under the title of Maktab-i Wuq’u appeared, it was thought that this new school was Sabk-i Hindi, whereas Maktab-i Wuq’u was different from the Indain style. In this school the feelings between the lover and the beloved is expressed by the poet. Baba Fighani (d. 1519) renowned as the junior Hafiz, is treated as the founder of this school.

\[249\] Ibid, p. 88.  
\[250\] Herman Ethe, Neupersische Litterature, tr, Tehran, 1958, p. 192.
In Hazin’s opinion Baba’s style was new, firm, pleasing and perfect.\textsuperscript{251} In fact this new school was the precursor of \textit{Sabk-i Hindi};\textsuperscript{252} and a link between it and the Iraqi style.\textsuperscript{253} According to this opinion, the Indian style emerged in the early seventeenth century. It is noteworthy that the elegance and acuteness of \textit{Sabk-i Hindi} are present even in the verses of some poets like Amir Khusrau Dihlawi (d.1324) and Hafiz Shirazi (d.1389) who belonged to a much early period.

\textbf{The Features of \textit{Sabk-i Hindi}}

The three styles of Persian poetry, i.e. Khurasani, Iraqi and Indian have some attributes that separate them from each other. The features of the first two styles have been briefly mentioned. Indian style too has some specific features which can be described as follows:

\textit{Intricacy}

The prominent feature of Indian style poetry is its intricacy (\textit{pichidegy}). Although in the Iraqi style the poets applied similes (\textit{tashbihat}) and metaphors (\textit{istearat}) in their verses, understanding them was not so difficult. In the Safavid period, however, the poets tried to express their thoughts in a manner that the reader was not able to comprehend the meaning so easily. Perhaps due to this obscurity of meaning, western scholars called the poetry of this period “Baroque.”\textsuperscript{254} For instance, Abu Muhammad Muslih bin Abdullah, known as S’adi Shirazi (d. 1272 or 1291), a prominent poet in Iraqi style composed the following verse:

\textsuperscript{253} Ziyûn ul Abîdin Mutamân, \textit{Tahawwul-i Sher-i Farsi}, Tehran, 1920, p.
You meet me and avoid me
Aggravate the heat of your bazar and my fire too

_Didar mikuni wa parhiz mikuni_

_Bazar-i khwish-o atash-i ma tiz mikuni_

And Muhammad Ali Sa'ib, from Indian style, composed the very purport in this way:

The beloved hide herself from the gaze of lunatic lovers due to her great popularity
Suspending in the agitation of the customers is a way of shopkeeping.

_Zi pur kari nazr mipushad az ushshaq-i saudai_

_Dokan darist dar jush-i kharidaran dukan bastan_

The nonexistence of a fixed meaning in the poetry of this style caused some scholars to comment that the meaning of the Indian style verses could be understood only with the aid of geomancy and astroble. 255 It was out of the search for gaining strange ideas that Sa'ib composed:

Friends are trying to get new words,
Sa'ib tries to get strange concepts.

_Yaran talash-i tazagi-i lafz mikunand_

_Saib talash-i mani-i bigana mikunad_

In order to create a new concept, the poet draws on a large set of rhetorical devices. Chief among them are tanasub or muraat-i nazir (harmony of images or congruence of poetic ideas), tazad (antithesis), mubalaghah (hyperbole), iham (double-entendre or amphibology), talmih (allusion), irsal-i masal (illustrative reasoning or argument by illustration or analogy), husn-i talil (poetic explanation), kinayah (symbolic statement) and jinas (alliterative play on words).\(^{256}\)

The overemphasis on finding new themes in Sabk-i Hindi led to exaggeration. Some poets recorded such themes in their verses as their understanding was very difficult and enigmatic. The poets of Sabk-i Hindi are divided into two groups. The author of the Dictionary of Anandraj wrote:

During Shahjahan’s reign, Mirza Muhammad Ali Saib, Abu Talib Kalim, Haji Muhammad Jan Qudsi and Muhammad Quli Salim rose and reconstructed a palace of locution. Due to the colour of this poetry the sugar crunching parrot consumed poison and became green and red with embarrassment.

Here the author referred to the balanced and preferred method of Sabk-i Hindi. Later on he pointed to the intemperate persons in this style and indicated:

And some of their contemporaries and indigents like Mirza Jalal Asir Shahristani, Qasim Mashhadi and Shaukat Bukharai chose another way, and named it fancy

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method (*tarz-i khiyal*) and so much indulged in fancy that the meaning of their verses could not be understood but in fiction.\textsuperscript{257}

Reacting to this type of poetry Hazin wrote:

The poetry of Nasir Ali and the prose of Bedil can not be understood, when I go back to Iran, there will not be anything better than their verses for fun.\textsuperscript{258}

**Innovation: Perpetual search for original poetic idea**

An important feature of *Sabk-i Hindi* which separates it from other styles is the endless search for new themes. Indeed it was the repetitious themes of the Iraqi style that motivated some poets to bring in new ideas. The poet obtained his objective in a number of ways, among them by hitting upon a novel metaphor, or by creating a new variation of an older imagery or theme or by capturing and expressing some subtle feeling or situation.\textsuperscript{259} Yarshatir enumerates nine ways through which a poet could gain new poetic themes.\textsuperscript{260}

In order to show his endeavour to find new poetic ideas, Kalim Amuli, one of the followers of this style composed this verse:

\begin{quote}
I put the heaven under the foot of my thought
In order to obtain a prominent concept
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{258} Azad, *Nigaristan-i Fars*, p. 212.

\textsuperscript{259} Yarshatir, 'Safavid literature, progress or decline', pp. 229-231.

\textsuperscript{260} *Ibid*, pp. 229-235.
The poet took advantage of every thing in the nature or in his mind in order to make new purports.

**The use of common expressions**

As it mentioned earlier, the Safavid period poetry became as popular that all classess tried their hands on the art, allowing some “vulgar” terms to creep into the lexicon of this style. The old words applied in the Khurasani style were abandoned; instead the current vocabulary of Persian language replaced them. Indeed the vocabulary of Indian style is the terminology of the contemporary Persian language.²⁶¹

**The absence of a uniform meaning**

When in Iraqi style, the poet composed a *ghazal*, he tried to convey a specific meaning through some couplets, while in the Indian style there is no unified or fixed meaning among the couplets of a *ghazal* or a *qasida*. In other words, every couplet has a separate message to convey to the reader.²⁶²

**The Construction of *Sabk-i Hindi***

The basis of *Sabk-i Hindi* is that the poet expresses a rational point in one hemistich, and in order to illustrate, mentions a sensible example in the next hemistich. The main part of the work of a poet of this style, during converting the rational point to a sensible example, is applying more artistry. Poets of *Sabk-i Hindi*, called the first hemistich-which was insignificant and could be repetitive-fore hemistich (*pish misra*),

while the sensible hemistich that should be initiative, was called the prominent hemistich (misra-i barjasta). For instance, it is mentioned that, one day, Mirza Muhammad Ali Saib (d.1670) the renowned Iranian poet who elevated this style to its summit, saw a dog and observed the dog bringing his head up while sitting and bringing it down while standing. So Saib composed:

The seated dog is more elevated than the standing dog.

In fact, this hemistich was the sensible or prominent hemistich, and then he composed the next hemistich:

Self conceit gets increased from isolation.

The Causes of the Appearance of Sabk-i Hindi

Modern scholars of Persian literature have tried to explain the causes of the advent of Indian style. Their arguments are summarized below:

Safavid Indifference and Mughal Attraction

Along with the formation of semi- independent Iranian dynasties after Islam, the rulers of these kingdoms usually were the supporters of literary men, and in fact the growth and evolution of Persian literature, to a great deal was effected by the support of the court. It was expected of the Safavids to be the patron of poets too; but some critics claim that the Safavid kings, especially the first Safavid monarchs, were not interested in literature. The

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royal indifference discouraged the poets and forced them to travel to the neighboring countries particularly India. The presence of Iranian poets in India caused their poetry to be affected by the Indian milieu, which led to the formation of Indian style or *Sabk-i Hindi*.


