Abdulghani Mirzoev, Facts of the history of literary contacts between Mawarannahr and India in the second half of the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th centuries

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FACTS OF THE HISTORY OF
LITERARY CONTACTS
BETWEEN MAWARANNAH R AND
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CENTURIES

Moscow 1963
Literary contacts between Mawarannahr and India in the second half of the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th centuries are one of the least-studied problems. Although Bukhara's literary contacts with India in other historical periods have not been a subject of special study either, some idea of them can be gained from publications on the history of Persian and Tadjik literature. For the given period, these publications have nothing to offer. No attention is paid to literary contacts between Mawarannahr and India in the books on history and history of literature, although the study of this problem as regards the second half of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries is more important than that of other periods, for precisely this period is known to have witnessed the establishment of a new literary style, "sabk-i Hindi". By the beginning of this period the "Indian style" became widespread in North India as well as in Iran and Mawarannahr. A study of the literary contacts of that time should, without doubt, facilitate the solution of many problems of history of literature; in the first place, it will help clarify some obscure matters pertaining to the definition of the essence of Indian style and the regions of its distribution.
As is known, beginning with 1560 a situation developed in India highly favourable for the development of literature and science in the Persian language\(^2\). At about the same time a progress in economics and culture was witnessed in Mawarannahr.

The feudal strife and disturbances that followed the death of Ubaydullah-khan Shaybani (1539) and continued in Mawarannahr almost twenty years greatly hampered the development of economic, cultural and literary life. It was only in the sixties of the 16th century that a certain normalisation of the internal situation took place. The reign of Abdullahkan II (1557-1598) saw an end of the feudal wars. Mawarannahr, Khwarezm and Khorasan were subordinated to a single centre, Bukhara. All that not only ensured some peace in the land, but also created favourable conditions for the development of economy and commerce, for construction, for the blossoming of cultural and literary life.

In the second half of the 16th century Bukhara again became an important literary centre: according to the information contained in Mutribi's Tazkirat ash-Shuara, there were more than 350 poets there at that time. Bukhara's most prominent poets were quite mature masters.\(^3\)

Divans of Abd ar-Rahman Mushfiqi, Hadji Hasan Nisari, Muhammed Hashim Dahbidi, Zawki Miyankali, Visali Bukhari, Arahi, Molla Khirgahi Hisari and a dozen other authors had been preserved. The Bukhara literary circle included representatives of almost all places of Central Asia, and also of many other countries, such as India, Iran, Kashgahr and Kabul\(^4\).

The blossoming out of literary life in Bukhara could not but pave the way for the development of its literary contacts with other countries. Especially strong contacts existed with India, for in that period Indian literature
prospered and enjoyed wide renown\(^5\). On the other hand, in the same period trade contacts between Mawarannahr and India through Afghanistan were strengthened\(^6\), and friendly relations were established between the rulers of the two states, Jalal-ad-Din Akbar, and Abdullah-khan II, as is evidenced by the correspondence between them. The drafts of Akbar's two letters are reproduced, in particular, in Abu-l-Fazl's Ruqast\(^7\).

The literary sources of the same period containing most of the information about Burhara's literary relationships with India include Tazkirat ash-Shuara by Mut-ribi, Tabakat-i Akbari by Nizam ad-Din Ahmed Firavi, the tazkira Nafais al-Massir by Mir Ala ad-Din Qazvini, and Muntahab at-Tawarih by Abd al-Qadir Badauni. Here, however, we shall turn only to the tazkira of Mutribi and Muntahab at-Tawarih\(^8\).

The very first evidence of literary contacts between the two countries gleaned by us from these sources is the evidence about poets' trips from Mawarannahr to India and from India to Mawarannahr. Mutribi writes in the tazkira about thirty three poets who left for India in the second half of the 16th century and continued their literary activities in cities of North India\(^9\).

