

Impact of Panchtantra on Persian literature

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Lot of Indian literature was translated into Persian in the 8th century especially the of Panchtantra by Abdullah. In the 10th Century Abu Rehan Al-Biruni did a lot of translation and is known as the first Indologist, and more than 100 books of Hinduism have been translated into Persian. In the medieval period, important translation of Mahabharata and Ramayana also took place. The Panchtantra (Five Principles) is an ancient collection of Indian inter-related animal fables, in verse and prose, in a story format. The original Sanskrit work, which some scholars believe was composed in the 3rd century BC, is attributed to Vishnu Sharma. It is based on older oral traditions, including "animal fables that are as old as we are able to imagine", including the Buddhist Jataka Tales.

The fables of Panchtantra which initially appeared in the Sanskrit literature of India spread throughout the world by their Pahlavi, Arabic and Persian translations done by Iranians. During Novsherwan Sasanid, the scholar Borzuy's 570 AD Pahlavi translations further facilitated translation into Syriac. Nearly two centuries later, it was translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa around 750 CE under the Arabic title, "*Kalila wa Dimna*"¹².

After the Arab invasion of Persia (Iran), Ibn al-Muqaffa's version emerged as the pivotal surviving text that enriched world literature. Ibn al-Muqaffa's work is considered as a model of the finest Arabic prose style, and "is considered the first translation masterpiece. In the 12th century, Nasrullah Munshi translated them into Persian. Nasrullah's Persian version of *Kalila wa Dimna* (750 H/1349AD) made one new name *Anwar e Saheli* by Mulla Kashifi.

It is "certainly the most frequently translated literary product of India", and these stories are among the most widely known in the world. There are recorded over two hundred

¹² . Studies in Persian Language & Literature Issued & Theme. P-61.

different versions known to exist in more than fifty languages, and three-fourths of these languages are extra-Indian. As early as the eleventh century this work reached Europe, and before 1600 it existed in Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, German, English, Old Slavonic, Czech, and perhaps other Slavonic languages.

Iranians were so much charmed and amused by Panchtantra that from time to time they tried to bring out simpler version of previous translations. Thus from “Kartak o Damnak”, the first translation rendered in the Pahlavi language during Sasanid period. We have a number of Persian versions like “Kalila wa Dimna” Marzaban Nama, Akhlaq Mohsani, Anware Saheli, Ayar-i- Danish etc.¹³

Iranians used the fables which were originally the finest examples of Indian “Nitishastra” with great versatility. The whole creative classical prose owes its style to Panchatantra. Besides, Iranians skillfully used the bird and animal characters in their ethical verses too. S’an ai, Attar and Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi included many fables of Panchantra in their mystical poems, Rumi’s Masnavi widely acknowledge as a Quran written in Pahlavi (Persian) language included more than forty fables of Panchtantra.¹⁴

Marzban-Nama authored by Sad-Uddin Waraeni is among the Persian classics of the 7th Century H/13th-Century AD Considered a masterpiece of Persian literature, the book is abundant in anecdotes. An early 13th-century prose work in Persian consisting of various didactic stories and fables used as illustrations of morality and right conduct. The work comprises of nine chapters (*bāb*) with main-framed stories, embedded minor tales, as well as Persian and Arabic poems, parables, sayings, and Qor’anic expressions.

In modern Iranian literature, Kasmaei also announced the completion of a collection of poems about animals and their nutrition and teaching numbers for kids to be published by Man-va-Kimia Publishing House. According to her, these books help children learn to explore. For instance, the picture of an animal is accompanied with a short poem introducing it, and in order to get more information about it the kid should begin personal experimentation.

¹³ . Ibid

¹⁴ . Ibid

Some of the stories she has chosen from Marzban-Nama are: the story of Tyrannous Zahak, the story of the Fish and the Heron, and the story of the Camel and the Rancher. An Iranian children's writer has penned a number of new volumes for children, among which is an abridged and simplified rewriting of 'Marzban-Nama'.

The author, Tahereh Khalili Kasmaei said: "Considering the age and mentality of kids, I have chosen 12 tales of Marzban-Nama and rewritten them for children in simple language."

Qabus-Nama is a kind of travelogue book written in Persian Language by Askandar bin Keykavus in 1082 AD on behalf of his son Gilan Shah. This work comprises of forty chapters occupies lots of fundamental and beneficial instructions, that can be applied in any field in daily life. Some of those information's are about playing chess, larking, bathing, hunting, playing with ball, having a concubine and slave, understanding horse breeds, medicine, astrology, sciences such as geometry, and being prepared for the administrative authority like becoming vizir or king. Qabus-Nama which is one of the basic pieces of Persian Literature is translated six times into Turkish Language.