The exit of poetry from the court and its popularity

In the Timurid period of Iran, poetry was practiced by the learned class, and the prominent poets were confined to the court of kings. But in the Safavid period this art was practiced by all classes. Besides the absence of royal patronage, there was another reason for the popularity of Persian poetry. It was during this period that Isfahan, the splendid capital of Safavids reached the highest level of economic growth, and following it the financial condition of its residents also improved. The comparative welfare of people motivated them to search for new sources of amusement and entertainments, and poetry provided their need.\(^{264}\) There was a public trend of composing verses. If in the previous periods, poets were professionals, in this period poets had other occupations. Zahira Lahiji was a baker, Mulla Wathiq was a tailor, and Muhammad Riza Razi was a goldsmith.\(^{265}\) Meanwhile visiting from Isfahan in the reign of Shah Sulayman Safavi, the French traveller, Chardin wrote that poets recited their verses in coffeehouses, and some of them were teashop keepers.\(^{266}\) Some of these poets were amateur and not able even to write or read. Hijabi Yazdi was one of them. He composed around forty couplets during the working day, gave them at night to a scribe to put them on paper.\(^{267}\) Reacting to the

\(^{267}\) *Riyaz ush Shuara*, pp. 277-278; *Naqd-i Khiyal*, p. 73.
participation of all classes in composing poetry Hazin reiterated his elitist view of the craft:

The lower type of poetry is exceedingly worthless and mean, and in fact derogatory to its composers; the middle type of poetry is only a waste of time and its existence and nonexistence are equal.²⁶⁸

The popularity of poetry changed some of its features.

Sabk-i Hindi: the supporters

Siraj ud Din Ali khan Arzu was one of the supporters of Sabk-i Hindi who stood to defend it. He wrote Siraj-i Munir in response to Karnama (see later), and in this book he rejected Munir’s criticism of the verses of four Iranian proponents of Sabk-i Hindi. Although in some cases he admitted that the comprehension of their verses was not easy.

The Indian poets considered their poetry superior to the poetry of the preceding era. Among them Faizi, Kalim and Sa’ib considered themselves poets of very high order, and Urfi felt that his own works marked the apogee of Persian poetry.²⁶⁹

One of the most serious contemporary supporters of Indian style was Amiri Firuzkuhi. As an able lyricist, he tried to challenge the negative perception about this poetic style. According to him, due to prejudice towards the great Indian style poet, Sa ‘ib, his verses were isolated, and no one paid attention to them. He wrote:

²⁶⁸ Tazkirat ul Muasirin, p. 94.
²⁶⁹ Yarshatir, “Safavid Literature, Progress or Decline”. p. 228.
The glossing over of the facts, indeed this injustice and bias-peddling... and particulary the ignorant or hostile judgment of Azar... not only caused Sa'ib to be relegated to the rank of worthless poets but also managed to hide half the body of the country's literature under masses... of ignorance and neglect.270

One of the contemporary western scholars who wrote on Sabk-i Hindi is Riccardo Zipoli. He argued that usually in European countries this style is known as Baroque, but he considered this title to be inadequate.271 In order to compare the features of the poetry of Baroque with the poetry of Indian style, Zipoli compared the verses of Saib, as the exponent of Sabk-i Hindi with the verses of Marinists, a group of poets in the Baroque period of Italy. This comparison yielded the point that Saib's verses are close to Marinists' in some aspects, and are distant in other aspects.272

Sabk-i Hindi: The opponents

The intricate style of Sabk-i Hindi, and the difficulty of its comprehension caused some poets, both Iranian and Indian, to criticize it. Abul Barakat Munir Lahori (1610-1644) was one of the seventeenth century Indian poets who objected to the new style. Munir in his renowned work Karnama probated the verses of four Iranian poets, i.e, Urfi Shirazi (d.1590), Zulali Khansari (d.1031or 1034), Zuhuri Turshizi (d.1625) and Talib Amuli (d.1626) who were the pioneers of Indian style. In Munir's opinion the verses of classical Persian poets like Kamal Isfahani (d.1237) and Amir Khusraw Dihlawi (d. 1324) were

272 Ibid, pp. 35-47.
superior to the verses of the four mentioned poets in both words and meaning. He did not approve the intricacy of the poetry of the new style.\textsuperscript{273}

In the eighteenth century Lutfali Azar Bigdali (1711-1781) in his renowned \textit{tazkira} entitled \textit{Atashkada Azar} criticized the poetic method of Sa‘ib. He wrote:

From the beginning of his writing poetry, the way to the firm imagery of the eloquent poets of the past had been blocked, and the undisputed rules followed by the old masters had been lost. After Sa‘ib who was the instigator of this new distasteful style, the level of poetry continued daily in decline, until this time of ours, when ... thanks be to God, their fabrications have completely fallen into disuse and the rule of the old masters revived.\textsuperscript{274}

Azar had a similar opinion about Talib-i Amuli, another poet of Indian style:

He is among the notables and compiled a \textit{diwan}. He has a peculiar style in poetry which is not to the liking of eloquent poets.\textsuperscript{275}

What Riza Quli Khan Hidayat (d.1871) the historian and literary man of Qajar period wrote on the quality of the poetry of the Indian style was harsher than the previous commentators:

\textsuperscript{274} \textit{Atashkada Azar}, ed. Sadat Nasiri, I, pp. 123-125. tr by Yarshatir in ‘Safavid literature, progress or decline’, pp. 222-223.
\textsuperscript{275} \textit{Atashkada Azar}, II, pp. 870-871.
After the Saljuq poets no progress was obtained in poetry; on the contrary, it declined daily from the highest level until it reached a middle state with the poetry of Salman Savaji and his like. A number of poets belonging to this stage attempted lyric poetry, but except for Khwaja Shams al-Din Muhammad Hafiz, whose ghazals have been well appreciated by the admirers of form and substance, there is hardly a divan inherited from them which could be worthy of hearing. Gradually the poetry declined further from the middle stage and reached a low level. Under the Turkmens and the Safavids, reprehensible style appeared...and since there were no binding rules for lyrics, the poets, following their sick natures and distorted tastes, began to write confused, vain and nonsensical poems. They placed in their poetry insipid meaning instead of inspired truths, ugly contents...instead of fine rhetorical devices and attractive innovations...but, since every defect is followed by a perfection, and each separation by a reunion...towards the end of the rule of Lurs[the Zand dynasty] several individuals directed their tastes toward reviving the style of old masters and demonstrated awareness of the tastelessness of the style of the later poets and their banal ways...and endeavoured...to divert people from their blame-worthy style. 276

Despite his praise of the Indian style poets in Sabk Shinasi, Bahar has a short poem indicating his dislike of this style:

The Indian style possessed novelty,
But had very many failings,
It was infirm and spineless,
Its ideas were feeble, its imagery odd.

The poems were crowded with ideas, but unattractive; They were wanting in eloquence.\textsuperscript{277}

The application of the term Sabk-i Hindi to this style of poetry is relatively recent.\textsuperscript{278} Before that, it was called tarz-i taza or tarz-i khiyal. Sa‘ib composed in a couplet about his contemporary poet, Talib Amuli who was in India:

\begin{quote}
Oh Saib, I swear by the new style that, The place of nightingale of Amul is vacant in Isfahan

\textit{Be tarz-i taza qasam yad mi kunam Sa‘ib}

\textit{Ke jay-i bulbul-i Amul dar Isfahan peydast}
\end{quote}

Hazin also remembered the poetry of his time by the same name. He wrote about the poetry of one of his contemporary poets, Wahid uz Zaman, Mirza Tahir that he participated in the propagation of tarz-i taza.\textsuperscript{279}

Amiri Firuzkuhi was one of the serious supporters of Indian style as an important part of Persian literature. At the same time he was not in agreement with the use of the title Sabk-i Hindi for this specific style. He suggested that Sabk-i Isfahani is more fitting and gave reasons that since none of the famous poets of this style suggested that their poetry originated from India, the labelling is not correct. Moreover the poetry of the first Iranian poets who went to India, like Ghazali Mashhadi (d.1572) Qudsi Mashhadi (d.1646), Naziri Nishaburi and Urfi Shirazi (d.1590) after their journey to the Subcontinent, was exactly the

\textsuperscript{277} Savory, \textit{Iran Under the Safavids}, p. 208.
\textsuperscript{279} \textit{Tazkarat ul Muasirin}, p. 141.
same as the one with which they had travelled.\textsuperscript{280} It means that there is no trace of Indian words in their poetry but rarely, and there is not seen any effect of the Indian culture and thoughts in their verses. He added that all Indian Persian poets like Faizi, Ghani Kashmiri, Shayda Fathpuri and Faqir Lahori considered themselves the followers of Iranian poets and none of them claimed that their style was exclusively Indian.\textsuperscript{281} There are two contradictory opinions expressed by Zabihullah Safa on this issue:

The name “Indian” was appropriated for this style because those of its partisans who lived in the time of the Safavid shahs and were adversely affected by their treatment of poets tended principally to settle in India. India and Afghanistan became its home, and the ghazal, the short lyrical piece, its most popular form, because this type of poem lent itself best to expression of delicate and novel ideas.\textsuperscript{282}