In Muntakhab at-Tawarih we do not come across the names of any of these poets. It mentions other fifteen poets, who also moved from Mawarannahr to India. Some of them even took part in the activities of official literary circles.
According to this source, they were poets of no mean merit. Some of them, including Mullo Sadiq Halwai, Churbati Hisari, Mushfiqi Bukharai and Manzar Samarqandi, had divans of their own, while the latter composed a Shah-namah in verse. For instance, the author of this source writes:

"Manzar Samarkandi, a grandeloquent poet, was in Bayram-khan's service in Agra; he conceived a Shah-namah in verse, completed several dastans, specifically /a dastan/ about the battle of Iskandar Suri, narrating of the exploits of Muhammad Husain-khan, which he presented in Paitala to the khan himself. The khan made a number of corrections and reiterated these events to him in order from the beginning to the end. (The poet) in the course of one night, as bidden, corrected 300 to 400 baits and, presenting himself before the khan in the morning, read and was properly rewarded..." 10

It is interesting that poets'names mentioned in Tazkirat ash-Shuara and Muntakhab at-Tawarikh are different. This shows that much more poets moved to India than it is said in the source. It can be supposed that most of them are not mentioned in the tazkira. Mutribi, for instance, has absolutely no mention of Mushfiqi's trip to India, while Indian and Central Asian sources written at the close of 16th century say nothing at all about the arrival of Abdussalam Kashmiri, a prominent Indian poet, in Mawaranmahr from India. This fact confirms once again the sup-
position stated above.

Muntakhab-at-Tawarikh contains no information about the poets who came to Mawarannahr from India, but this information can be found in Mutribi's tazkira. He mentions six poets of the Indian literary circle who came to Mawarannahr and continued their literary activities there. One of them was Alifi Shami, a pupil of Fayzy Dakani, and the others were Tuluk Kashmiri, Kimali, Mirza Ma'sum Razi, Lakhuri and Jani Kabulii. The latter was educated in India before going to Mawarannahr.

One more fact helping us to gain an idea of literary contacts between India and Mawarannahr is correspondence between the rulers and men of letters of these two countries. For instance, when Indian scientist Hakim Humayun decided to go to Mawarannahr, Abu-l-Fazl Allami addressed a personal letter to Abdullah-khan, the ruler of Mawarannahr, asking for help and assistance to him. In 1557, i.e., before his trip to India, Abd ar-Rahman Mughfqi sent a kaala to Indian ruler Jalal ad-Din Akbar with the following matla' translated into English:

"With his kindness (he) turned the land of India into his flower garden.

"Muhammad Akbar Ghazi Jalal ad-Din, the greatneses of faith and world."

As Mutribi points out in his tazkira, Malik ash-Shuara Fayzy Dakani (1547-1596) and Hadja Hasan Hidari (died in 1597) for a long time maintained regular and friendly correspondence.

The third fact testifying to the existence of literary contacts between the two countries is provided by
poetic replies (nazira) to popular poems by distinguished Indian poets, which were written by poets of Mawarannahr as a demonstration of their poetic skill. A good example is the reply to Payzy Dakani's well-known kasida Kashmir. Devoted to the description of Kashmir, this kasida Kashmir widely popular as soon as it was written. It begins with the following matla':

"Thousands of caravans of passion set out on a nocturnal journey".

"So as to untie the packs of mirth on the expanses of Kashmir". 16

Among the poets of Mawarannahr, a reply to this qasida was written by Muradi Samarqandi, who composed it in the form of a muwashshah (acrostic) addressed to Abdullah-khan. Mutribi notes that in this qasida Muradi "elevated the art of writing so highly that thanks to him most poetic figures, methods of expressing ideas, and mysteries of sciences became understandable and clear". Here is a translation of the matla' from this qasida:

"Now, centuries afterwards, the heaven has by a hundred ruses

"Spread a silken canopy for your joy". 17

Hadja Husein Sana'i Masahhadi, one of the celebrated poets of the Indian literary circle, composed an ornate qasida entitled Kar-nemah, into which he included successively all numbers from one to one hundred, and sent it to Mawarannahr, demanding that any of the local poets writes a "nazira" to it. Here is a translation of the matla' from it:

- 6 -
"0 you who have cast a glance with two flaming narcissus blossoms (eyes),
"You have delivered me from the torments of passionate love". 18

One of the poets of Mawarannahr, Hadji Hasan Nisari, wrote a reply qaṣida and sent it to Sana‘i Mashhadi in India. Here is a translation of the matla' from it:

"Two arrows shot from one bow have pierced my heart
so

"That a latticed window has appeared in the abode of a poor heart". 19

We know of many reply poems similar to Mutribi’s reply to a ghazal by Razmi 20). In their content and artistic skill they are not inferior to the original poems and belong to the best specimens of the poetry in the Tadjik and Persian languages of the 16th century. These reply poems show, in turn, that in the 16th century literary contacts between India and Mawarannahr grew stronger and even acquired, in a way the nature of competition.