Abul M'aali Nasrallah's Munshi 539 H, (1110 AD) the Kalila wa Dimna translated from Arabic into Persian. He got this Arabic script from his close friend Ali bin Ismail. Nashrullah read this book and translated in common Persian Language. After that, by his friend this book reached into the hands of Behram Gaznavi. The translation was in a Language easy to comprehend for all classes. Later on the book was known as Kalila wa Dimna Bahramsahi.

Rudki, a great poet of Iran during Sassanid period, composed some story of Panchtantra in poetry, but the Rudki poetry translation of Kalila wa Dimna is lost. Munshi Nashrullah in the introduction (muqadama) of Kalila wa Dimna something says.

With Safawid period's rule in Iran (16th 17th centuries), the Persian literature especially poetry suffered a great setback. Most of Iranian poets and scholars migrated to India seeking shelter and patronage of the Mughal and Bahmani kings.

Ayar-i- Danish: Akbar the great Mughal Emperor had shown much interest in literature, during Akbar's rule many books of Sanskrit, got translated into Persian. He orderd Abul-Fazl Allami that the Panchtntra should be re-translated in Persian, cause

the Kalila wa Dimna translated into some different languages and different periods so, and the reality of Panchantra has gone. Abul- Fazal ordered to retranslate the Panchtantra into Persian as “Ayar-i- Danish”.

Pancakhyana or Panjdastan (Kartak wa Damnak): A new Persian translation named *pancakhyana* of this Sanskrit work by Mustafa Khaliqdad Abbasi at the instant of emperor Akbar has been recently discovered. The only manuscript copy of this translation from the Sanskrit translation exists in National Museum, New Delhi.¹⁵

In his preface to the translation Mustafa Khaliq Dad Abbasi gives the story of how Akbar ordered him to prepare translations from the Sanskrit original. He states that there were already several translations in existence .e.g. those of Burzoe in Pahlawi, Ibnimuqaffa in Arabic, Rudkin in poetry, Nashrullah bin Muhmmad, Hussain W’aiz Kashifi, and Abul-Fazl in Persian. But the Persian rendering was not approved by the emperor for either that did not maintain the order of the stories of the original or contained variations, additions and omission and therefore departed from the original or their language or style was burdened with Arabic words and phrases.

Akbar who had already arranged for translation of a number of Sanskrit manuscripts of Panchtantra and orderd Abbasi to render them into Persian which could be easily understood by reader. Abbasi writes that when Akbar saw the original book, he felt that since this book has been translated from an intermediary language - naturally it has deviated from the original – so it is appropriate that the book be translated afresh. And the work was assigned to Mustafa Khaliqdad Abbasi with the instruction that the book should be translated without any omission in the same order, so that the variation between the original and the various translations may become evident. So, according to the enjoying command, the first draft was translated in to a plain and simple language.¹⁶

Anwar-e-Saheli: The book is on morals (Akhlaqi), wisdom and pedagogy written by Kamaluddin Hussain Baheqi Kashifi, as per wish of Saikh Ahmed Saheli Chughtai wrote, or translated Kalila wa Dimna of Munshi Nasrullah Kashifi perorate Gulstan S’adi and Masnavi. As command and wish of Amir Ahmed Saikh Saheli Chughtai, he

¹⁵ . Panj -dastan, Tara Chand and Prof. Abidi, P- 12.

¹⁶ . Ibid, P- No-7.

was appointed as governor by Husain Bayqra Chughtai. So that the book known was Anwar-e-Saheli.

There exist many books written directly or indirectly style of Panchtantra like Akhlaq –e- Mohsani, Akhlaqu jalai etc. These have been clearly influenced by Panchtantra. Persian poetry is very rich in world literature. Great poet of Persian Rudaki, Daqiqi, S’anai, Firdausi, Attar, S’adi, Hafiz, Moulvi, Nezami, these are all having big position in the world literature, In Iran fable of Panchtantra was first time translated in poetry by Rudaki.

According to Samanid chief minister, Abul-Fazal Bal’ami (Kitabulansab): Rudki “Kalila Dimna” composed in poetry, I see the Panchtantra has greatly influenced on Persian poetry.

Anecdotes of the Masnavi Moulvi Moulana Jalauddin Rumi Taken from various sources, including the Qur’an, Hadith, and the writings of Farid-uddin Attar, S’anai, Muhammad Afi Persian critic. Apparently Maulana’s four or five tales of Kalilah seem translation from "Panchtantra" Their titles are as follows.