Safa's opinion about \textit{Sabk-i Hindi} differs in another place where he writes that during two and a half centuries of Safavid period, different poets with different styles appeared and there was no single specific style of poetry or method prevalent in this age. Then he says:

Supposing that there was only one poetry style in that period (Safavid), is it correct to call it Indian style? In this case what should we do with those poets who lived in Iran, and did not visit India, even in their dream?\textsuperscript{283}

\textsuperscript{281} \textit{Ibid}, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{282} Safa, 'Persian Literature in the Safavid Period', \textit{The Cambridge History of Iran}, VI, p. 956.
Following Amiri Firuzkuhi, Safa believed that since the main poets of this style grew up in Iran, especially in Isfahan, the style should be named *Sabk-i Isfahani*. These poets were in India only for a short time, and this could not be the basis of characterizing this style of poetry as *Sabk-i Hindi*:\(^{284}\)

Correspondingly, the supporters of the title of *Sabk-i Hindi* were justified with the argument that the Iranian poets who travelled to India during the Mughal period were familiar and impressed with the Indian literature and thoughts. Hence the elegance and acuteness of the poetry of *Sabk-i Hindi* is the result of conjunction between Iranian thought and Indian philosophy. They continue that the poetry of those poets who did not travel to India, like Hakim Shafai and Muhtasham Kashani, is lacking in elegance and theme compared to the poetry of some poets like Urfi, Naziri, and Talib who travelled to India.\(^{285}\)

The imprint on *Sabk-i Hindi* of Indian literature and ideas is indisputable, as Muzaffar Alam writes:

\[\text{The shaping of Sabk-i Hindi signified a dialogue between the Persian language and the Indian cultural ethos. It developed as a result of constant interaction between the literary matrices of India, on the one hand and of Iran, Afghanistan, and central Asia on the other hand. It implied the use of words and phrases as well as the appropriation and integration of ideas from the Indian world into Persian. This diction had its inception with Masud Sad Salman and Amir Khusrau during the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, and first showed signs of stability in fifteenth century Herat, where were gathered the the best of Ajam culture. Among other things, Herat played a role in nurturing the ideas of Baba Fighani of Shiraz, who}\]

\(^{284}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{285}\) Abdul Wahhab Nurani Wisal, 'Sabki-i Hindi wa Wajh-i Tasmiiyya-i An', *Sāʿib wa Sabk-i Hindi*, p. 287.
lived there during his formative years. Sabk-i Hindi matured and scaled new heights under the Mughals in tazah- gu'i of Fayzi, Urfi, and Kalim; the imagination of Saib and the abstract images, tropes and allegories of Bedil.  

This discussion motivated some critics to advance the view that neither an Indian name separates this style from Iran, nor ascribing it to Isfahan makes its relation firmer, but it is worthy of notice that, this is one of the styles of Persian language and the final revolution in it in the 17th and 18th centuries.  

**History of Persian poetry in India**

Much has been written on the travel of Iranian poets to India. It is evident that the favourable attitude of the rulers of Deccan, and the Mughal kings towards prominent Iranian poets in their court was effective in encouraging this group to travel to India. The presence of Iranian poets in medieval times was of such order in India that the number of literary productions in this country became more than that of Iran. Besides the emperors, their ministers and their high courtiers also were the supporters of the Persian language. Abd ur Rahim Khan Khanan, and Zafar Khan Ahsan played a big role in attracting

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288 Yarshatir, 'Persian poetry in the Timurid and Safavid period', p. 980.
289 Biram Khan’s son, was born in 1566. He later became one of the prominent Mughal nobles. He was learned in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi and was one of the greatest poets and prose-writers of India, and a patron of letters. Sheida Fathpuri composed praising him: “the existence of Khan Khanan in India, is like the existence of Kaba in the desert.”
290 Ahsan Turbati, entitled Zafar Khan (1605-1662). His father migrated from Khurasan to India in the Akbar’s reign. Zafar Khan was governor of Kabul on the transfer of Mahabat Khan in Jahangir’s period. In Shah Jahan’s reign, he became the governor of Kashmir. His court was a rendezvous of poets and literary men.
Iranian poets to the court of the Mughal kings. Sa'ib, the exponent of the Indian style travelled to India due to the patronage of Zafar Khan.\textsuperscript{291}

The first contact of India with the Persian language occurred in Sind, when the region was occupied by the Saffarids in the ninth century. The Ghaznavid hegemony in Punjab increased this contact in the eleventh century and later, during the Turkish domination in northern India, the Persian language widened its usage more in Delhi in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The Mongol invasion of Iran in the thirteenth century, caused migration of Central Asian and Iranians to India, among them some literary men and scholars who enjoyed the Sultans' patronage:

Long before the coming of the Mughals, Persian had established itself in India as the language of the Muslim elite. Northern India had seen many poets and prose writers, including Masud Sad Salman, Zia ud Din Nakhshabi, Amir Khusrau and Hasan Sijizi in the Ghaznavid Punjab and in the territory of the Sultans of Delhi.\textsuperscript{292}

A popular couplet by Hafiz Shirazi (d.1389) indicates the prevalence of Persian language even in the east of India in that period:

\begin{verbatim}
All parrots of India would turn to crunching sugar
Due to this sweet Persian language which goes to Bengal
Shikar shikan shawand hame tutiyan-i Hind,
Zin qand-i Parsi ki bi Bangala mi rawad.
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{291} Rawabit-i Adabi-i Iran wa Hind, p. 77.
\textsuperscript{292} Muzafar Alam, 'Pursuit of Persian Language’, p. 318.
The attention of the Mughal Emperors, especially Akbar, towards the Persian language, caused its popularity in the Mughal Empire. It is said that many books which were read out to Akbar were in Persian. Persian was made the administrative language of the court in Akbar’s period and he instituted for the first time the formal position of *malik ush shuara* (poet laureate). This position was occupied by Iranian poets. Ghazali Mashhadi, Husain Sanai, Talib Amuli, Kalim Kashani and Qudsi Mashhadi were *malik ush shuara* in this period. The sole Indian poet who obtained this post was Faizi (1547-1595).

The pre-history of Persian poetry in India is worth mentioning. Probably Abu Abdullah Ruzbih bin Abdullah Nukati (d.1091) from Lahore was the first Persian poet in India. Two famous poets flourished in the Ghaznavid period in India, viz. Abul Faraj Runi, who was born in Run, a village near Lahore, and Masud Sad Salman (d.1121) whose family came from Hamadan to Lahore, and he was born there. The star of early Indian Persian poetry was Amir Khusu Dihlawi (d.1325) and his verses are considered as the first samples of Persian poetry in the Indian style.

The Iranian poets held Indian Persian poetry in good esteem. Anvari (d.1187) one of the greatest Iranian composers of *qasidah*, referred to Abul faraj Runi in the following way:

> Let be known that I am Abul Faraj’s slave in poetry

> When I saw it, I became eager for it.

> Bad malumash ki man khadim bi sh’ir-i Bulfaraj,

> Ta bididastam wulu’i dashtastam bas tamam.

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A few centuries later, Urfi Shirazi (d. 1591) considered Abul Faraj in the same league as Khaqani and Sadi, two great Iranian poets.  

Socio-political turmoils in Iran on the one hand, and attraction of the generosity of the Mughal kings towards Iranians, on the other hand, caused their migration in a great deal to India. In Akbar’s reign, 259 Iranians, most of them literary men, travelled to the Subcontinent. The number in Jahangir’s period was 173, and in Shah Jahan’s reign it was 114. Many of them were poets.

The popularity of Iranian poets at the Mughal court and the generous treatment they received, added glamour to the genre and motivated Indian poets to compose Persian poetry more eagerly.

There was one thing about Indian poetry which the Iranian disliked, and that was mixing Persian with Indian words. They worked to safeguard the purity of the language.

In the biography of Abu Talib kalim, *malik ush shuara* of Shah Jahan’s court, Shibli Numani indicates that the Iranians refrained from using Indian words in their poetry, but the poet laureate was somekind of an exception.

While other poets, imagine the usage of Indian names of flowers, fruits and crafts, in their poetry wrong, he (Abu Talib Kalim) has used these names his verses in a great deal.

The resistance of Indian poets against the tendency of Iranian literary men to refrain from using the Indian words in their poetry started with Amir Khusrau:

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He had disapproved of the Khurasani idiom and had noted that in India, Persian was written and pronounced according to the standard of Turan. In prose particularly, the models were the authors of Transoxiana; the writings of Rashid al-Din Vatvat and Baha al-Din of Khwarazm....

