



MUSTAFA KHALIQDAD HASHMI ABBASSI: A RENOWNED TRANSLATOR OF THE ROYAL COURT OF MUGHAL EMPEROR AKBAR AND HIS PERSIAN TRANSLATION OF PANCHATANTRA

Dr. Wasif Ahmad

Associate Professor (Persian), Department of Arabic & Persian, Bhasha-Bhavan,
Visva-Bharati University, Shanti Niketan-731235, West Bengal, India.

ABSTRACT

As the title suggests the present paper primarily attempts to investigate in to the literary contributions of Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi Abbassi, a literary giant and a translator of Emperor Akbar's court, to Persian translations of Sanskrit texts. Further it throws light on the translation of Panchatantra preserved in the royal court of Emperor Akbar from Sanskrit in to Persian. It sheds light on the importance and relevance of Panchatantra even in the twenty first century modern world of science and technology. More over attempts have also been made towards highlighting its conversion in to the various languages of the world. An attempt has also been made here by chiefly examining, reviewing and interpreting its contents in order to understand Indian philosophy and wisdom. This paper will unravel the various facets of the features and characteristics of Panchatantra and its valuable contributions to the development of the world literature.



KEYWORDS: Key words include Panchatantra, Five principles, Sanskrit text, Vishnu Sharma, Borzaweh, translations, Persian, Kalilah o Dimna, foreign language, Cultural migration, literature, India, Indian philosophy and wisdom, World literature, Indo-Iran relations, Foreign languages, Katha Saritsagar, Jatakas, national treasure, niti shastra, Morales, ethics, Pahlavi, , fables, civilizations.

INTRODUCTION

Being one of the oldest and civilized countries, India occupies an important place on cultural and literary map of the world. The people of India and Iran, two ancient neighboring civilizations, have enjoyed close historical, cultural and literary links through the ages. The great scholar, writer, politician, architect of modern India and the first Prime minister of independent India, Pandit Jawarhar Lal Nehru, in his famous book titled 'Discovery of India' has rightly emphasized on the closed relationship between India and Iran in these words, "Among the many peoples and races who have come in contact with and influenced India's life and culture, the oldest and most persistent have been the Iranians. Indeed the relationship precedes even the beginning of Indo-Aryan civilization"¹. He further says, "Few people have been more closely related in origin and throughout History than the people of India and the people of Iran"². They belong to the common birth place and the same race, Aryan. They share common linguistic and racial past. Over the several millenniums they interacted and enriched each other in the fields of language, religion, art, culture, food and other traditions³.

Panchatantra: The 'Panchatantra' is a classical Sanskrit text. It is basically an ancient Indian collection of fables in Sanskrit verse and prose. It is believed to have been composed around the 3rd century BC⁴ by an ancient Indian sage named Vishnu Sharma. Panchatantra is the store-house of knowledge, wisdom and

philosophy. Innumerable translations in various major languages of the world and their occurrence to this day in popular folk-tales are themselves attestation of popularity, value, importance and relevance of *Panchatantra* in the 21st century modern world of science and technology. During the reign of Sassanid emperor Khusraw Anushervan,⁵ Burzoy⁶, the trusted courtyard and physician, brought the *Panchatantra* from India to Iran and translated in to Pahlavi Language, the language of Sassanid kingdom, in around 6th century AD⁷(570CE). *Panchatantra* consists of five chapters or sections or books and each book comprises of many fables or stories. The titles of five books are as follows: Book 1: *Mitra-Bheda*: The separation of friends (The lion and the bull), Book 2: *Mitra-Labha* or *Mitra-Samprapti*: The Gaining of friends (The Hermit and the Mouse), Book 3: *Kakolukiyam*: Of Crows and Owls: (The war and peace/The old man, Young wife and thief), Book 4: *Labdhapranasanam*: Loss of Gains: (The Monkey and the Crocodile) and Book 5: *Apariksitakarakam* or *A sampreksya-Karita*: Considered Action/Rash deeds/Hasty Action: (The Brahman and the Mongoose). In order to acquaint the readers with contents of *Panchatantra* an important story is given below which contains valuable moral lessons and which will be of immense beneficial to the modern society.