1. Tale of Lion and Rabbit - Mitrabhedha: 1/8, Masnavi- Vol- 1, P- 900.
2. The Story Drum and Jackal - Mitrabhed- 1/2, Masnavi- Vol 2, P- 3155.
3. The Story Rabbit and the King Pelan, Kakoliukiya- 3/2 – Masnavi- Vol, 3 –P 2738.
4. The Story of Three Fishes - Mebrabhid- 1/4, Masnavi- Vol- 4, P-2738.
5. The Story of the Lion and Ass, Labdhaparnasha -4/2, Masnavi- Vol-5, P-2326.

In addition to these examples, many sayings in the Masnavi could be attributed to "Panchtantra" .

Tales Moulana used were for centuries been used for moral education, while it in cases of longer and it was mysticism and spirituality.

Moulana Rumi apparently did not use the original Panchatantra but he benefited from sources of Arabic or Persian “Kalila wa Dimna”.

“The story of a pond and hunters and these three fishes, amongst which, one was wise and one half wise – and the other one proud and foolish, and the result of the three fishes.”

قصه آبیگر و صیادان و آن سه ماهی یکی عاقل و یکی نیم عاقل و یکی مغرور ابله و عاقبت آن سه ماهی.
قصه آن آبیگر است ای عنود----- که در او سه گاهی اشگرف بود
در کلیله خوانده باشی لیک آن----- صورت قصه بود وین مغز جان

چند صیادی سوی آن آگیر ----- برگشت و بدیدن آن ضمیر
 پس شتابیدند تا دام آوردند----- ماهیان و اقف شدند و هوشمند
 آنکه عاقل بود عزم راه کرد----- عزم راه مشکل نا خوانده کرد
 گفت با اینها ندارم مشورت ----- که یقین سستم کنند از مقدرت
 مهرزاد و بود بر جا نشان تند----- کاهلی و جهلشان بر من زند
 مشورت را زنده باید نکو ----- که ترا آن زنده کند زنده کو
 ای مسافریا مسافررای زن----- و آنکه پایت لنک دارد رای زن" ¹⁷

Translation: ¹⁸

1. It is a talk of that lake in which there lived three strong fishes.
2. One may have read in *Kalila* that one of them was in the form of a story and that was the pulp of life.
3. Some hunters went towards that pond to see it.
4. Then they ran hastily and trapped them. The fishes become aware and wise.
5. The one which was wise took its way (went away). The foolish one made it difficult to go away.
6. It said that it do not want to consult them, because they would surely make me slow and lazy from strength and energy (power)
7. It became affectionate and was a strong sign on the place, their laziness and illiteracy prevailed over me.
8. O' gentleman! The consultation should be made alive, that it would make you alive like the live weevil.
9. O' traveller, make consultation with a traveller, and that your leg is weak, so make consultation"

Fariduddin Attar Nishapuri' (1145-1221) 'Attar. Throughout, I argue that 'Attar portrays his submission to the divine by accepting and embracing human diversity through Sufism and love of the divine. His works, *Tadhkirat al-Awliya*, *Ilahi-Nama*, *Musibat Nama* and *Mantiqal-Tayr*, are precious for they show that inclusiveness was thinkable in the medieval period. His "Conference of the Birds" or *Speech of the Birds* (منطق الطیر) *Mantiq-ut-Tayr*, also known as مقامات الطیور *Maqāmāt-ut-Ṭuyūr*, is a long poem of approximately 4500 lines written in Persian by the poet Fariduddin Attar. Fariduddi Attar, who is commonly known as Attar of Nishapur. In the poem, the birds of the world gather to decide who is to be their king, as they have none.

In the wake of twentieth century, Iran underwent a great political change known in history, the constitutional Revolution" (1905-1909) demanding healthy parliamentary system, curtailing endless power of monarch and bringing them under the control of people.

¹⁷ . مثنوی معنوی مولوی، استاد بدیع الزمان فرورفر، ص 739

¹⁸ . Masnavi Manavi. Page No 739- Persian into English.

Ali Akbar Dehkhoda a successful journalist, poet, critic and versatile writer. In his newspapers “Suri Israfil” he started a column under the heading of “Charand o Parand” (Animal and Bird) the main objective and the popular theme under this Column was subtle criticism of the despotic rule, the miserable state of affairs of Iranian life, and a plea for the change of order in socio-political life of Iran was followed by many other intellectuals like Dr. Mohd Hejazi a well known novelist, short story writer and one of the earliest professor at the University of Tehran who wrote “Pund- e –Karkas (Advice of Vulture). The story turned to be extremely amongst the Iranians.

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