Bedil Dihlawi (1644-1720) the master of Siraj ud Din Ali Khan Arzu, applied in his verses Indian words and the delicacy of Indian literary men abundantly. Arzu found a good reason for using Indian words in Persian poetry. According to him, and here he preempts William Jones, there was a correspondence (tawafuq) between Persian and Sanskrit. He says:

To date no one, excepting this humble Arzu and his followers has discovered the tawafuq between Hindi and Persian. Even though there have been numerous lexicographers and other researchers in both these languages. I have relied on this principle when assessing the correctness of some of the Persian words, which I have illustrated in my books Siraj ul-Lughat and Chiragh-i Hidayat. It is strange that even the author of Farhang-i Rashidi and those others who lived in India neglected the tawafuq between these two languages.

How much of the Iranian insistence on purifying Persian arose out of their concern about the degeneration of their language, and how much of it was due to prejudice?

Indian interest in Persian poetry bred competition with the Iranian poets. This rivalry started from Amir Khusrau’s era when he challenged Nizami Ganjawi, the great

296 Alam, ‘Persian in Precolonial Hindustan’ pp. 174-175.
Iranian *qasidah* writer of the eleventh century, and composed a *khamsah*, like his famous work. He declared his poetry superior to that of Nizami:

The sign of my sovereignty is risen
It shook Nizami in his grave

The Iranian poets considered this claim exaggerated and criticised it. One Ubayd replied to Amir Khusrau.298

In later eras, the popularity of Iranian poets, their monopoly over the position of *malik ush shuara* and their dominance over Persian poetry, provoked criticism from Indian poets. Shaida Fatahpuri (d. 1630) objected to one of the compositions of Qudsi Mashhadi (d. 1646) and when Jalala Tabatabai an Iranian living in India in Shahjahan’s period, was informed of Shayda’s critique, he wrote to him that this is not Dhrupad (Indian music) that one could interfere. Although Munir Lahori supported Iranian poets, he believed that nobody paid attention to his judgment on account of his Indianness. In his view, in order to be noticed, four factors were necessary:

In this age the masters of locution should have four qualities, and without them, although their words could be water of life, he is unvalued. The first quality is old age. The young man whose words entirely meaningful is not respectable unless he had a white beard... The second quality is wealth. The word of the wealthy, although devoid of truth, would be accepted like a gem in a ring, and the speech of the indigent, although deserves to be written in gold, worth nothing. The third quality is fame;

hence that witty who has reputation, although his word be exposed to objection, has thousands eager... the fourth quality is being from Iran, so if he commits hundred mistakes, nobody objects to him and the Indian, although like the Indian sword, shows his genius, nobody admires him. And while I, a young penniless and unknown Indian, am devoid of these four qualities, if the people of the age do not approve of my speech, it is not strange. 299

Hazin and Indian Persian poetry

Hazin entered Delhi in such a literary environment. If those Iranian poets who came to India before him criticized just the Indian poets, he criticized India in general, its people, the emperor and his courtiers. Hazin’s satires in his Diwan were more sarcastic than what he had written in his travelogue while his assertion in his travel account was nothing more than a general statement. Arzu wrote about Hazin’s criticism of the Indians:

The Shaykh has written a treatise on his ancestors, poetry and his travels. He has high claims in his book, and it is evident that his main purpose has been to reproach India and Indians, from poor people to the king. Although his compatriots have been the cause of his misery, and no body insulted him in India, he has made about this land and its inhabitants some statements in vain. But praise be to God that every shameful thing in India turns into goodness. 300

Hazin’s combative attitude towards Indians provoked the Indian poets to respond in kind:

300 Arzu, Majmaun Nafals, p. 379.
Briefly, some intolerant people in this land, decided to take revenge from Hazin, so lampooned him and despised him near the wise people. As an example, Siraj ud Din Ali Khan Arzu, who is one of the poets of this city and is unrivaled in accomplishment and poetry, has found many wrong verses from Hazin’s Diwan, and wrote a treatise under the title of Tanbih ul Qaflin.\textsuperscript{301}

Significantly, in spite of Hazin’s pungent satires of the Indians, his challengers in India were few. The focal point of his opponents was Arzu, and then Muhammad Azim Sabat, Mir Muhammad Afzal Sābit’s son. One Zirak from Kashmir also replied to Hazin’s satires about the people of Kashmir.

The authors of tazkiras contemporary to Hazin referred to the reason of the disagreement between him and Arzu and Sabat. Some sources assert that since Hazin ridiculed India and its people, Arzu had to oppose him.\textsuperscript{302} Others mentioned that since Hazin defamed Arzu and Sabat, they disliked of him.\textsuperscript{303} Muhammad Husain Azad writes in this regard that when someone recited two couplets of Arzu befor Hazin, he retouched the verses, corrected them, and then made the following remark:

This fellow can not differentiate between a purse and a cup and thinness and tightness and yet he calls himself a poet.\textsuperscript{304}

When Arzu was informed of this he gathered Hazins’s verses, selected the ones he considered meaningless, and dispatched them to Hazin.\textsuperscript{305}

\textsuperscript{301} Walih Daghistani, Riyaz ush Shuara, p. 202.
\textsuperscript{302} Azad Bilgirami, khizana-i Amira, p. 194.
\textsuperscript{303} Hashimi Sindilwi, Makhzan ul Gharaiib, p. 803
\textsuperscript{304} Azad, Nigaristan-i Fars, p. 212.
It is not unlikely that Hazin criticized Arzu’s poetry in some cases, but definitely this issue was not the sole field of Arzu’s enmity towards Hazin, but before Hazin’s arrival on the Indian scene there was a history of differences between Iranian literary men and Indian poets, and Hazin with his biting criticism aggravated those disputes.

Arzu’s response to the Iranians who debased Indian poets and poetry was wider. He expressed it in three ways; first, he brought up the issue of correspondence (tawafuq) between Persian and Sanskrit, by this assumption and in the case of association of two language, the usage of Indian words in Persian poetry was authorized. Second, he maintained that there is a distinction between verbal language (zaban-i muhavarah) and the language of poetry (zaban-i-sher) meaning that it is likely that Iranians can speak better Persian, but in poetry, superiority belongs to the person who could achieve the mastery of his speech without defect:

In fact, the remark (kalam) of linguist is a proof (sanad), but would gain the mastership only when his remark (kalam) is accurate.\(^{306}\)

Azad has summed up the key points of the debate between the two heavyweights:

When the shaykh heard about Indians objections he laughed and said: “this is our language, we hear it, since our birth and talk in it. The imitators imitate by reading some books, rather incorrectly, and they do not have the merit to object. You suppose that a term is wrong, while the problem is that you have not heard it.” Khan Arzu believed that “it is true that this is your language, but there is a difference between us

\(^{305}\)ibid

\(^{306}\)Arzu, Tanbih ul Ghafilin, p. 75.
and you, we learn this language from Khaqani and Anwari, while you have learned it
from the women who grind wheat. So the pupils of these two great masters are not
equal to the women who grind wheat.” 307

Arzu believed that just as non Arabs had changed in some cases the Arabic words,
Indians also were entitled to transform Persian words into Indian.308 In Muzaffar Alam’s
opinion with his remarks regarding the issue of correspondence (tawafuq) between Persian
and Sanskrit, Arzu intended to create a pan-literary identity.

Indeed it is arguable that instead of emphasizing a pan-Islamic identity, as seen in the
writing of the noted eighteenth-century theologian Shah Wali-Allah (d.1762), Arzu
was invoking a pan-literary identity.309

The remark of Alam is noteworthy and interesting, although one would like to
know why Arzu advised his compatriots to devote their energies to learning their mother
tongue.310

The third approach of Arzu was to compile a treatise, Tanbih ul Ghafilin regarding
the poetry of a great Iranian poet, whom all Iranian and Indian praised. Arzu wrote Tanbih
ul Ghafilin in 1744 AD, two years after the compilation of Hazin’s fourth Diwan. After
using pompous titles for Hazin, like dabir-i falak-i sukhan sazi, hujjat ul khalaf, baqiyyat
us salaf, he wrote ironically that, since he failed, on account of his dullness of

308 Arzu, Musmir, p. 37.
310 Rizvi, Shah Wali-Allah and his time, p. 189.
comprehension, to understands some of Hazin’s verses, in some cases, he changed them and in some cases composed them all over again.