The fourth fact helping to determine the character of literary contacts between India and Mawarannahr is the inclusion of the names of many Indian poets, especially prominent masters of the "Indian style", into Mutribi’s taṣkira. This source contains fairly detailed biographical data about the life and gives samples of the verses of 29 poets of the Indian literary circle 21
It is known that Mutribi composed his tazkira in Mawarannahr in 1604, i.e., before his departure for India, and presented it to the then ruler of the land, Wali Muhammad-khan (1606-1611) and that departure for India was undertaken by him approximately in the middle of the reign of Jahangir (1605-1627).

The data about Indian poets were obtained by Mutribi in Mawarannahr, and therefore he entitles the chapter devoted to them “On Poets Whom the Author Has Not Seen and Whose Poems He Has Heard from Others...”

It is also very interesting that nine poets out of those enumerated above are mentioned in Muntahab at-Tawarikh: Sana'i Mashhadi, Ja'far, Zuhuri, Urfi Shirazi, Fayzy Dakani, Fahmi, Karari Gilani, Maliki Kumi and Naziri22).

The biographical data about Indian poets given by Mutribi are in many cases much more detailed than those contained in Muntahab-at-Tawarikh. In Mutribi’s tazkira we come across hundreds of new bits of information missing from Muntahab at-Tawarikh — for instance, about Sana'i Mashhadi’s departure for India already after he had completed his studies in Bukhara, or about Naziri’s stay in Mawarannahr and his meetings with poets in Samarkand, or about Maliki Kumi’s mathnavi entitled “Sana va Brahman” (The Idol and the Brahman)23).

This fact goes to show once again that the men of letters of Mawarannahr kept an attentive eye on the Indian literature in the Persian language.

Thus, as appears from the proofs attested above,
literary contacts between Mawaranahr and India in the second half of the 16th and at the beginning of the 17th centuries were sufficiently strong and extensive. This had, naturally, a certain bearing upon the themes and style of the literary works of that period. For instance, the themes of the works of Abd ar-Rahman Mushfiqi are associated with Indian life, while the Zafar-nama of Badr ad-Din ibn Abd as-Salam Kashmiri is not connected with Indian literature not only by content, but also in the character of expressive means, and so on.

It should be noted that broader research in the field of literary relationships between India and Mawaranahr and as a result of this, gathering of new facts, especially those pertaining to the literary heritage of poets who moved from Mawaranahr to India and from India to Mawaranahr, will help, as we said in the introduction to our report, to fill up gaps in the history of the literature in the Persian language in India as well as Tadjik literature.
Notes


2. Р.Г. Убагулова, Э.Б. Арабов, И.А. Дорди и А.Н. Додонов, История Таджикской литературы, Душанбе, 1954 г., с. 34-56.


4. Ibid., pp. 53a, 86a, 97b, 128a, 137a, 152a, 177b, 225a, 203a.

5. Ibid., pp. 53a, 86a, 97b, 128a, 137a, 152a, 177b, 225a, 203a.


7. Ibid., pp. 53a, 86a, 97b, 128a, 137a, 152a, 177b, 225a, 203a.

10. Qasim Kāhi, Sīnāyatī, Khawājeh Shīrīn Hūrvī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī, ʿAbdīr Rūhī,


12. Mutribī, Biographies of Poets, pp. 44b, 67a, 122b, 127a, 302a, 238b.


15. Mutribī, Biographies of Poets, f. 186b.
۱۶. هزار و نهایه سوق میلیون سپر
که برخی گفته دارد میلیون کشور
Ibid., f. 138a.

۱۷. نظریه بی‌پیام و قرن‌ها بصد استرور
که هر فناوترا سایه‌ای ای ساز
Ibid.

۱۸. دو نظریه در آن دوران برگزار
شده است جهت از زنده بوده، سودا
Ibid., f. 219b.

۱۹. نظریهٔ دو نظریه می‌خواهد بدل
بطانهٔ علی و رازگر خبرهٔ پیدا
Ibid.

۲۰. Ibid., ff. 203-204b.

۲۱. اظهاری دلودی، سرآرایی نامی، بعفر آصف‌نام، نظام همزمان
وبدی ملّتان، وقوعی اصفهانی، رضایی عراقی، هیایی گلی
نظری مشدید، عرف عریز، فیضی گلی، هیایی بریز،
نگاری هنری، قرار گیری‌ها، رضایی، عراقی کاوشانی، لیلیت
همانی، رندی عراقی، شیروی هنری، شعری ملتی، خلیج
عراقی، شناوی مشدید، زهابی عراقی، ضریبی اصفهانی
25. Badr ad-Din ibn Abd al-Salam al-Kashmiri. 