The first part of the book contains the following story which is most important and relevant. A friendship arises between the lion, the king of the forest, and a bull. There are two Jackals named *Karataka* and *Damanaka*. They are retainers to the lion. Against *Karataka's* advice, *Damanaka* breaks up the friendship between the lion and the bull out of jealousy.

Mustafa Khaliqdad and his Persian translation of *Panchatantra*: Due to lack of sufficient available sources we know very little about the biography of Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi Abbasi, the translator of *Panchatantra*. Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi Abbasi, son of Shaikh Khaliqdad, is one of the renowned literary personalities of medieval India. He was the famous translator of Emperor Akbar's court during the second half of the sixteenth century and the first half of seventeenth century A.D. He was born in a religious family in Lahore. He received his primary education in Lahore. He was at home in Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Panjabi. His important translations of literary works include *Katahsaritsagar* and *Panchatantra*. He was an expert of both the languages i.e. the source language, Sanskrit, and the target language, Persian. Persian language and literature developed a lot during Mughal period, particularly during the reign of Emperor Akbar which is considered to be the golden period. Akbar played a vital role towards the development of literature, art and architecture. He established translation bureau through which important religious books and classical Sanskrit texts, including *AtharVeda*, *rigVeda*, *Upanishads*, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Katahsaritsagar* and *Panchatantra* were translated from Sanskrit in to Persian.

During the reign of Emperor Akbar in the second half of the sixteenth century⁸ at the instance of His imperial majesty, Akbar the great, Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi Abbasi translated *Panchatantra* from Sanskrit into Persian under the title '*Pancakhyana*'. The most important feature of this translation is that it was translated directly from the source language, Sanskrit, in to the target language, Persian without any deletion or addition. The sequence of the chapters of the original Sanskrit text was maintained, and was not disturbed. This is worth mentioning here that the original Sanskrit text was available in the royal library of Emperor Akbar. This is also worth mentioning here that the original text of the Persian translation of the above noted book was preserved in the national museum, Delhi which was jointly edited by Prof. Saiyed Amir Hassan Abidi, Professor Emeritus, Delhi University, Delhi, and Dr. Tara Chand⁹, Former Ambassador of India to Iran, and was published by the Aligarh Muslim University press, India, in 1973 AD. Then '*Pancakhyana*' was published by Eqabal printing and publishing organization, Tehran, Iran, in 1984 (First edition) and in 2003 (Second edition) with introduction and note by Prof. Jalal Naini¹⁰. Innumerable translations in various major languages of the world and their occurrence to this day in popular folk-tales are themselves attestation of popularity, value, importance and relevance of *Panchatantra* in the 21st century modern world of science and technology. *Panchatantra* has been translated into various languages of the world including Pahlavi, Syrian, Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Latin, Spanish, Tibetan, Greek, English, Russian, French, Italian, Turkish, German, Pashto, Tibetan, Chinese Japanese, Mongolian, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu (Hindustani), and other languages. Almost all pre-modern

European translations of *Panchatantra* arise from the Arabic version of *Ibn e Muqaffa*. From Arabic it was translated in to Syrian, Greek and Spanish. In modern period also conversion of *Panchatantra* is in continuation. Many English versions of *Panchatantra* have appeared in the literary horizon in the recent years. It was written for the benefit of ignorant Princes. The author, Vishnu Sharma, narrates stories to princes. It illustrates prudent worldly conduct or the wise conduct of life. Undoubtedly *Panchatantra*, the store-house of beauty, knowledge, wisdom and philosophy, figures in the top list of world literature and has enriched cultures of innumerable civilized regions of the globe. In other words *Panchatantra* is one of the best collections of stories in the world. Edgerton says, "Few books in the literature of the world have enjoyed such great popularity over on wide an area. It has penetrated practically all the literatures of Europe and Southern and Western Asia. It is known to exist in over 200 versions and translations in about 60 different languages and dialects, spreading from java on the south east to Iceland on the north-west"¹¹. Penzer says, "India is indeed the house of story-telling. It was from here that the Persians learned the art, and passed it on to the Arabians. From the Middle East the tales found their way to Constantinople and Venice, and finally appeared in the pages of Boccaccio, Chaucer and La Fontaine. It was not until Bonifay wrote his famous introduction to the *Panchatantra* that we began to realize what a great debt the Western tales owed to the East"¹²." Undoubtedly this is an Encyclopedia of knowledge, philosophy and ancient Indian wisdom. This is the primary source of ethics, moral values, human values and peaceful co-existence.