Arzu’s objections to Hazin’s poetry was both on account of its language and meaning. Moreover he believed that the subject matter of some couplets of Hazin were copied from the verses of other poets. This critical work created a wave of agreements and disagreements towards Hazin. Those who were dissatisfied with him (like Walih Daghistani) fished in troubled water; he included Arzu’s work in his book, and sent it to Iran. Walih had received a mansab of 4000/2000 at Muhammad Shah’s court and it is not surprising that he had to break off his relation with Hazin on account of the latter’s satires of the emperor and his nobles. 311 The sending of Tanbih ul Ghafilin by Walih did not amount to confirmation of all of Arzu’s views, since his opinion of Indian poets was somewhat like Hazin’s own:

Indain men do not know Persian, much less their women and Persian exists only in name in India. Its words separately are Persian, but after combination in speech, become something else which the very people understand it, but others understand it hardly. 312

The debate soon acquired a wider space and involved other writers who took sides. Mir Muhammad Muhsin Akbarabadi wrote Muhakimat ush Shuara in 1766 in which he took Arzu’s side. An anonymous book, Ihqaq ul Haq appeared with criticism of Hazin’s poetry. It was speculated that too was written by Arzu. In response Hazin wrote Rajm ush Shayatin as a counter point to Tanbih ul Ghafilin. Mir Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgirami

312 Riyaz ush Shuara, p. 602.
defended Hazin and tried to exonerate his poetry from Arzu’s criticisms. His statements are included in *Khizana-i Amira*. Fath Ali Khan Gardizi wrote *Ibtal ul Batil* in vindication of Hazin but this book is extinct.

In the next century too the debate continued. Imam Qulu Sahbai (executed in 1857) wrote the most important reply to *Tanbih ul Ghafilin*, ninty-eight years after Arzu’s death, in 1845, entitled *Qaul-i Faysal*. He also wrote *I’ila ul Haq* as a rejoinder to *Ihqaq ul Haq*. While he discussed in *Qaul- i Faysal* the dispute among the Indian poets, Arzu’s and Hazin’s debates, he mentioned both poets respectfully and wrote that he had tried to be fair in his judgment of the two poets. Sahbai has mentioned all of Arzu’s objections to Hazin’s poetry, and in every case, has quoted verses of great Iranian poets in order to prove the correctness of Hazin’s versifications. In some cases, Arzu’s objections to Hazin’s verses are so reasonable that Sahbai, in spite of his inclination more towards Hazin became helpless:

The readers of this treatise are warned that the ignorant Sahbai definitely decided to find in every case a justification for Hazin’s poetry, but what he can do, in these places he throws in the towel.\(^{313}\)

Sahbai’s explanations shows that he entered the battlefield of judgment between Arzu and Hazin well intentioned, but the attraction of Hazin’s poetry influenced him so much that he could not restrain himself from supporting the latter.

It seems that the controversy about Hazin’s poetry was started during the early years of his residing in Delhi, since after his return to Lahore in 1150-51/ 1737-38, one of

his friends informed him about the rumours casting aspersions on his poetry. By quoting some couplets of Khajuy-i Kirmani and Hafiz-i Shirazi, Hazin replied to questions posed in this connection:

The question regarding the rhyme of *miskin* (poor) and *mushkin* (musky) and also the remark of *du, seh ayyami chand* (few days) has arisen from the ignorance and stubbornness of these people. They are not aware that the mistake is not mine in the first place. They measured my corn with their own bushes. There is no doubt in the correctness of the rhyme. In Persian and Arabic, this kind of rhyme is so abundant that there is no need to explain. If there was justice and understanding, the expression of this humble would be taken the reason of correctness. 314

Arzu was informed of Hazin’s explanations, but he was not convinced, and the debate continued:

In fact, the remark (*kalam*) of a linguist is proof (*sanad*), but on the condition that he had gained the mastership and his poetry is perfect. His (Hazin) language is authoritative, but the language of poetry is different from the language of conversation. Consequently the rhyme can misrepresent things. 315

Once, Arzu asked Hazin the meaning of some couplets of Khaqani Shirwani, the famous Iranian writer of *qasida* in the twelfth century through the mediation of Mir Shams

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314 Hazin, *Ruqaat*, Persian Ms. National Archives of India, No. 381, ff. 1a-b
315 Arzu, *Tanbih ul Ghefilin*, p. 75.
ud Din Faqir. Following objection to Khaqani’s poetry by Arzu, Hazin was provoked by misreading of Khaqani’s verses.

What he gains from questioning hakim Khaqani’s verses and what his gain is after knowing the meaning of these couplets, because Khaqani’s Diwan is thorough like the said verses from the view point of intricacy, and is ambiguous for him.316

Hazin continues:

For the present time, particularly in India, unawareness towards hakim Khaqani’s verses, rather, ignorance of the occasions of the five prayers is not supposed a mundane damage or an intellectual defect, as possessing the knowledge of all mankind and promotion to high degrees, is not a value. In this situation, that darling (Arzu) takes no pains.317

However, this letter, more than any thing else, expresses the reason of writing Tanbih ul Ghaofilin by Arzu, and endorses the judgment of Sayyid Muhammad Akram, who says that Arzu’s motivation for writing this book was to respond to Hazin not on account of his satires of India but rather due to personal vanity.318

Surely Arzu could not foresee that three centuries after his death, Hazin’s compatriots would praise his critical faculty. One of these admirers was Muhammad Riza Shafli’i Kadkani, an Iranian cotemporary writer, who wrote about literary critics:

316 Hazin, Ruqaat, National Archives of India, f. 1b.
317 Ibid.
318 Arzu, Tanbih ul Ghaofilin, p. 41.
In this period (the end of Safavids and in the Zand period) a few informed and punctilious critics appeared in India who are unique during 1200 years of our literary history in the Islamic period, with their attention, profound knowledge, patience and much perspicacity.

Shafi’i calls Arzu’s work the best literary criticism in the history of the Persian language:

It is necessary to say hurrah to this level of understanding and the awarness of poetry of this great critic whose statements have arisen from the perfect knowledge and attention to the Persian literature.

The other person who antagonized Hazin was Muhammad Azim, known as Sabat (d.1161), the son of Mir Muhammad Afzal, known as Sabit. There are two different citations at the heart of Sabit’s adversarial towards Hazin. According to Walih Daghistani, someone showed a couplet of Sabit to Hazin and after reading it, Hazin wrote:

This verse is worthless, and moreover its theme is plagiarized.\(^{319}\)

When Sabit’s son was informed of this remark, he became enraged and within a few days picked out five hundred of Hazin’s couplets which were alleged to have been copied from the *Diwans* of other poets.

\(^{319}\) Walih Daghistani, *Riyazu sh Shuara*, p. 213.
Arzu believed that since Shir Afkan khan, Sabit’s pupil, joined Hazin, after the former’s death, his son antagonized Hazin and found the derivation of two hundreds couplets of this poet.\footnote{Arzu, *Majma un Nafais*, p. 380.} However the first account is more reasonable. Mir Husain Dost also agreed with Walih’s account. Since the author of *Tazkira-i Husaini* has written that Sabat died some days after writing his work (1161/1748), so Sabat compiled his work in this year.\footnote{Mir Husain Dost, *Tazkira-i Husani*, p. 108.} The work had no specific name and the original text is extinct today, but since Walih included it in his book, it is available there. Walih annixed *Tanbih ul Ghafilin* too in his book.

The subject of plagiarism has always been one of the controversial issues in the realm of literary criticism. In this field there are three terminologies which were operationed, viz. *sarqah, tawarud* and *ibtiza*. These terms coined by the literary criticis of the Subcontinent are still in use today.

When a poet includes the subject matter or the poetry of other poets in his verses consciously, his work would be *sarqah*. If he includes others’ purports in his poetry, unconsciously, his work is *tawarud*. In the both cases, the verses of the latter poet are repetitive, and his work would be called *mubtazal*. Since in the Safavid period, the poets studied similar set of books, similarity in the subject matters of their poetry was more evident than in any other period. According to Mir Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgirami, among the poets, no one is secure from *tawarud*. Arzu believed that *tawarud* is the result of concordance of the tastes. He wrote:
May God destroy the abode of *tawarud*, which many of versifiers are afflicted by it.\textsuperscript{322}

A similar sentiment was expressed by Sahbai:

If other poets think of the commonplace purports, it would not be strange, whether you call it *tawarud* or call it *sarqah*, it depends on your honesty or your enmity.

