

Subject:- PERSIAN

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Unit-II

Topic- Shaikh Saadi

Online Class Materials

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Saadi spent thirty years in travelling. According to his own version he visited Egypt, Syria, Plestine, Asia-minor, Makka, cities of Iran and Turan and travelled from Baghdad to the Scythian Wall and thence to India. The famous Tazkira writer, Daulat Shah says that the first thirty years of Saadi's long life was devoted to study and laying up a stock of knowledge during his wide-extending travels. He spent the remaining part of his life in the retirement of a recluse and writing works of piety and discourses on mysticism. Jami has paid glowing tribute to the profound learning of Saadi, who according to him, was a master of every branch of science and accomplished in the polite art.

Saadi returned to Shiraz in 654/1256-57 after a long journey with varied experience of human character and with a treasure of lofty ideals of deep mystical and theosophical knowledge, during the reign of Atabak Abu Bakr Saad bin Zangi. It is during this time that Saadi achieved fame when he composed the Bustan in 655 A.H. (1257 A.D.), in honour of Abu Bakr Saad bin Zangi and a year later he compiled his Gulistan (656/1258 A.D.) which he dedicated to Saad bin Zangi. It was from him that the poet took Saadi as his pen-name. Apart from the Gulistan and the Bustan, his most celebrated and most popular works, Saadi composed panegyrics, elegies, poems with alternative Persian and Arabic verses, refrain poems, odes, quatrains, distichs and some prose treatises.

Before the time of Saadi in Iran, the Masnavi and Qasida were the most popular forms of Persian poetry than the Ghazal. Shaikh Saadi refined and added excellence to this form of poetry. The Persian ghazals of Saadi combine purity of language with dignity of thought and beauty of expression. "His lyric" says A. J. Arbery "is marked by perfect technical control, ease and fluency of diction, a pleasing formality and an occasional true touch of the sublime." Saadi in his ghazals, seems to be a moral philosophy and preacher. He dwells upon the subject related to the mortality of the world and the futility of the human efforts. Divine dispensation and human limitations are the main theme of Saadi, which have found expression in his writings in a befitting manner. His poems offer the best example of the art of poetry, brother-hood, tolerance and good-wiil to all mankind, without distinction of caste and creed.

The classical memoir-writers and the modern critics too have held his ghazals in high esteem. Khawja Hafiz, the greatest ghazal writer of Persian, has held him as the “master of ghazal”. Amir Khusraw is proud to call himself as a successor of Saadi. Malikush-Shuara Md. Taqi Bhar , a great scholar poet and modern critic, is of the opinion that numerous ghazals of Saadi have political connotation under the cover of wine and beloved. His panegyrics and elegies are compact and impressive.

The name of Shaikh Saadi stands foremost amongst the poets and prose-writers of Persian literature. His works both in prose and verse particularly the Gulistan and Bustan have been acknowledged as masterpieces and even acclaimed as epoch-making in the evolution of Persian literature. The personality of Saadi is multi-faced. He is a poet, a prose writer, a philosopher, a scholar, a moral preceptor, a guide to politics and administration, a mystic, a Gnostic, true-believer and a follower of Sunna and Shariat.