CONCLUSION

Having discussed at length on the importance and relevance of the Persian translation of *Panchatantra* titled *Panchankyana* I am of the view that since its creation it has been the primary source of ethics, knowledge, wisdom and philosophy of life. In view of its importance and relevance it has been translated in to various important languages of world, including Pahlavi, Syrian, Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Latin, Spanish, Tibetan, Greek, English, Russian, French, Italian, Turkish, German, Pashto, Tibetan, Chinese Japanese, Mongolian, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telgu, Malayalam, Urdu (Hindustani), and other languages. During Mughal period it was repeatedly translated in to Persian. In view of its importance and relevance Emperor Akbar again wanted it to be translated in to Persian. In the second half of the sixteenth century at the instance of His imperial majesty, Akbar the great, Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi Abbassi translated *Panchatantra* from Sanskrit into Persian under the title '*Pancakhyana*'.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Nehru, Pandit Jawarhar Lal; The Discovery of India, Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd., 11 community centre, Panch sheel park, New Delhi-110017, India, 2004, P.149
2. ibid, P.152
3. Taghavi, Fatemai; 2nd International Conference on Social Science and Humanity, IPEDR Vol.31, IACSIT Press, Singapore, 2012, p.115
4. Panchatantra-Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, File: 111C:/users /w/ documents / Panchatantra % 20-%201-html, P.1
5. Khusraw Anusherwan or Anusherwan or nosherwan became king of Iran after the death of his father Kobad (Kavadh) in 531AD.
6. Khanlari, Zohra, Farhang e Adabiyat e Dari, Bunyad e Farhang e Iran, Tehran, Iran, p.88.
7. ibid
8. Abbassi, Mustafa Khaliqdad Hashmi/Abidi, Amir Hassan; Pancakhyana or Pancatantra, Eqabal printing and publishing organization, Tehran, Iran, 1984, first edition, 2003, second edition, P. 92 (preface).
9. ibid. P. 104 (preface).
10. ibid. P. 1 (preface).
11. ibid. P. 3 (preface).

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Jame'a, Urdu Encyclopaedia, Adabiyat, National Council For Promotion of Urdu Language, Ministry of human resource development, Govt. of India,
2. Rypka, Jan, History of Iranian literature, D. Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht, Holland, 1967.
3. E. G. Browne, 'A literary History of Persia, Vol.III, Good word Books Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi - 110013, 2008.
4. Panchatantra-Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, File: 111C:/users /w/ documents / Panchatantra % 20-%201-html, P.1
5. Nomani, Allama Shibli, Sherulajam, Vol.II, Darulmusannefin, Shibli academy, Azamgarh, 1988.
6. Subhani, T.H, Taarikh e Adabiyat, vol. II, Payam e Nur University, Tehran, Iran, 1369 A.H.
7. Khanlari, Zohra, Farhang e Adabiyat e Dari, Bunyad e Farhang e Iran, Tehran, Iran.
8. Safa, Zabihullah, Taarikh e Adabiyat dar Iran, Intesharat e Amir Kabir, Tehran, Iran, 1365 A.H.
9. Safa, Zabihullah, Mukhtasar dar Taarikh e Tahawwol e Nazm o Nasar e Farsi, Intesharat e Qaqnus, Kheyaban e Inqelab, Tehran, Iran, 1373 A.H.
10. Shafaq, Reza Zadah, Taarikh e Adabiyat e Iran, Tehran, Iran, 1321 A.H.
11. Imam, Manzer, Chakida e Taarikh e Adabiyat e Iran, vol.II, Smanid ta Qajr, Kitabistan, Chandwara, Muzaffarpur, -842001, 1999.
12. Azad, Mohammad Hussain; Sukhandan e Fars, National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, West block-1, R.k.Puram, New Delhi -110066, 2005
13. Wasim, Prof. S.M; Indo -Iran relations, ISBN-978-964-439-318-1, Iran Culture House, 18-Tilak Marg, New Delhi -110001, 2008.
14. Islam, Riyazul; Indo -Persian relations, Iranian Culture Foundation, Tehran, Iran, 1970
15. Cultural relations between Iran and Subcontinent, vol. I, Centre of International Cultural Studied Tehran, Iran