Hazin also called the repetition of others’ purports, *tawarud*, not *sarqah*, and he knew that it was unavoidable:

\begin{quote}
There is no remedy for *tawarud*,
Neither by carefulness, nor by self control.
You understand our trouble when,
You take the pen in the hand and write.
\end{quote}

It would not be out of place to include Shafi’i Kadkani’s opinion of Sabat’s criticism of Hazin’s poetry:

\begin{quote}
Some objections of this poet on Hazin, are valid, and we do not deny them, but we can see the sameness of the themes in the *Diwans* of many poets, even in the *Diwan* of Hafiz, and similarly if we look at the themes in the verses of poets in this manner, they would loss all their verses.\textsuperscript{323}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{323} Shafi’i Kadkani, *Shairi Dar Hujumi Muntaqidan*, p. 362,63.
Hazin’s opinion of contemporary tazkira writers

*Tazkiras* or collection of biographical notes of poets are a considerable part of Persian literary heritage in medieval times. Before the Safavid period, this term (*tazkira*) conveyed the meaning “remembrance”, but gradually in the Safavid period it appeared as a book containing biographies of poets, scholars and saints.\(^{324}\)

The first Persian book with the title *tazkira* is *Tazkirat ul Awliya* by Shaykh Farid ud Din Attar, written in the early fourteenth century; but in this title, *tazkira* means only remembrance.\(^{325}\) During the Zand and Qajar period, all books bearing the prefix *tazkira* were written as collections of biographies of poets.\(^{326}\)

When Persian speaking scholars began writing *tazkiras*, they drew upon an Arab heritage which was around four centuries old. Indeed it was under the influence of the Arab books on the biography of traditionisrs and poets that the Persian scholars started the writing of such works.\(^{327}\) Very Likely Muhammad Awfi (d. 635/1237) the compiler of *Lubab ul Albab* was the first Persian *tazkira* writer who received lot of attention from subsequent scholars. Hence Ali Azad Bilgirami entitled the *tazkira* writers as “Awfi’s households”.\(^{328}\) With the popularisation of *tazkira* writing in Iran and India, Awfi’s household multiplied greatly.

Hazin however denounced the genre of biography writing and considered it to be an idle exercise. In his view the efforts of *tazkira* writers were not more than bungling the words, and repeating the remarks of predecessors.\(^{329}\) He remarked that *tazkira* writers

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\(^{325}\) Ibid,

\(^{326}\) Ibid, p. 6.


\(^{328}\) Ibid, p. 15.

\(^{329}\) Hazin, *Tazkirat ul Muasirin*, p. 90.
supposed the work of compilation of the biography of poets as mere story telling, whereas it needed knowledge and honesty. He briefly stated his view of \textit{tazkira} writing of his age in this manner:

Some \textit{tazkiras} which are compiled by these illiterates are the causes of confusion of the wise man; because beside the indecency of words and idle talking, they are filled with untruth and superstitions; and are loaded with mistakes and absurd words. They (\textit{tazkira} writers) write many pages about persons they do not know, and ascribe the poetry of others to persons who have not composed even one couplet. They confuse the words of narrators with each other, and ascribe the speech of one to another.\textsuperscript{330}

In one sentence he summarised his view of the \textit{tazkiras} in the following hemistich:

\begin{quote}
The substance is wrong, the meaning is wrong, the contents is wrong, the composition is wrong \textit{Khud ghalat, ma'ana ghalat, mazmun ghalat, insha ghalat}.
\end{quote}\textsuperscript{331}

A review of the Persian biographies of poets reveals that Hazin's comment is to some extent right. The reader could find many misspelled words in these works; moreover the texts of biographies of poets in these works usually are repetitive. Nevertheless these disadvantages do not degrade the value of these books altogether. Sometimes the researcher finds important points about the life and works of past literary men in these books. It seems that Arzu's \textit{Tazkira Majma un Nafais} was effective in shaping Hazin's

\textsuperscript{330} Hazin, \textit{Tazkirat ul Mu'asirin}, pp. 91-92.

\textsuperscript{331} Ibid
critical opinion, because as mentioned before, Arzu responded to Hazin’s satires on India in this book.

In spite of Hazin’s criticism of *tazkira* writing of his time, he himself compiled two *tazkiras*. The first and more prominent work is *Tazkirat ul Muasirin (Biographies of the Contemporaries)* and the other is *Safina* which he wrote at the request of Maharaja Kishan Prasad. Safina has the biographies of hundred and seven Iranian poets arranged alphabetically. Hazin compiled the *tazkirat ul Muasirin* in late 1165/1751 “when his fortune was asleep in the *shabistan of dark India.*” He explains that by contemporaries he means those poets who were alive after his birth year i.e, 1103/1691. He however confined the book just to the Shiite poets. The book is divided into two parts; in the first part under the title of *firqay-i Aula* (the first group), he introduces twenty contemporary scholars who were also poets. The first person whose biography is presented is Sadr ud Din Sayyid Ali khan b. Sayyid Nizam ud Din Ahmad al Husaini, and the last scholar is Sadr ud Din al Jilani. Some of these scholars were Hazin’s teachers, and more importantly some of them were died during Iran’s political turmoil in the eighteenth century. Among them Muhammad Ali Shakib Shirazi was killed during the Afhan attack on Shiraz, and Mirza Hashimi Hamadani and Mulla Ali Isfahani were murdered during the massacre of Hamadan by Ottomans.

In the second section, *firqay-i saniya* (the second group) Hazin pays attention to eighty of his contemporary poets. The entries in this section are not all uniform. In some cases they are detailed, such as the life story of Shawkat Bukharayi, and in some cases they are short. It is noteworthy that Hazin wrote this book relying just on his memory, and in

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333 *Ibid*. 

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each case he mentioned some couplets of every poet. As Salik, the editor of *Tazkirt ul Muasirin* explains, Hazin praised in this section the poetry of two poets. He wrote of Mir Nijat (d.1122/1710) his friend and compatriot that his poetry is legendary due to its elegance and also due to the novelty of his style. Shawkat was the other poet who attracted Hazin’s praise.

Hazin’s *tazkira* has some disadvantages. For instance, due to his reliance alone on memory, Hazin’s accounts of some poets are very short and bereft of useful information. He did exactly what he criticized others for. Nevertheless this book is an important contribution to the biographical literature in Persian written in India in the eighteenth century.

**Abdul Latif Shushtari’s perceptions of India and its people**

Shushtari was thirty years old at the time of his departure for India; fourteen years younger than Hazin. His youth might have given him optimism towards India. Moreover he did not leave his homeland fearing persecution or punishment, but rather left for India voluntarily for commerce. Given all this one could imagine that his perception of India and its people would be somewhat different from Hazin.

Indeed Abd ul Latif started trading from Iran and in this order settled down in Bushihr. He became familiar with some renowned traders there, among them Haji Muhammad Khalil bin Haji Muhammad Qazvini. This Iranian wealthy merchant was in the service of the East Indian Company in Bushihr. According to the suggestion of the British, he was sent to India in 1216/1802 as the envoy of Fath Ali Shah Qajar. Indeed this

335 *Ibid*, p. 163.
diplomatic relation appeared as a result of a plan in which the British tried to gain advantage from the quarrel between the ruler of Iran and Zaman Shah Afghan about Khurasan. Mahdi Ali Khan-i Khurasani, another Iranian trader, resident in Bombay and a pro British, played the main role in this juncture. He was sent by Jonathan Duncan, the governor of Bombay, as the agent of the English in the court of the Qajar king in order to persuade the Shah to attack Herat. The presence of Mahmud Mirza and Firuz, Zaman Shah's brothers as refugees in the court of Fath Ali Shah, sealed this plan. To make matters certain, the Governor General of India, Richard Wellesley, dispatched Sir John Malcolm also to the Qajar court. Other than the pursuit of the issue of Zaman Shah, he was assigned to dissuade Fath Ali Shah from every relation with the French. Finally Iranian troops attacked the territory of Zaman Shah. This operation relieved the British from their Afghan rivals and helped them to extend their colonial project.

Shushtari wrote of Haji Khalil that his sincerity for him was beyond expectation. When the former was in Hyderabad in 1801, he was waiting for Haji Muhammad Khalil who was coming to India as the envoy of the Qajar king. Eventually Khalil Khan arrived in Bombay on 21 May 1802, accompanied by 120 of his relatives and Iranian servants. But within less than two months on 20 July 1802 a dispute arose between his Qizilbash guards and Indian soldiers. Haji Khalil went to investigate the matter when he was struck by a bullet and got killed. This event was so important for Shushtari that he decided to start writing his diary from that date. The notes in his diary are available in a manuscript entitled Waqayi'-i Hind.

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337 Shushtari, Tuhfat ul Alam, p. 233.
Shushtari’s first description of India was not pleasant. On his arrival, while some Iranian traders welcomed him in Masulipatam, he had this impression to offer:

While I was walking, I saw many people, a mixed crowd of men and women. They had covered their private parts, and the rest of their bodies were naked. They were moving everywhere, like beasts and insects. I was surprised and inquired one of the Qizilbash who accompanied me, regarding the state of these people. He explained that they are inhabitants of that port and in other parts of this country also people are all similar. It was my first step into this land while I turned remorseful and blamed myself and remembered the Arabian adage that hearing of them is better than visiting them.  

