

Subject:- PERSIAN

B.A.(Hons) Part-III

Paper- VIII

History of Persian Literature

Topic- The Saljuque Period

Online Class Materials

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THE SALJUQUE PERIOD

As a result of the overthrow of the Ghaznavids at Khorasan in 1044 A.D. and the Buwaihids of Baghdad in 1055 A.D. who were the ruling dynasties in Iran, Tughral Beg, the grandson of Saljuque bin Tuqaq was able to establish a new empire. Although the Saljuques belonged to the Turkoman race, they never laid stress on their Turkish origin but adopted the Muslim-Persian culture and civilisation.

The Saljuque period which covers the reign of Tughral Beg (1037 – 1063 A.D.), Alp Arslan (1063 – 1072 A.D.), Malik Shah (1072-1092 A.D.) and Sultan Sanjar contributed largely to the development and progress of Persian literature and culture. Numerous institutions, educational religious and social came into being. Under this period Persian achieved a universal position. Persian literature both in prose and poetry was produced in volumes. Books on varied topics such as Philosophy, History Travels, Biography, Theology, Mathematics, Astrology and Romance were written. A large number of poets like Omar Khayyam, Abu Sayeed b. Abil Khayr, Tahir Uryan, Abdullatif Ansari, Abul Majd Sanai, Fariuddin Attar, Nasir Khusraw, Amir Muizzi, Anwari Zaheer Faryabi, Khaqani, Adib Sabir, Rashiduddin Watwat, Nizami Ganjawi and many others flourished during the period and produced various types of poetic compositions.

Notwithstanding the fact that Nizamul-Mulk Tusi, the powerful minister and realistic statesman was very much averse to panegyric, there was no lack of panegyricists at the court of the great Saljuques. It was, however, during the reign of Sultan Sanjar, one of the most remarkable and greatest kings of this dynasty who ruled for about sixty five years that this form of poetry found favourable attitude.

Despotism, court intrigues and exorbitant flattery nourished the panegyric qasida which Rudaki had found so profitable under the Samanids and Unsuri and his 'school' under the Ghaznavids, rose to new heights of prosperity in the reigns of Alp Arslan, Malik Shah and above all Sanjar. This required a greater degree of Arabisation of the Persian language. As a result, classical literature of Arabic played a very important role in moulding the temper and the style of Persian scholars and writers. The pure language and

simple style of Persian found and elegant and elaborate way of expression, enriched with highly flown rhetoric and figures of speech in the later Saljuque period. It is better to mention here that in the early dynasties, the panegyrics were written only in praise of the rulers, but under the Saljuques, the greatest masters of panegyri poetry set a bold front in this movement and introduced philosophical opinions, warnings and counsels into their verses. Moreover the foundation of the Mystical poems was laid during this period.

In sort the period constitutes one of the peaks in the history and civilisation of Iran.