However, with the passage of time Shushtari lively moral and his optimism enabled him to see the beauties of his environment and describe them. He wrote of Bengal that it was unique in prosperity and was a separate unparalleled world.  

Since Shushtari came to India for commerce, he settled in Calcutta on 10 October 1787. After a short time his cousin, Mir Alam Bahadur, entered that port as the envoy of Nizam Ali Khan, the governor of Deccan to the British governor of Calcutta. The presence of Mir Alam changed the direction of Shushtari’s life and brought him in the service of the British. When Mir Alam was leaving Calcutta for Hydarabad, he introduced his cousin as the new representative of the governor of Deccan to the British.

And the acceptance of this work was the first mistake I made in this country. I was trapped unknowing.  

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339 Tufat ul Alam, p. 237.
340 Ibid.
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In fact Shushtari was enabled to work as the agent of Nizam Ali Khan to the British, according to the recommendation of Mir Alam; and when the Mir became unemployed, on account of the hostility of Mushir ul Mulk towards him, Shushtari also was deposed in Calcutta, and even was not allowed to go to Hydarabad. After sometimes Shushtari somehow reached Hydarabad and tried to rescue his cousin but in vain. He was in touch with his friend, Haji Muhammad Khalil, who was appointed by Fath Ali Shah as the ambassador to Calcutta and was prepared to move to India. Haji Khalil interceded for his friend with the Shah and got an order from him for Shushtari to serve in the court of the Qajar king. Meanwhile Khalil Khan requested the British governors to send his Iranian friend in Bombay, as his host, when he would arrive in that port. Thus Shushtari was released and he went to Bombay.

The most active period in Shushtari's life was after Haji Khalil's death in Bombay. Since the English valued the agreement with the Qajar king regarding the Afghans, they were concerned about the cancellation of the contract by the Iranian king, on account of the murder of Haji Khalil, tried to appease Fath Ali Shah and to impress upon him that the ambassador's death was unintentional. Meanwhile Haji Khalil's relatives, one of them wounded during the shooting, tried to reap the benefit from this condition. The most trustworthy person among Iranians, in the opinion of Duncan, the English governor of Bombay, was Shushtari, and he tried to put to an end the issue honourably. In spite of Wright's indication that the ambassador's relatives left India at the end of 1802, Shushtari writes that this adventure stretched at the end of the next year.

342 Wright, The Persians Amongst the English, tr. pp. 67-68.
By this time Shushtari got rich enough and extended help and shelter to those Iranians who wanted to go back home.

When I came back home, midway I saw Mirza Khush Niwis Tabib and the Khurasani Sayyid who had brought with him Ziyarat Nama. They were standing with some others. I could not ignore them, so I came down and sympathized with them. Everyone expected me to support him with a huge sum but I was not able to manage it. Since there is no one in Bombay to grant hundred dinars to a deserving person, they approached me.343

In the nineteenth century, the English governed Bombay and their agents controlled the commercial traffic in the sea. Iranian traders also dispatched their goods from this port to the Iranian ports. Whenever the goods of the Iranian merchants were confiscated by the British, they approached Shushtari for help and for the release of their goods.

Still Shushtari old friend, Shaykh Muhammad Ali, who had turned a skillful trader, was working in Bengal and sent his commercial cargo to Bombay to be shipped to Iran. Apparantly Shushtari was still the commercial partner of Muhammad Ali, and due to his friendship with the English his role in sending their goods to Iran was significant.

In 1804 the period of Mir Alam’s isolation ended, and Sikandar Jah, the new governor of Hydarabad, appointed the Mir as his deputy. Consequently the Mir summoned his cousin, Shushtari to the Deccan. One year later when in 1805 Bihbahani was visiting Hydarabad, Shushtari was there. It seems he refused to take a formal governmental post at that time.

343 Shushtari, Waqayi-'i Hind, f. 39.
When shushtari was talking of India, his remarks were not sarcastic like Hazin; although he liked his motherland and felt homesick as well. These feelings did not motivate him to see India as a dark land. His reconcilable moral caused him to associate with the people around him, who were mostly British, but also Indians; and he used to inquire from them of their life and in return recited on every occasion a couplet by Hafiz to arouse their admiration.

There is temperance in Shushtair’s description of the new things in India. When he visited Jaganath (Puri) and its temple, he wrote that it was a big town with splendid buildings on the coast, although extremely polluted with bad air.\(^{344}\)

The sight of a magnificent Hindu *taziya khana* in Jainagar excited Shushtari’s surprise and he wrote of the Hindu mourners during the Muharram mourning:

> They wear mourning clothes at the time of observing the month of mourning (*mah-I aza*) and abandon enjoyments. Many of them abstain totally from drinking and eating. They recite elegy in Hindi and in Persian during days and nights, and everybody tries to feed the poor, as much as he can.\(^{345}\)

The practice of Muslims and Hindus during the mourning ceremony in Hydarabad was not to his liking:.

\(^{344}\) *Tuhfat ul Alam*, p. 446.  
\(^{345}\) *Ibid.*
Many of the great men in Hydarabad fasten their hands and their feet with chain, and hang a plug around their necks. Some others take in their hands the chain, and drag the man in the mourning meetings, while he is bowing down.  

Shushtari was not happy with the sight of the Muslims joining in Hindu festivals. Worse in his view was the recourse of some Muslims to Hindu clergy men. He wrote that mutually Hindus also went to mosques and invoked the blessings of the Shiite Imams.

Shushtari's attitude towards the people of Hydarabad varied when Mushir ul Mulk, the deputy of Nizam Ali Khan by a plan pushed aside Mir Alam from governmental charges, and as a result Shushtari also was dismissed. After this adventure in a general statement he had this to say:

The nature of all people of this country is much the same; all of them are inconstant and ungrateful. They do not remember the goodness of others and they do not know doing well. They quarrel with each other for an almond (petty money) and rush to each other for a worthless thing.

In another statement in *Waqayi-'i Hind*, regarding the people of Hydarabad, he called them dishonest and impious and believed that this disposition was the result of the climate of this region.

In a verdict against the British, Abdul Latif agreed that their presence caused the decline of Murshidabad.

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347 *Waqayi-i Hind*, f. 19
348 *Tuhfat ul Alam*, pp. 458-59
349 *Waqayi-i Hind*, f. 22.
And before the domination of the British, Murshidabad was the seat of the governors of Bengal, and was a large and prosperous city. People narrate strange accounts of its flourishing condition in those years, but when I visited it, people were dispirited and there was no trace of their freshness.  

Bihbahani’s perceptions of India and its people

As mentioned earlier, Bihbahani started for India in 1804 with certificates from grand Mujtahids of the shrine cities indicating him as a Shiite scholar. Indeed he started his work as a jurist in India. The story of this is interesting. An Iranian trader, Mahdi Ali Khan Khurasani, who was sent to Iran as the agent of the English, also an intimate friend of Duncan, made his will to his English friend regarding his youngest son who was from a concubine. In the case of a temporary marriage, only a Shiite law approves the right of offsprings to inherit; and now Duncan wanted to make Mahdi Ali Khan’s will operational. Bihbahani came to his rescue and cited the Shiite ruling in this case.  

It is not irrelevant to raise a point regarding the behaviour of some English agents, like the reaction of Duncan to the will of his Iranian friend. The statement of Lorimer, the English resident at Baghdad in the first quarter of the twentieth century, regarding the issue of the Awadh Bequest is helpful in this case. He believed that the proper administration of the Bequest would increase the British moral and political reputation in Iraq, Iran and India. It seems that it was the belief in this principal by the English that could explain the behavior of those such as Duncan.

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350 Tufat ul Alam, p. 372.
351 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 228.
352 Nakash, Shiis of Iraq, p. 220.
Bihbahani devoted a good deal of his time in India to commerce. He travelled along with Iranian traders to Calcutta in Safar 1221/ April 1806 while his steward, Aqa Muhammad Hasan accompanied him. He writes that they made purchases in Qadam Rasul, a place before Calcutta and then moved to their destination. 353

Although the final destination of Bihbahani was Lucknow, he was not in a hurry to reach there. So when Bahu Begum Sahiba, the wife of Mir Jafar, the previous Nawab of Murshidabad, asked him to stay in that town for sometimes, he accepted the offer. Bihbahani preached her about the importance of Hajj and insisted that she included it. Since the Begum was not able to go for Hajj, on account of old age, Bihbahani arranged for someone to perform the pilgrimage on her behalf.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ladies of the aristocratic household put legal questions before ulama who came from the shrine cities, for knowledge and information. Bihbahani writes about the leading lady of the house of the Nawab:

Although the Begum is a concubine of Jafar Ali Khan and deos not come from a noble or respectable family, yet on her last leg, God the most bountiful has by His grace opend the doors of divine guidance for her... On being informed of the arrival of people from the Holy Shrines, she sends her munshi to inquire about their health, and arranges for their two meals from her state’s kitchen. On the eve of departure requisite money is also paid to them by way of parting gift. 354

Begum Sahiba proposed Bihbahani to marry one of her daughters, but apparently the Iranian scholar preferred the daughter of one of his distant relatives. Perhaps the

353 Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 254.
354 India in the early 19th century, p. 115.
knowledge of the life of Jafar Ali Khan prevented him from having a relationship with him.

Bihbahani has written at the end of his travelogue about the state of affairs in his province.

Mir Jafar was the son of one Sayyid Ahmad from Najaf who escaped from that town to Surat, and then got married to a Hindu. Mir Jafar, the fruit of this marriage, in his youth went to Ali Wardi Khan Mahabatjang (d.1756) the independent Nizam (governor) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and was put in his employment. After Ali Wardi Khan, his nephew, Siraj ud Dawla replaced him. In the battle of Plassey between the English, under the command of Clive and Siraj ud Dawla on 23 June 1757, Mir Jafar joined the army of the English, in lieu of a promise of governship of Bengal. He caused the capture and murder of the Nawab. The opportunity that Mir Jafar gave to the English enabled them to extend their domination over the entire region. Ironically he did not succeed to preserve his own rule and was deposed by the British in 1760. Afterwards his son in law, Mir Qasim succeeded him, but due to his opposition to the British, he ws replaced by Mir Jafar in 1763. After a short time he passed away in 1764. When Bihbahani travelled to Murshidabad in 1806, Mir Jafar’s grandson, entitled Diler Jang, had the nominal govenrsip of the town.

During the governship of Ali Wardi Khan, Bengal became the rendezvous for the Iranian and Indian Shiite ulama. Hence Bihbahani bemoaned the destruction of the power of Mahabatjang’s family, he wrote:

Let it be known that before the stablishment of English rule, the town was the seat of the mighty and powerful rulers and the Nizams (of Bangala). The strange stories told about its vast population, plenitude of riches and multitude of affluent persons and

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men of accomplishment and perfection were but the legends of by-gone days, and at the present not a trace of the past grandeur is to be found anywhere. 355

Bihbahani noted that India was a unique country from the point view of natural sources:

This auriferous country is without parallel. The wealth of the emperors of this country has been exemplary in all periods. In clothing, food and other things they (Indians) have no need of foreigners, but other countries are needed for costly textile and other items. 356

In his opinion, any one who owned the share of the resources of the country would be mightly happy and comfortable, such as presently the British who dominated the country politically.

In order to illustrate the wealth of the Indian emperors, Bihbahani chose a part of the autobiography of Jahangir and annexed it in the text of his travelogue. In this part of the Tuzuk, Jahangir referred to the wealth of the Mughal kings on the one hand, and to the services that the Mughal emperors offered to their subjects on the other hand.

And we ordered (the agents) to release the prisoners, and the making of wine and its sale to be stopped because wine is the root of all corruptions and the cause of all offences... and to construct medical centers in the big towns, and to pay the expenses of the poor people from the treasury...

355 India in the Early 19th Century, p. 113.
356 Ibid
In these pages Bihbahani appears as a supporter of the Mughal kings to remind the Indians the glory of their country during the Mughal rule, compared to the age of the domination of the British.

On his way to Lucknow Bihbahani visited big and small towns and villages which caught his attention. When he reached Tuljapur, he recorded the following impression:

I came across a number of populated townships and villages. One of them was Tuljapur, where is located a magnificent temple, on the construction of which lakhs of rupees were spent. Hindus from all over the world come here on pilgrimage. I also went to have a sight of it; in the inside of the building, on a very superb edifice a human figure is very decoratively carved out of stone, which they adore and worship.

Bihbahani classified the inhabitants of India into five groups.

Let it be known that its (India) inhabitants comprised five sects: first, the offsprings of the Sadat, second, the descendants of Qizilbash, third, pinhan i.e. the descendents of Turani and Kabuli Afghan, fourth Shaykhs, i.e. those Hindus who are newo-convert to Islam and their ancestors have been Hindus, five, Hindus, who are the original inhabitants of this country.  

In Bihbahani's opinion, Hindus and Shaykhs were subservient by nature, and hence foreigners were able to dominate them. He continued that although the other groups were naturally brave, on account of the lack of a capable commander, they were not able to do anything. Afterwards he complained of the lack of accord and sincerity among the Indians.

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357 *Mirat ul Ahwal*, p. 186.
and said that brothers are not kind to each other, nor sons to their fathers. This, in his opinion has been the main reason of their weakness.\textsuperscript{358}

Bihbahani described the political condition of India in the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century in this manner:

And now feudal system is dominated every where, and every governor is occupied in his territory. At this juncture the most part of the Deccan and Bengal and Shahjahanabad, which has been the pride of this country, is possessed by the British; and Akbar Shah-i Baburi (Akbar II) is a nominal king. The British give him 12 lakh rupees in a year as pension and themselves take more than 40 crores. The army is monopolized in their nation (British) and also to some ignoble men, and no noble interferes in the affairs of the army and chairmanship.\textsuperscript{359}

Bihbahani goes on to explain ceremonies of the ordinary people in India, and among them the wedding rituals. In his view, the rate of the bride money in India was more than the standard, and he considered this to be a device in the hands of the women to rule the men.

The marriage portion settled upon a wife is contracted (in this country) beyond one’s means: the one who does not possess the capacity to pay even thousand rupee contracts dower-debt for twenty or thirty lakhs. It is for this reason that generally women in this country hold sway over their husbands, except for a few, who because of their ingrained personal virtues are submissive and always endeavour to keep their

\textsuperscript{358} Ibid
\textsuperscript{359} Mirat ul Ahwal, p. 191.
husbands pleased. Husbands do not evince much liking for their wives; for the ardent love of a (true) lover is never reciprocated and is always held in contempt. In the event of a husband's death, all his property devolve upon the (first) wife and her children; and any children by subsequent marriage are reduced to beggary and destitution.\footnote{India in the Early 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, p. 62.}

In his description of marriage ceremonies in India, Bihbahani reminded that the formalities were common among the Hindus much more than the Muslims, but after the marriage of the emperor Akbar with the daughter of one of the Rajas, these have become usual in the Muslim society also.\footnote{Mirat ul Ahwa/, p. 214.}

When Bihbahani himself concluded a marriage contract in India to have a third wife, a descendant of Mulla Salih Mazandarani, one of Bihbahani's distant relatives, he refrained from performing marriage rituals except sighting of the Holy Quran and the mirror, and also he recited the marriage formula himself in secret.\footnote{Ibid.}

On the issue of widow remarriage among the Indian Muslims, Bihbahani mentioned that after the death of their husbands they refrained form remarriage under the influence of the Hindu tradition which had penetrated among Muslims. He wrote that people consider in this country the marriage of women after the death of their husband very abominable, and added that the practice in their view is akin to adultery, whether held openly or secretly.

The prevalence of wine drinking and the abundance of courtesans in the towns of India surprised Bihbahani. He wrote in this regard:

\footnote{India in the Early 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, p. 62.}
\footnote{Mirat ul Ahwa/, p. 214.}
\footnote{Ibid.}
There are also whores who in the Indian dialect are termed kanchani. Besides them, various kinds of intoxicating drinks are also found in great abundance in every town or village. Those beautiful whores or prostitutes after a lot of make-up sit on the windows, balconies and on the top of their brothel houses to attract customers and in lanes and market places where wine-sellers carry on their business. Whenever someone wishes to have the company of them, he can do so by spending a small amount, call most comely and beautiful women and having arranged a drinking party plunges himself into the luxurious and voluptuous enjoyments. He neither dreads God, nor the Prophet; and is neither afraid of the officials nor ashamed of such shameful acts. These abominable acts have obliterated the visions of all except a few.  

According to Bihbahani, Saadat Ali khan, the Nawab of Awadh, had prohibited the sale of wine in Lucknow. Being a jurist Bihbahani praised him that he disregarded the income accruing out of this profession which was more than a lack of rupees.

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363 India in the Early 19th Century, p. 68.